Anti-individualists, which hold that subject's thoughts are not wholly individuated by her intrinsic states, are accused of undermining subject's ability to reason well and that they do not capture correctly the epistemic position of a thinking subject. These accusations are based on anti-individualist's rejection of transparency of thought content which allows that otherwise rational subjects may fail to make valid inferences, may have contradictory beliefs, and may make invalid inferences. By distinguishing between two kinds of anti-individualism, Fregean and non-Fregean, Jessica Brown (2004) argues that while Fregean anti-individualism better fits our intuitions about rationality it introduces an unavoidable internal friction between the endorsement of Frege's principle of content difference and rejection of transparency of difference of content, which renders it untenable. In his 2008 paper Sanford Goldberg tries to motivate these two principles on different grounds, thus providing an account of anti-individualism which is completely compatible with Frege's principle which should secure subject's rationality. We critically assess these claims to conclude that attempts to reconcile traditional notion of rationality and anti-individualism by way of saving validity of Frege's principle fail in their intentions.

Key words: anti-individualism, transparency of content, rationality, Frege.

Anti-individualists are accused of not accommodating our traditional notion of rationality. By rejecting that contents of our thoughts are transparent to us they have opened the door to many kinds of irrational behaviour. If we do not have the means to determine what are the contents of our thoughts we will be often prone to make different logical mistakes. The goal of this paper is to assess one particular attempt to reconcile Frege's principle of thought content difference with anti-individualism which should protect the privileged position of the thinker and her rationality. In the first section we shall define anti-individualist's position and differentiate between its minimal and strong version. In section 2 we shall examine examples fashioned

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to show that anti-individualism does not capture correctly epistemic position of a thinking subject. In section 3 we will demarcate between two different transparency claims and see in which ways they are connected to different versions of anti-individualism. This will lead us to conclusions that strong anti-individualism has to abandon traditional notion of rationality in order to defend its plausibility, while minimal can accommodate the traditional notion of rationality but only at the price of introducing significant internal frictions. Section 4 will introduce Goldberg's position and a new perspective on connection between Frege's principle and transparency of difference of content. While section 5 will deal with a case of simultaneous differential dubitability without the difference of content, which will motivate Frege's principle on different grounds than on content transparency. In section 6 we will critically assess this notion of dubitability in order to conclude that it does not satisfy the very motivation for which it was introduced in the first place. In our concluding remarks we will point out to different ways of saving rationality of a thinking subject in the framework of anti-individualism.

1. What is claimed by anti-individualism?

Anti-individualists claim that the subject’s thoughts and attitudes in general are not individuated wholly by her intrinsic states, but are instead individuated at least partly by chunks of her environment. It is claimed that we can be in the same narrow mental state but have different thoughts. Putnam has famously demonstrated this with a fictional scenario dealing with physical duplicates being in the same narrow mental state while thinking of different substances, namely, and XYZ. Subject S₁ was an inhabitant of Earth, and she used her concept “water” to think about the substance normally found on Earth in rivers, ponds, flowing out of water taps, etc. Subject S₂ was an inhabitant of Twin Earth, and she used her concept “water” to think about the substance typically found in Twin Earth's ponds and rivers. From these two subjects' internal perspectives concepts “water” and “water” are identical due to their having the same intension, the differences between them are not transparent by reflection to the subjects. But nevertheless, it is suggested that they are different because, in fact, they do not have same extension, and the thoughts which contain them are different and individuated by environmental features. The possibility introduced by anti-individualism, that two thoughts are different even when we as thinkers are not aware of their distinctness, challenges the view that an epistemic subject is in a privileged position when it comes to thought content differentiation. A thinker is no longer a sole judge of the content of her thoughts, because sometimes she can be wrong in thinking that she is thinking two identical thoughts when the difference between them comes from the outside. It is not hard to infer that this kind of thinking about the semantic content of our
thoughts, beliefs, hopes, etc. jeopardises the received view about the rationality of a thinking subject.

In *Anti-individualism and Knowledge*, Jessica Brown investigates the objection that such an anti-individualistic view undermines a subject’s ability to reason well and that anti-individualism, accordingly, does not capture correctly the epistemic position of a thinking subject. The objection in question is grounded in the claim that anti-individualism undermines subject’s ability to grasp *a priori* whether two thoughts, or thought constituents, have the same or different contents (see Brown 2004: 157). Before we continue to follow Brown in her investigation it is important to note at the beginning that anti-individualism comes in two broad forms. At the very beginning it was said that thought contents according to anti-individualists are *at least partly* individuated by the chunks of the subject's environment, and that we can be in the same narrow mental state while thinking different thoughts. As we shall now see this *at least partly* meant that there could be two readings of anti-individualism; one that understands thought content individuation as only partly done by the environment, and the other which allows for complete individuation of thought contents by the environment. We can call them Minimal AI and Strong AI. Differences between these two kinds of anti-individualism will deeply reflect on their different implications on rationality. This means that complaints on anti-individualism about not capturing the perspective of a rational subject have to be carefully separated according to the two views on the role environment plays in thought content individuation.

**Minimal AI** claims that – if there are relevant environmental differences, there are differences in thought contents.

For a minimal, or “Fregean” anti-individualism as Brown calls it, this is a sufficient condition for being an anti-individualist. At the same time this is not a necessary condition of thought contents differentiation. This kind of anti-individualism allows that differences of contents can, also, come from the differences in the ways we think two thought contents. But what is more important is that our inability to tell two thoughts apart is not sufficient to claim that they are, in fact, the same. So, the *differences in thought contents can come from the “inside” and from the “outside”*; two thoughts can differ in the two ways in which we think about the same thing, but also two thoughts will be considered different even if our internal states are identical but relevantly linked to two different objects or natural kinds. Thought contents are consequently, *partly* individuated by the environmental features.

**Strong AI** takes the first condition as a necessary condition for anti-individualism, but adds another one – relevant sameness of the environment entails sameness of thought contents.
This means that, unlike minimal AI, strong AI does not allow for the differences which are solely internal. Thought contents are wholly individuated by environmental features.

These two kinds of anti-individualism, which take the environmental factors as having different roles in content individuation, also deal with rationality and epistemic position of thinking subjects in a specific way. We will start with full-fledged anti-individualism, strong AI, and see in what ways it conflicts with our traditional notion of rationality, and then continue with the investigation of minimal AI and determine could it cope better with counterexamples than the strong version of AI.

2. Anti-individualism and rationality

Presupposing that thought contents are individuated solely by the objects and kinds, in accordance with strong AI, inferences such as:

1. Woodchucks are mammals.
2. Mammals are warm blooded.
3. Therefore, groundhogs are warm blooded. (Millikan 2009)

or:

4. Cilantro grows in France.
5. Coriander grows in Britain.
6. Something grows both in France and in Britain. (Brown 2004)

should on this view be valid, because “woodchucks” and “groundhogs” as “cilantro” and “coriander” express the same concepts, even if this is not transparent to a subject having these thoughts. On the other hand, if we allow for differences of thought contents based on differences of mental states or the ways we think about objects (according to individualism or minimal AI), then the two inferences would not be valid as 1. and 3. and 4. and 5. would not be suitably expressed by same concepts and expressed contents would vary in a way that would not allow for making such inferences. But if we take strong AI stance and rely only on environmental features for thought content differentiation then environmental features cannot differentiate by themselves the thoughts containing these concepts and inferences are valid. And here comes the problem – if we take this into account it follows that quite often human beings ordinarily rendered as rational fail to make simple valid inferences, as many of us would fail in making the relevant connection between thoughts expressed by 1. and 3, and 4. and 5. Again, if we postulate that meanings and accordingly thoughts are at least partly constituted by Fregean senses, or the ways we think about objects in the world, then the proposed inferences
would not be considered as valid because the sentences expressed using different terms as “woodchucks” and “groundhogs,” and “cilantro” and “coriander” would express different thoughts. This means that if we soften the strong AI and reject the additional condition about the sameness of the environment (basically, turn it into minimal AI) we would secure our intuitions about rationality, for now at least. It is a fact that we may think about the same plant differently when we think about it as cilantro, and when we think about it as coriander, and Fregeans and Fregean anti-individualist agree that this difference is sufficient to consider the two thought contents expressed by them as distinct and inferences from 1-3 and 4-6 as invalid.

A preliminary conclusion that we can draw from this is that minimal AI does not face the problem that the first argument poses to the strong AI. The argument shows that strong AI does not capture the epistemic perspective of a thinking subject correctly. Namely, it shows that in cases where we think two thoughts via two co-referential concepts we may easily fail to make proper connections between them and fail to make valid inferences. So, in accordance with strong AI most of the otherwise rational subjects would fail to make simple valid inferences – and making simple valid inferences is one of the conditions for being a rational subject.

A second argument can be constructed in order to show that strong AI entails another kind of frequent irrationality of otherwise rational subjects. Specifically, it appears on the strong AI view that subjects are often prone to hold contradictory beliefs. Brown herself introduces an example where “Rudolf assents to [7.] ‘Coriander was known to the ancient Romans’ and [8.] ‘Cilantro was not known to the ancient Romans’” (Brown 2004: 166) simultaneously. On the strong AI view in this case Rudolf holds that “C is P” and that “C is not P” and thus acts irrationally because he is holding contradictory beliefs at the same time. On the other hand, it intuitively seems that it is perfectly rational to hold such beliefs as expressed with 7. and 8. simultaneously. Minimal AI again evades the objection as it allows for the differences in contents which come from the differences in the ways we think about the same object or kind.

What is added to minimal AI and what keeps it from being subject to mentioned objections is the Fregean perspective. The Fregean view not only supports our intuitions about rationality but is deeply dependent on such a view of rationality. That is to say, Fregeans individuate thought contents by potential differences of attitudes which are rationally grounded. The famous Fregean test or Fregean principle of difference claims that:

**FT** – if it is possible rationally to believe that \( p \) and not believe that \( q \), then the contents of \( p \) and \( q \) are distinct.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Or closer to Frege's formulation – two sentences express different thought contents if a subject can rationally accept one of them but not the other (Frege 1891).
In this manner, “although Rudolf may assent to ‘Coriander was known to the ancient Romans’ and ‘Cilantro was not known to the ancient Romans,’ he does not thereby express contradictory beliefs, for the concepts he expresses with ‘cilantro’ and ‘coriander’ have different contents” (Brown 2004: 166.). The difference of contents is founded on his ability to believe rationally one belief and rationally doubt the other, which would be dubbed contradictory by non-Fregean strong anti-individualists because they are, in fact, about the same plant. It is not the case that Rudolf believes in propositions “C is P” and “C is not P,” but on the contrary, in “C1 is P” and “C2 is not P”.

The difference of contents is tied to a subject's ability to assent to one proposition and not to assent to the other (C1 is P, and C2 is P), it is claimed that this difference of subject's attitudes, this difference in mental states secures the difference in contents of subject's thoughts. This claim draws its strength, in turn, from the assumption that subject is rational, that her thoughts are transparent to her, and that she cannot make mistakes about her thoughts. My perspective is paramount when it comes to differentiating contents of my thoughts.

It is easy to conclude that one particular notion of rationality, which is at the same time quite common, has a very important role in the basic form of Fregeanism, and that opposing Fregeanism will have severe consequences on the common sense notion of rationality. The role of this notion of rationality is multifaceted – rationality justifies the “difference of contents principle”, because if there were no such concept it would not be clear how to implement the principle, and conversely “rationality” motivates Fregeanism because this view is guided by this notion – at the core of this view is an assumption that “rational subjects know best what they are thinking, and what they are not thinking.”

According to Boghossian (1992), our common sense conception of rationality in fact relies on the assumption that “the logical properties of the inferences we engage in must be judgeable purely a priori” (Boghossian 1992: 17; Brown 2004: 183). So far, we have seen that if content is not transparent, then, even in simple cases, a subject may fail to make valid inferences (case of coriander and cilantro), and may have contradictory beliefs (“Hesperus is visible at night”, and “Phosphorus is not visible at night”). We will soon see that non-transparency of thoughts can lead us to make even simple invalid inferences.

3. Anti-individualism and two principles of transparency of content

Because the notion of rationality is in this way so deeply intertwined with the notion of transparency as its precondition (if thoughts are not transparent to us how we will be able to judge about their logical properties a priori), Brown goes on to investigate the relations of both kinds of anti-individualism with different trans-
pereiety claims. Even if strong AI is not in accordance with a common sense notion of rationality *tout court*, maybe minimal AI is. Realising whether two thought contents are the same or different and doing it correctly is crucial for reasoning. If a subject makes mistakes about sameness or difference of content, she may make mistakes about the logical properties of her thoughts, and fail in applying basic logical operations on her thoughts. This is why Brown considers whether anti-individualism is compatible with the following two principles:

**Transparency of sameness of content (Tr-S):** for any two thoughts, or thought constituents, that S entertains at time t, if they have the same content then, at t, S can realise *a priori* that they have the same content.

**Transparency of difference of content (Tr-D):** for any two thoughts, or thought constituents, that S entertains at time t, if they have different contents then, at t, S can realise *a priori* that they have different contents. (Brown, p. 160.)

In accordance with anti-individualism which takes only external objects as responsible for thought individuation, in other words, non-Fregean anti-individualism or strong AI, the subject may not recognise *a priori* that he expresses the same thought using two different terms “coriander” and “cilantro” which, in fact, express the same concept, namely the concept which is contained in the thought expressed with 4. and 5. So, the sameness of thoughts is not transparent to thinking subjects according to the strong AI and they may fail to make simple inferences including these terms (again, according to Fregeans this kind of inferences are not valid, so it does not pose a problem for them). Tr-S is out of reach for strong AI, but not for the minimal AI.

On the other hand, transparency of difference of contents seems to be out of reach for both strong and minimal AI. Unlike the cases against the transparency of sameness of contents in which the intrinsic differences introduced by the Fregeans bring the difference into the contents of thoughts in question and in that way they evade the problem (as there are no thoughts with same contents for which we are not aware that they are different, because difference is on the subjective side) - “slow world-switch” cases have been used to argue that anti-individualism of both kinds is not compatible with Tr-D (see Boghossian 1992; Falvey and Owens 1994; Goldberg 1999, especially Brown 2004: 167). One of the Brown’s examples is constructed in such a manner in order to show that a subject named Sally is “slow switched” from world to world, which are identical except one of them contains aluminium whereas other is abundant in twaluminium, fails to spot the difference between her two thoughts which are about two mentioned distinct natural kinds - aluminium and twaluminium. In order to make this example actually work as a counterexample for the principle of transparency of difference of thoughts, we should assume that Sally is able to entertain two different thoughts
with two different concepts at the given time, and this is possible only if Sally can retain her old aluminium concept after the switch. At time $t_2$ Sally is retaining her old belief about aluminium - “In front of me is a pot made of aluminium” formed at $t_1$, but also entertains a new thought about twaluminium which she expresses with her new concept formed by relevant causal and deferential connections - “In front of me is a pot made of aluminium” formed at $t_2$. “In outline, the view may be defended by arguing that the two beliefs differ in their causal and deferential connections (see Boghossian 1992: 19–20) and/or that it is part of the function of memory to preserve the contents of earlier thoughts so as to make them available at later times (see Burge 1998)” (Brown 2004: 168).

Sally is unable to differentiate her two thoughts, and she is prone to make simple invalid inference that she is looking at the same pot in $t_2$ that she was looking at $t_1$, even when the two pots are made of different materials. Alternatively, she can conclude that both pots are made of the identical material. Brown concludes that:

“It seems, then, that both Fregean and non-Fregean anti-individualism are incompatible with transparency of difference of content and may lead a subject to make a simple invalid inference that she can know to be invalid only by using empirical information.” (Brown 2004: 169)

For now, it looks that strong AI is in a worse position then the minimal AI. It is incompatible with both Tr-S and Tr-D, so according to strong AI otherwise rational subjects may fail to make valid inferences, may have contradictory beliefs, and may make invalid inferences. While minimal AI has only to deal with the last problem. Nevertheless, strong AI may come out as a more coherent theory then the minimal AI. It completely denies any kind of transparency and in that it dismisses the notion of irrationality outlined by Boghossian. The way out for a proponent of strong AI is a) in giving a different concept of rationality as Campbell (1987) does, or b) conceding that psychological generalisations about subjects rational behaviour still work as generalisations and not as universal truths, and that cases of subjects failing to act rational are just infrequent exceptions to these rules.

The first solution (a) is calling us to realise that we can distinguish two distinct abilities; the ability to grasp a priori that thoughts having a certain form have certain logical properties, and the ability to grasp a priori of what form one’s thoughts are (Campbell 1987). According to the anti-individualist we can have the first ability – if we know the correct form of one thought, then we also can know a priori what logical properties it has, but lack the other – because given the lack of transparency we may need an empirical evidence to be certain of a specific form of our thoughts. Furthermore, the strong anti-individualist can endorse a biological normative conception of rationality, which is more or less compatible with both routes, (a) and (b). He can look at the rational behaviour as something emerging
from the environment and the subject embedded in it, as a way of behaving which is responsible for the survival of the species, as a proper function which has a desirable outcome, but which is also importantly dependent on the possibility of making mistakes. In that environment is the leading judge of the contents of our thoughts and logical properties which they possess, and it is the one which will make corrections if our conclusions do not conform to its standards (see Millikan 2009; Milojević 2011).

The strong anti-individualist can then take a wholly new perspective on subject's behaviour and capacities to judge its own thought contents. But what about the minimal anti-individualist? He endorses FT and Tr-S but rejects Tr-D. This does not mean that he holds a contradictory position, but as Brown suggest, it makes his standpoint poorly motivated. We can also discard objections based on the world-switching scenarios as too fantastic and resting on a premise that a subject can retain her old concept while acquiring a new one which is internally indistinguishable from the old one and entirely evade the problem. However, if we do assent to the claim that anti-individualism is incompatible with Tr-D, because it allows for the differences in thoughts which come solely from the differences in the environment even undetectable for a thinking subject, then we should address the question what justifies endorsement of the Tr-S while rejecting Tr-D.

Strictly speaking, Tr-S nor FT are not in a collision with the negation of Tr-D, which means that minimal anti-individualist is not holding a contradictory view (by holding „FT and Tr-S and not-Tr-D“). But introduction of FT itself and for that Fregean perspective is highly motivated by a specific view of subject’s epistemic position and its rationality. FT is motivated by the view that subject is the unprece-
dented judge of its own thoughts and their logical properties. If this is so it is not clear why should we endorse the view according to which subject is immune to some of the logical fallacies but not to others. Why is a subject in a position to determine clearly the sameness of his thoughts but not their differences?

So, strong AI is in a deeper conflict with one particular notion of rationality, which is a part of a prevalent opinion, but because of that not necessarily true and the only one. On the other hand, minimal AI conforms with the greater part of common sense theory about subject's rationality but lacks the motivation for the rejection of Tr-D.

4. Another perspective on rationality and anti-individualism

Nevertheless, this is not the only way to treat rationality and anti-individualism. Sanford Goldberg in his paper „Must differences in cognitive value be transparent?“ sets out to explore their connection in a different manner. The aim of his paper is to show that anti-individualism is compatible with FT while denying
Tr-D, and that endorsing rational dubitability as a way of differentiating thought contents (FT) is in no way incompatible with the rejection of the transparency of difference (Tr-D), not even at the motivational level to which Brown pointed out. In other words, Goldberg is set out to show that a conclusion about internal poor motivation of minimal AI is false. In order to determine correctly the relation between FT, Tr-D and anti-individualism let us be reminded of the difference between minimal and strong AI and their relation with Frege's test.

**Minimal AI** claims that:

If there are differences in the environment, there are differences in thought contents (allows that difference of contents can come from the difference in the ways we think two thought contents)

The extra condition for **Strong AI**:

Sameness of the environment entails sameness of thought contents (does not allow for the differences which are solely internal)

At the same time **Frege's test** claims that:

If one can rationally believe \( p \) while simultaneously doubting \( q \), then \( p \) and \( q \) are different contents.

We can see now that FT implies that difference in the subject's attitudes towards relevant propositions entails a difference in thought contents, but not the other way around. The converse of FT: if there is a difference in contents, then the subject can rationally believe one but doubt the other (or in other words, a subject will be in a position to tell these two thought contents apart), is actually equivalent to the principle of the transparency of contents Tr-D. This means that FT gives a sufficient but not a necessary condition of thought content differentiation. Difference in thought contents can also come from the environmental differences if we take an anti-individualistic stand, and constrained only by FT we would not be obliged to be in a position to be aware of this difference. Put differently, **Tr-D is not entailed by FT**. FT is completely silent about the necessary conditions of content difference.

If we take this into account, we can conclude that FT is compatible with minimal AI, but compatible with strong AI only if we can rationally differentially doubt just the thoughts about different environmental features, because according to strong AI the difference in thought contents can obtain only if there is a difference in the subject's environment. This is why most of the strong anti-individualists are rejecting FT. If we take that a rational doubt means taking differential attitudes based on our conscious thoughts, then differential doubt will introduce some differences which would not be grounded in environmental differences. In other words, it would be hard to give an account of rational doubt which would be so
restricted (that we can rationally differentially doubt only the thoughts about different environmental features). 

Goldberg starts with the supposition that it is common to assume that FT presupposes Tr-D (2008: 167-173). In turn, Tr-D makes a strong claim about transparency – that anytime we think different contents we are in a position to tell by reflection that these contents are, in fact, different.

For all rational subjects S and contents p and q, if (i) p not equal q (they are distinct thought contents) and (ii) if at time t subject S entertains both thoughts simultaneously, then S at t can tell by reflection that the thoughts differ in content.

By thinking that Tr-D is presupposed when we are endorsing FT, Goldberg cannot simply think that FT implies Tr-D, because this would be obviously wrong! As we have already seen there is no strict logical relation between these two principles, and there is no contradiction to endorse FT and at the same time reject Tr-D. Some differences can be internally constituted and some are coming from the outside, some are transparent and some are not.

To properly understand what Goldberg has actually meant by this statement is crucial for understanding his further intentions. Otherwise it would not be quite clear why he thought that we commonly think that FT presupposes Tr-D as stated, and why it is important to prove that FT can hold without Tr-D. These two principles are motivated by the same line of thinking, as we previously saw, that internal perspective of a thinking subject is crucial for thought content individuation. And it is true that Tr-D is accepted by Fregeans who also endorse FT, but this is because for them only the internal difference makes a difference in contents. If we, alternatively, start from the anti-individualistic perspective, especially minimal AI perspective, it is not so clear why would we think about presupposing Tr-D at all. FT does, in fact, entail a certain amount of transparency, in that that if we can doubt q and believe p, then they are by definition different, and their difference is transparent to us by the fact that we are able to differentially doubt them, but it also leaves the possibility of not being able to differentiate two thought contents, which are actually different thanks to environmental differences. FT only states that if we can doubt one and believe the other then we think two different thought contents but it does not state that we cannot think two different thought contents which are not transparently different and which we cannot reflectively tell apart. So FT does not presuppose Tr-D, that difference in contents entails an ability to tell them apart by reflection, but only a weaker claim that if we are able to doubt content difference then this content difference must be transparent to us. This means that Tr-D would be entailed by FT only if it stated that:

Only if one can rationally believe p while simultaneously doubting q, then p and q are different contents.
As this would secure that content difference entails an ability to doubt rationally one thought content and believe the other.

Having cleared the path now, we can safely conclude that what Goldberg must have meant by this is that in the single case where FT is applied Tr-D must be true as well. So it is not the case that FT and Tr-D hold or not hold universally, but when we differentially doubt the two thoughts we have it is on the basis that the difference of contents was transparent to us. As it was said earlier, when we are, in fact, believing one content and doubting the other, then this difference of content must be transparent to us.

This interpretation of Goldberg's claim that it is commonly taken that FT presupposes Tr-D goes in line with his intentions to separate FT and Tr-D. Now that we have agreed that rational differential dubitability is based on Tr-D, as stated in the previous passage, Goldberg constructs a scenario trying to show that sometimes FT is not based on the difference of content that was transparent to us. He will construct a case in which rational subject is in a state of differential doubt but there is no content difference which is possibly transparent to her. We are led to believe that by showing that we can have FT in play with simultaneous falsity of Tr-D, we should be convinced that FT does not have to be motivated by the transparency of content of any kind, contrary to what Brown has defended in her book. Differential dubitability does not have to include any kind of transparency usually presupposed by Fregeans and still be efficient in securing thought contents differences, or so Goldberg argues. Saving a kind of FT which does not rest on transparency of contents would save rationality of epistemic subjects without reintroducing Fregean perspective.

5. Differential dubitability without the transparency of content difference

The first case that Goldberg introduces is the case of Schmidt (2008: 174), who is world-switched from our world to a world which contains twater instead of water. The point of the example is to show that there can be:

- thought content difference (T₁ is not T₂)
- which is not transparent to a thinking subject (~Tr-D) but
- a subject is still in a position to differentially doubt thoughts in question (FT: S believes T₁, but doubts T₂, so T₁ and T₂ are different).

This would enable motivating FT which is not based on transparency of thought contents, which would further enable anti-individualist to consistently hold FT and reject Tr-D. The story is set up to show that Schmidt, who was world-switched, currently doubts her thought about water, namely she doubts her thought:
T₂ “Water was Granny's favourite drink,” where “water” refers to twater and she entertains it at t₂ after the world switch.

At the same time she believes her old thought introduced at t₁:

T₁ “Water was Granny's favourite drink,” where “water” refers to water.

According to the FT thoughts T₁ and T₂ have different contents thanks to the differential doubt. However, even if we are not Fregeans, or minimal anti-individualists we would still consider these two thought contents different because they can be individuated by environmental differences. Second claim that Goldberg makes apart from claiming that Schmidt is in a state of differential doubt is that difference of thought contents is, nevertheless, not transparent to Schmidt. Interestingly, this is something that most of the theorists would comply with because there is no way in which Schmidt can identify twater as a different liquid then water. Her concept “water” introduced at t₁ and her concept “water” introduced at t₂ “look the same” to her from the inside regardless of their different reference. However, what would be called into question is that Schmidt is able to rationally be in a state of differential doubt in this case.

How is her state of doubt even possible? Well, it is possible because Schmidt is doubting in her T₂ thought not on the ground of different thought contents, but because she doubts that she has been world-switched, and on the basis that she has some knowledge about anti-individualist semantics, or so it is claimed. By pursuing this line of argumentation Goldberg wants to save subject's rationality that should consist in being able to differentiate thoughts which have different thought contents. This kind of rationality was supposedly lost for anti-individualists, and Goldberg is trying to re-establish it without making reference to transparency of thoughts which would reintroduce Fregean aspects into anti-individualist semantics.

Even so, in doing this it seems that he attributes to Schmidt a wrong kind of doubt. It looks that Schmidt does not doubt her thought T₂, which is needed for the operationality of FT (because S doubts T₂ and believes T₁, they are different), but a thought about the reference of her concepts. Schmidt does not doubt that her granny's favourite drink was water, but she doubts that her two concepts “water” from t₁ and “water” from t₂ have the same extension. This would be a kind of meta-linguistic or second-order doubt, that would not get us where we need to be – differentially doubting T₁ and T₂. Goldberg is aware of this objection, and he tries to counteract upon it by showing that even this doubt, this meta-linguistic doubt, would not be grounded in the difference of thought contents and its transparency. Leaving this objection aside and granting Goldberg that it is T₂ that is really doubted, there is still the problem of the peculiarity of this case as doubt is enabled only through extensive subject's knowledge about semantics and its own epistemic position. This kind of argumentation would open a possibility of rationally doubt-
ing an identity of any two thoughts employing same concepts on the grounds of our semantic knowledge, i.e. possibility that two of our concept do not co-refer, even if they are internally identical. It would enable a kind of semantic scepticism! We would never be in a position to know if our two concepts are really the same, because this is by anti-individualism outside our epistemic perspective, and we would always be in a position, granted that we have sufficient knowledge about semantics, to differentially doubt our thoughts employing same concepts. As sceptics are granted a status of rational doubters, it would be rational for us to doubt our every thought and ask ourselves are we truly in contact with the same substance or the same object as before. This position would then in turn be subjected to the same kind of argumentation against scepticism and it would open a question when it is really rational to doubt our position in the world and when do we have enough justification for our doubts, which is not an easy matter. It does not seem that this kind of rationality Brown and Boghossian had in thought. It is not doubt based on our understanding of our own thoughts, it is not rationality which consists in not introducing contradictory thoughts on the basis of their contradiction, but doubting by introduction of a special philosophical theory which puts us in the domain of sceptical scenarios of world-switching, evil demons and brains in vats. The weight of Goldberg's argument has the same weight as arguments of a sceptic. Goldberg's insistence on Schmidt's having good reasons for doubting that she is world-switched does not suffice (in the end what reasons would be good enough?).

6. Role of deference in rational semantic behaviour

When it comes to Goldberg's second example we can see that he is much aware of the possible problems that differentiating contents by dubitability of this kind can bring in. He is explicit in claiming that such differentiation would possibly cut contents too thinly, which now seems as an understatement, but at the same time he proceeds in defending FT instead of discarding it as inapplicable in the cases where there is no internal difference between the concepts used. As it will turn out in the Schmidt case, it is not going to be the doubt that plays the main role in differentiating contents but the environmental and social circumstances, still Schmidt's doubt will be rational and FT will stand, though it is not clear in what form. The doubt employed in Goldberg's cases is a peculiar one as we have seen, it is a kind of a knowledgeable doubt, but what will preclude it to cut contents too thinly is its rationality. As we shall see doubt in the cases where relevant environmental features are identical will not be considered rational. So if we doubt that we are having the same thought as moments ago on the basis that we might be world-switched, and we are, in fact, wrong, then our doubt would not be rational. It looks that Goldberg's argumentation is begging the question, if only by fiat we reject the
cases of doubt as irrational because they do not conform to anti-individualism. Even so, in order to save FT as still operational principle Goldberg will introduce a new aspect in his story, namely the role of deference in rational semantic behaviour. Interestingly, the plan is actually to defend what is defined as strong AI, and not minimal AI, and still hold that FT is true and useful, but in order to do so rational dubitability must be grounded in something that exists “outside” – it will be closely connected to the community of experts and to the notion of semantic deference.

Although Goldberg holds the opinion that minimal AI is well defined position, he will build his case in accordance with the conditions for strong AI. At first glance this sounds strange, because we would expect from an anti-individualist who holds that FT is true to defend no stronger than minimal AI, but on the second look it makes perfect sense. In order to defend FT while rejecting that it must be grounded in the transparency of content, which secures anti-individualism which is coherent and not dependent on Fregean notions of transparency, Goldberg introduces a special kind of doubt, doubt which is not founded on the transparent differences of subject's thoughts. However, allowing for this kind of doubt while holding minimal AI would introduce a proliferation of contents of a large-scale – the difference in attitudes would be enough for the difference in contents which combined with “Goldberg doubt” leads to “semantic scepticism”. So, it must be that Goldberg chooses to defend the strong AI in order to stop this unwanted proliferation. In the second example Goldberg introduces (2008:178) a case in which a subject named McSorley:

- doubts that she has the same thought as before and believes that she is world-switched and now exposed to a different liquid – twater, than before when she was in contact with water (S doubts Tb, but believes Ta).
- In fact, McSorley is not world-switched (Ta is Tb)
- The possible difference between thought contents is not possibly transparent to McSorley (~Tr-D).

If he can rule out the case of McSorley as a case of rational doubt he can save strong AI and FT. If McSorley is rationally doubting, then Ta and Tb are different contents, and according to strong AI they are the same. It seems that McSorley exhibits the same kind of doubt as Schmidt, but if that is so, then, actually, the two thoughts that McSorley thought Ta “Water was Granny's favourite drink” introduced at t₁ and Tb “Water was Granny's favourite drink” introduced at t₂ after the supposed switch would have different contents which will not be in accordance with strong AI. So how can Goldberg solve this contradiction?

It is important to note that minimal AI would support the claim that thoughts Ta and Tb have different contents and FT would not be in jeopardy, but by introduction of a special kind of second order doubt minimal AI is out of reach for Goldberg.
because it would be far too permissive (it would allow for difference of contents even when concepts employed are the same and the environment is the same but there is differential dubitability). In order to save FT Goldberg puts constraints not on what can be doubted, we saw that he is very liberal when it comes to that, but on the rationality of the doubt employed. If we remember it is only:

If one can rationally believe \( p \) while simultaneously doubting \( q \), then \( p \) and \( q \) are different contents.

Goldberg claims that semantic deference is a part of our rational behaviour. And because it is rational to defer to experts of our community when it comes to the reference of the terms and concepts that we use, it is not rational to differentially doubt contents which are, in fact, the same according to our experts. Deference as a part of rational behaviour secures that only thoughts with different thought contents according to strong Al can be rationally differentially doubted! We must admit that Goldberg’s final step in defending FT alongside strong Al is very clever, but does his answer actually conforms to what is usually assumed by FT? Isn’t FT then completely superfluous?

In order to have FT standing, it is rationally doubting one proposition and believing the other that makes them different. Under Goldberg’s conditions this appears to be barely true. Doubt is rational only when the contents are actually different, different because of the differences in the environment, so FT comes out true, still there is the price to be paid. Although logically true, FT no longer captures the implicit claim of the conditional that what makes the difference in contents is the doubt itself. The usual implicature of conditionals is that what is asserted in the antecedent is what causes that what is asserted in the consequent. In the case of Schmidt this is not satisfied, what makes the difference in contents is a fact that twater and water are not identical and not the attitude of an epistemic judgement. Furthermore, it is not straightforwardly obvious that deference can be a part of our rational doubt. One thing is to say that it is rational to defer to experts and the other that deference is part of rational differential doubt. It seems that we have two acts here, one is deferring and the other doubting. They both have their conditions to be rational. Our doubt is rational if it is at least logically coherent, and deference is rational if we are a member of a community which contains reliable experts, etc. It is not incoherent to rationally differentially doubt two thoughts and not be a member of such a community, so the later cannot be a necessary condition for the former.

In the end Goldberg makes a note that this kind of tricky cases where we need to employ this special kind of rational dubitability arises only in the cases like McSorley’s which are very rare. However, simply if we remember the case involving concepts “coriander” and “cilantro,” or more famous one about “Phosphorus” and “Hesperus” we will be urged to consider those cases as cases of an irrational
doubt. The problem will re-arise for every case of doubt which is about same objects or kinds of objects.

Conclusions

Goldberg's attempt to show that rational differential doubt goes hand in hand with anti-individualism, and not against it did not prove to be especially successful. It introduced a peculiar kind of doubt – meta-linguistic doubt, without treating other more frequent kinds of doubts at all, then it puts constraints on it, which do not conform to common assumptions about rationality. We can conclude that FT as a guide to content differentiation and cognitive significance is if not straightforwardly incompatible still completely inefficient combined with strong AI. So, saving the rationality of an epistemic subject from the perspective of an anti-individualist has to take a different form from the one that endorses FT and then changing it to conform to AI. The best way to save anti-individualism from the objections that it does not capture rationality of epistemic subjects is to completely reject FT and put rationality on the side of the third-person perspective. Combining the first-person perspective by the usage of FT and the third-person perspective by the notion of deference proved to be odd and unfruitful. Only by radically refashioning the notion of rationality, which was extremely internal, and defining it in objective third-person terms can vindicate anti-individualism and its stance towards the cognitive perspective of a subject and its role in content differentiation. Fortunately, we do have such notions of rationality, which cut the historical and philosophical connections to Cartesianism and subject's privileged access to its thoughts. These views can leave a subject with an ability to determine correctly logical connections between propositions if she is given its contents, but not at the same time to determine incorrigibly the contents of her thoughts themselves. The rationality can be considered as something that leads us to desirable outcomes, and which enables our survival (Millikan 2009). Nevertheless, this at the same time means that rationality is deeply dependent on our environment and its changes, and cannot and should not be solely rooted internally without any possibility of change.

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References

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Antiindividualizam i racionalnost

(Aprakt)


KLJUČNE REČI: antiindividualizam, transparentnost sadržaja, racionalnost, Frege.