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Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being

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Let us frankly concede that Gegenstandstheorie *itself is dead, buried, and not going to be resurrected. Nobody is going to argue again that, for example, "there are objects concerning which it is the case that there are no such objects."*

— Gilbert Ryle, *"Intentionality and the Nature of Thinking,"* Revue Internationale de Philosophie, *27, 1973, 255*

Dedicated in fond memory of
Rudolf Haller (1929–2014)

Preface

The very name of Alexius Meinong used to be anathema in analytic philosophy circles. Gilbert Ryle testifies to this attitude in the quotation cited on the book's opening leaf as its ironically intended motto. These are famous last words and a caution against predictions about where philosophy will take its future course. Today, 40 years later, there is, contrary to Ryle's postmortem, a flowering of rigorously developed formal symbolic Meinongian logics and active discussion of his work. Meinongian logicians and philosophers, like the best exemplars of logical analysis among antipodal referential extensionalists, pursue a family of different strategies in analyzing the meaning, formal expressive and inferential structure, of thought and discourse. Meinongians, unlike extensionalists, cultivate their analytic aspirations by positing a Meinongian referential semantic domain of both existent and nonexistent objects. All intended objects alike are admitted, regardless of their ontic status, provided that they satisfy intensional property-based Leibnizian identity conditions. As such, both existent and nonexistent objects can be referred to by names understood as abbreviating true descriptive predications of their constitutive properties, counted and quantified over, independently of whether or not they happen to exist.

Meinong's thought, because of its connections to phenomenology and intentionality theory, continues to be of interest to so-called analytic and so-called continental thinkers. It builds upon and complements a powerful philosophy of mind in all its outlets of symbolic and artistic expression. As a student of Franz Brentano, like Edmund Husserl, Meinong in some ways is a dialectical opponent in logic, semantics, and philosophical psychology, to mainstream analytic philosophy centered in the writings, among others, of Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and W.V.O. Quine. Meinong has often stood as the absurd first lame half of a dilemma, which, once mentioned, typically with ridicule, is quickly disposed of, leaving the analytic movement free to develop its radically contrary pure semantic extensionalism. Anything else was propagandized as visiting logic with a philosophically objectionable psychologism, to which the great founders of modern symbolic logic had agreed never to subscribe.

From the beginning, this was a mistaken and in many ways unfair impression. It was fostered especially by Russell's off-target criticisms of many of Meinong's most central and important ideas in his influential *Mind* reviews of three of Meinong's books, monographs and edited work, eventually more formidably, in Russell's *On Denoting* (1905a). Virtually anyone training in analytic philosophy in this era studied *On Denoting*, but not many looked behind Russell's criticisms and polemical calls for a sense of Meinong-opposing robust reality to Meinong's writings themselves. It is easier to take Russell's objections as gospel than to learn the hard way exactly what Meinong's ideas were, whether Russell's objections were well-aimed, and whether philosophical logic and semantics should take the extensionalist or intensionalist route. The historically unsupported prejudice against Meinong, who was never a formal mathematical logician in the contemporary sense, as an incompetent semantic theorist and ontically inflationary metaphysician, has been repeatedly and so thoroughly exploded in the literature, that one thinks of deprecating attitudes toward Meinong of this nature today as quaintly uninformed.

Now, as part of that same turn of fate unforeseen by Ryle's hubris, Meinong is glacially gaining prestige as an important thinker in his own right and a bridge figure between analytic and continental thought. On the analytic side, this is largely thanks to the more urgently perceived need for an adequate intensionalist semantics of meaning to partner with an intentionalist philosophy of language and philosophy of mind. It is owing to the failure of mainstream extensionalist analytic efforts that Meinong's more expansive treatment of meaning in the relation between intending thought and its expression and direction toward intended object, independently of the object's ontic status, has begun to recover its birthright philosophical respectability. Meinongians need not disregard or feel compelled to refute or replace the early pioneering days of logic and semantics among other main branches of analytic philosophy, in the referential domain extensionalisms of Frege, Russell, Quine, and the early Wittgenstein. All of these findings of these giants in the philosophy of mathematics and language that survive criticism on their own terms can be incorporated in the extensionalist subsystem of a more complete and comprehensive intensionalist Meinongian logic and semantics.

Whether an open-minded reader leans instinctively toward Frege or Meinong, it cannot fail in either case to be a useful, philosophically instructive exercise to see how a sympathetic development of Meinong's object theory stacks up against what sociologically has been more mainstream logical-semantic referential extensionalism, as it has evolved especially from the time of Frege. That is one of the main purposes of the book, which I hope succeeds at that level even for those who at the end are more convinced than ever that Meinong was on the wrong track. There are surprising parallelisms and interesting departures, limits, and distinctions observed and transgressed in the ongoing dialogue in philosophical logic and semantics between extensionalism and intensionalism, and there is much to be learned from the dynamic of theoretical advantages and disadvantages on both sides of this major conceptual watershed in the theory of meaning and interpretation of logical symbolisms. There is no basis for comparison and informed judgment, unless a solid

intensionalist alternative to Frege-Russell-Quine referential extensionalism like Meinong's is given more of a fair hearing than it has usually enjoyed in the past.

The present book brings together a collection of my mostly previously published essays that have appeared since the release of my *Meinongian Logic: The Semantics of Existence and Nonexistence* (1996a). These chapters explore related background aspects of Meinong's thought, beginning with his early categorization of assumptions as a fourth kind of mental state, supplementing Brentano's three-part division of thoughts into presentations, feelings, and judgments, to details of Meinongian semantics for metaphysics and intentionalist philosophy of mind, including phenomenology and the concept of aesthetic value, the meaning of fiction, and ontic commitments of false scientific theories and historical narratives. The title of the present volume, *Alexius Meinong: The Shepherd of Non-Being*, makes playful reference to Martin Heidegger's catchphrase, in his 1947 *Letter on Humanism* (2008, 234; 245), pronouncing in sermonette fashion on the human responsibility, not to be an overlord, but rather a steward or caretaking shepherd of being. Surely non-being, pastoral flocks of nonexistent intended objects, otherwise unorganized, need equally to be herded and tended in their fields, as Meinong appoints himself to do. This book explains part of Meinong's philosophical motivation as directed toward the rigorous systematization of all the different kinds of intended objects by which alone their intending thoughts can be distinguished by satisfying intensional property-based Leibnizian identity conditions.

The continuity of themes in this sequence of chapter essays reflects an effort at systematic development of my thinking over several decades on many aspects of referring to and truly predicating constitutive properties of beingless objects that are neither dynamic nor abstract. Intended objects include not only spatiotemporally existent entities, like Julius Caesar and the Taj Mahal, but those mentioned in works of fiction, such as Sherlock Holmes, and the notorious combinatorially property-constructible golden mountain and round square. They number also among the objects of thought ideal theoretical objects like the ideal pendulum and frictionless surface that do not actually exist, but are indispensable for many kinds of scientific explanation. We can think about them and truly or falsely predicate properties of these nonexistent intended objects, just as we can of existent physical entities. My original motivation for developing a Meinongian logic was not to explain the meaning of fiction, but to understand the semantic status of ostensible reference to such putative objects as the ideal gas, perfect sphere, average homeowner, projectiles unimpeded by impressed forces, and the like. Similarly, Meinongian referential semantic domains must contain objects ostensibly referred to in false science and false history, such as phlogiston, vortices, the planet Vulcan, and many other *irrealia*. Here hypotheses may have once appeared justified but have since come through the progress of science to be regarded as false and even insupportable. Mathematical objects might also be categorized as Meinongian, allowing true predication of constitutive properties to *abstracta* without supposing that they must therefore exist. The Meinongian domain also presumably includes such intended objects as future states of affairs, toward which our actions might be directed, but that, as the purpose or aim of actions, without reference to which our actions cannot

be adequately explained, do not exist unless or until the intended action is undertaken and succeeds in achieving its end.

The book as such is not merely a compilation of past reflections on Meinong, but knits together my persistent preoccupations with specific themes and key aspects of the Meinongian proposition that every thought intends an intensionally identifiable individuated object, independently of the object's ontic status. A unified portrait is encouraged of Meinongian logic and semantics, along with its supporting empirical intentionalist phenomenology, as the essays proceed from first to last, and essential ideas are extended and refined. The essays in content, as they have been integrated, are meant to tell a single albeit incomplete story about a currently momentum-gaining philosophical movement based on a very different set of assumptions than mainstream analytic philosophy has historically acknowledged. The assumptions are uniquely the original property of a cluster of several dozen important European philosophers at the turn of the previous century centering around the early intentionalist phenomenology of Brentano and Meinong. Here these concepts are critically investigated by the same practiced tools of logical analysis in the clarification of ideas and pursuit of truth forthcoming as conclusions of the most intuitive and objection-resistant arguments. The hope is that this selection of interconnected essays offers a *tableau vivant* of a promising but still controversial and only partly exploited way to think about logic, meaning, existence, and nonexistence that is more responsive to the generality and nuances of thought and language beyond reference and true predication of properties to existent objects. The challenge and promise is to recommend a preferable alternative to some of the strategies that have predominated historically despite their limitations in every branch of contemporary analytic philosophy.

Bern, Switzerland Dale Jacquette

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Deserts and Jungles from Meinong to Carnap," Université de Liège, Liège, Belgium, May 15–16, 2012. I am grateful to those in attendance for lively discussion and to Peter Simons and Leclercq for useful follow-up correspondence about several aspects of the logic and semantics of nothing or nothingness as an intended object that is also its exclusive constitutive property. "Tarski's Quantificational Semantics and Meinongian Object Theory Domains" first appeared in *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 75, 1994, 88–107. "Reflections on Mally's Heresy" was published in *Axiomathes*, 8, 1997, 163–80. "Virtual Relations and Meinongian Abstractions" originated as "Virtual Relations" in *Idealistic Studies*, 25, 1995, 141–54. "Truth and Fiction in Lewis's Critique of Meinongian Semantics" was published in *Metaphysica: International Journal for Ontology and Metaphysics*, 2, 2001, 73–106. "Anti-Meinongian Actualist Meaning of Fiction in Kripke's 1973 John Locke Lectures" is forthcoming in *Meinong Studies*. "Metaphysics of Meinongian Aesthetic Value" was previously published in *Meinong Studies*, 4, 2010, special issue on *The Aesthetics of the Graz School*, edited by Venanzio Raspa, 53–86. "Quantum Indeterminacy and Physical Reality as a Predicationally Incomplete Existent Entity" is previously unpublished. "Confessions of a Meinongian Logician" appeared in *Grazer Philosophische Studien*, 58–9, 2000, 151–80. "Meinongian Dark Ages and Renaissance" is previously unpublished. "Object Theory Logic and Mathematics: Two Essays by Ernst Mally" (Translation and Critical Commentary) was published in *History and Philosophy of Logic*, 29, 2008, 167–82. A preliminary version of Chapter 11 was presented before the Society for Exact Philosophy, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, August 17–19, 1989. A version of Chapter 9 was presented at the conference on "Meinong and His School," Centro Studi per la Filosofia Mitteleuropea, Trento, Italy, December 9–10, 1994. I am grateful to Liliana Albertazzi for inviting me to participate and to Wilhelm Baumgartner, Jacek Julius Jadacki, Jacek Pasniczek, Roberto Poli, Matjaz Potrc, Robin Rollinger, Karl Schuhmann, and others for stimulating philosophical discussion of these topics. I am grateful to Rudolf Haller and Reinhard Fabian for inviting me to participate in the International Meinong Conference, sponsored by the Forschungsstelle und Dokumentationszentrum für österreichische Philosophie and the Karl-Franzens Universität Graz, Graz, Austria, September 28–30, 1995. It is to Haller and his tireless promotion of Austrian philosophy that this book is dedicated. I especially wish to thank Simons, Pasniczek, and Alberto Voltolini for their valuable comments and discussion when the paper was presented. I am indebted to participants at the conference on "Russell vs. Meinong: 100 Years After 'On Denoting,'" that Nick Griffin and I organized at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, May 14–18, 2005, especially Simons, Paul Weingartner, and Griffin. I thank the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) for supporting this among related research projects during my Resident Research Fellowship at the institute in 2005–2006. Special thanks are due to my research assistant Rian Zuberi for technical assistance in preparation of this manuscript from dusty digital files and for his careful editorial skills in reading and commenting on a preliminary draft.

Contents

Introduction: Meinong and Philosophical Analysis

The theoretical appeal and explanatory advantages of Meinongian object theory can be understood constructively as the culmination of a series of intuitive steps, one leading to the other with a kind of satisfying inevitability. All thought intends an object, but not all intended objects exist. Beingless intended objects are distinguished as they are defined intensionally in relation to their characteristic constitutive properties. The other, upward, path to Meinong and Meinongianism, strewn with roots and loose stones, is by thinking through all the problems encountered by the alternatives to a Meinongian logic and semantics that do not acknowledge a semantic referential domain of both existent and nonexistent intended objects.

Alexius Meinong at the turn of the twentieth century takes his philosophical starting place for all his work in philosophy and theoretical and experimental psychology as the intentionality of thought. Meinong's charismatic teacher Franz Brentano in his influential 1874 (and later editions in 1911 and 1924) work, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, and the impact of Brentano's sense of conviction about the intentionality of thought in their philosophical interaction as mentor and student had established the proposition to Meinong's independent satisfaction. Meinong begins from the critically examined assumption that thought, unlike the purely physical world, is essentially intentional. Thought is always *about something*, directed upon an intended object. Brentano distinguishes between psychological and purely physical nonpsychological phenomena on the basis of the insight that psychological phenomena are always about or directed upon an intended object, whereas nonpsychological purely physical phenomena are not. To believe is to believe (that) *something*, some proposition (is true), to love is to love *something*, for there to be an existent or nonexistent intended object of the feeling of love, to or upon which the emotion of love is directed, however this complex mental state and bodily condition is finally to be understood. Similarly for other mental states, whether their intended objects are things in the ordinary sense, physical or abstract, or states of affairs, such as the intended outcome of a contemplated action or decision to act, an as-yet nonexistent state which an action aims to realize.

Meinong accepts Brentano's classic three-part phenomenological analysis of mental states as consisting of a mental act, the content of the act, and the act's intended object. The act intends the object transparently through the thought's content, and the exact role of the contents of thought in establishing or fixing an intention for cognitive processes is subject to debate. It is not quite so simple, although it is sometimes the case that the content of a mental act determines the mental act's intended object. This happens in such instances as when you try to visualize afterward whether you locked your office door. Sometimes there is a reassuring memory, clicking into place in its details as you try to relive your movements, that you did turn the key, perhaps because of something else you remember in that moment that could only be recalled from an experience occurring earlier today.

Unfortunately for such oversimplifications, there is no logical reason to expect that the content of thought is always a mental picture of an intended object. There need be no more associational relation than simultaneity linking content and object when an object is intended. The content of passing moments of consciousness presumably plays a variety of cognitive roles related to thinking about an intended object. Any association can hold between any thought content and any intended object in the moment that a mental act intends an intended object and experiences a simultaneous lived-through thought content, quale or *noema*. Introspectively, it is easily discovered that the content of a mental act sometimes bears no direct relation between a mental act's content and its intended object. We can intend the Eiffel Tower while entertaining as mental content an accompanying mental image or equivalent description of the Taj Mahal. Twin Earth thought experiment scenarios, popularized by Hilary Putnam's 1975 essay, "The Meaning of 'Meaning,'" expanding on Putnam's 1973 essay, "Meaning and Reference," further reinforce the logical independence of thought content and intended object.

Add then, to Brentano's generalized intentionality thesis that all thoughts are about something, the phenomenological observation that many thoughts ostensibly intend nonexistent objects, and at once a referential domain of objects of intentional states is opened up for application in reference and predication of properties to specific existent and nonexistent intended objects. We can then appeal to the liberated referential semantic domain to address many otherwise intractable problems in logic and semantics, colloquially and symbolically. The preanalytical evidence may be thought overwhelmingly to support the Meinongian alternative, and the technical literature is replete with hackneyed examples that remain thorns in the flesh of reductive extensionalisms. Extensional semantics and ontologies that limit their referential semantic domains exclusively to existent, especially physical spatiotemporal or abstract entities, are unable to explain the meanings of propositions in which subjects intend nonexistent objects.

How shall these delicate matters be approached? Ontic commitment to the existence of abstract intended objects is made when objects considered as putative entities turn out to be absolutely indispensable for the conduct of science. Abstract intended objects enter the extensional existence-presuppositional referential semantic domain, especially as intended objects of thoughts in applied

mathematical physics, numbers, sets, classes, propositions, properties, or whatever is thought to be essential for the ontology of mathematical entities, in precisely the same way and with precisely the same type of justification or rationale. They enter also in the form of the many ideal theoretical objects of applied mathematics, in the natural laws of physics and mathematical genetics and population models, including the ideal gas and perfect fulcrum, projectile unimpeded by impressed forces, or the average Swiss Alphornblaser, that are useful for explanations of physical phenomena, but have no place in the world of physical phenomena themselves.

With appropriate adjustments for apparent counterexamples, involving such sensations as the experience of pain or pleasure, which does not always seem to be *about* anything, Meinong follows Brentano in regarding all thought as intentional. It follows that when thoughts intend beingless objects that are neither actual nor abstract, then there must be a reference domain of distinct nonexistent intended objects in order to distinguish my thinking about Sherlock Holmes from my thinking about Professor Moriarty or Anna Karenina. Thoughts about the Taj Mahal are thoughts about the Taj Mahal. Thoughts about Sherlock Holmes are thoughts about Sherlock Holmes, and not just about Sherlock Holmes's character, the character *of* Sherlock Holmes. For Holmes's character in this sense can only be intended by other thoughts more specifically directed upon distinct intended nonexistent fictional objects, in order to be able to distinguish the character of Holmes from that of Karenina. Granted that they are different sets of properties, which are which, which are Holmes's properties, and which are Karenina's, if they are not the properties *of* distinct intended objects? We already know that the property clusters themselves are different.

The extensionalist tradition in the logic and semantics of scientific expression is a grand but uneasy synthesis of Plato and Aristotle at the origins of Western philosophy. Aristotle provides the metaphysics of physical spatiotemporal entities as real things, as fundamental reality itself, whether identified collectively as all the existent primary substances or furniture of the universe. Plato, reluctantly among many contemporary analytic thinkers and irrespective of the philosophical chronology, supplements Aristotle's commonsense picture of a world of physical things accessible to the empirical senses by positing a realm of existent (in some terminologies subsistent) abstract entities. Abstract intended objects, in turn, since they do not present themselves in the usual way to be named, counted, truly described, and quantified over, theorists think themselves free to maintain are reducible to numbers, sets or classes, propositions or properties, or logically possible worlds. These reductive strategies have an intrinsic cognitive interest, although the present point is only how uncomfortably the contemporary synthesis of Aristotelian and Platonic ontologies travel together. Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics are set down side by side in the contemporary analytic synthesis, contrary to their deepest philosophical incompatibilities. It is the contradiction with its dynamic inner tension that seems historically to hold the beating metaphysical heart of mainstream Western analytic philosophy.

Plato and Aristotle themselves would have encountered no such theoretical schizophrenia. Plato did not regard Aristotle's primary substances as real things in the first place, but only appearances imperfectly imitating or participating in their corresponding abstract ideal Forms. Aristotle in turn considered his teacher's Platonic Ideas as misunderstood secondary substances, forms with a small "f," inhering in real physical spatiotemporal primary substances in his more comprehensive *ousiology*. Modern philosophy has it differently, loves its empirical science, and believes that anything needful for science must somehow exist. Contemporary scientific philosophy scorns Aristotelian inherence and grudgingly makes room at the table for Plato's *abstracta* only because mathematics cannot easily make do without them. Metaphysics in the scientific grain simply juxtaposes the physical or spatiotemporal dynamic with the transcendent abstract as two mutually exclusionary ontic realms. A single adequate philosophical rationale for this unaccountable attempt at synthesis, although and probably because its lack does not seem to be much lamented or even noticed, has yet to be discovered. As witness to the difficulty, one cites Paul Benacerraf's dilemma of explaining the meaning of and truth conditions for mathematical theorems on a par with those of true propositions in the physical sciences, in his frequently discussed 1973 essay, "Mathematical Truth." An adequate epistemology seems inherently wanting for determining the truth or falsity of mathematical propositions. The problem, still awaiting resolution, of providing both an adequate general semantics and epistemology for mathematical as for nonmathematical propositions.

If all thoughts are *about* something, if all psychological occurrences *intend* an object, and if some thoughts appear to intend nonexistent objects, as when we produce or entertain a work of fiction or false scientific or historical explanation, or decide and plan to bring about an as-yet nonexistent state of affairs by undertaking a certain physical action, then there are thoughts and the expressions of thoughts that intend nonexistent objects. We can try to reduce the apparent intending of nonexistent objects to existent objects only, but these efforts cannot explain thoughts about things that do not exist by mapping them onto existent things, as though we were to try explaining Shakespeare's fictional character Hamlet by "reducing" references to that nonexistent entity to Shakespeare or to an actor playing the part of Hamlet. A semantic referential domain of nonexistent objects for some predications in a logic is accurately considered Meinongian. Meinongian objects, more properly speaking, are any intended objects, irrespective of their ontic status, existent or nonexistent. Where a distinction between spatiotemporal physical *existence* [*Existenz*] and what is usually translated as abstract *subsistence* [*Bestand*] is observed, as in some of Meinong's writings, we say more generally, when extreme perspicuity is required, *beingless* (and *beinglessness*) to cover both *nonexistent* and *nonsubsistent* intended objects.

The golden mountain and round square are intended objects because we can think about them, as we can about any nominalized combination of constitutive identity-determining properties. We can put them freely together in a truth-functionally complex combination, just as we do in inventing a character for a fantasy of fiction. We rely on the same associated properties by which all objects

are identified as particulars and distinguished from all other objects under intensional property-based Leibnizian identity conditions, regardless of their ontic status. The fact that in the case of nonexistent objects we have only incomplete collections of properties available is really no different than when we intend existent objects. We never have full command of all the constitutive properties of an existent object like the Taj Mahal, to which we can nevertheless refer and to which we can truly predicate properties. It is the same with respect to nonexistent intended objects, as when we think about Sherlock Holmes. We can only partially and even then with only partial comprehension grasp his storied properties in exact detail, despite errors of memory and judgment, after we have read one of Arthur Conan Doyle's gripping detective adventures. We may lose track of certain details or invent our own filler or background, even with the book still in our hands, just as can happen when we are self-consciously in the presence of an existent object of reference and true predication such as the Taj Mahal.

A purely extensionalist semantics cannot adequately account for the meaning of fiction and false science and history, everyday falsehoods, and intendings to bring about states of affairs that as yet do not and may never finally exist. Extensionalism with its referential semantic domain limited exclusively to existent entities cannot adequately, naturally, or plausibly account for the distinct intended objects of imagination, including projections of as-yet nonexistent states of affairs in problem solving, invention, and advance planning. These are not dispensable or postponable semantic frills, but absolute essentials, if we are going to understand practical reasoning in action theory and the role of reason in decision-making, among numerous other semantic occurrences. We see the failure of a purely extensionalist semantics, among other ways, in the fact that intuitively Sherlock Holmes is a different intended fictional object than Anna Karenina, although the null extensions, like those of any other ostensible nonexistent object, fictional, ideal or in ostensibly mentioning nonexistent objects in other literally false thoughts and their expressions, are always identical for the predicates, "being Sherlock Holmes" and "being Anna Karenina."

Meinong's often quoted "Über Gegenstandstheorie" object theory banner that "There are objects of which it is true to say that there are no such objects" stands in stark contrast with conventional classical logic and extensionalist existence-presuppositional semantics. Rather than a shocking explicit self-contradiction, the statement highlights two different meanings of the colloquial phrase "there are." Meinong maintains that semantic reference to an intended object is independent of the objects' ontic status and that *Sosein*, so-being or identifying and distinguishing character, is logically independent of *Sein*, existence or being. There are objects, in the sense of intended objects, to which we can refer and truly predicate properties. They are objects of thought, belonging to a referential semantic domain of all intendable objects, only some of which exist, and hence of which it is true to say in an ontically loaded rather than merely referential semantic sense that there are actually and abstractly no such (existent) objects. To say that there *are* nonexistent objects is to say something more significant, which is the point of Meinong's playful formulation.

This is the crux of what a Meinongian object theory offers the semantics of fiction and of meaningful sentences in false science and false history. It serves colloquial description in many informal practical contexts, in acts of imagination and goal formation and pursuit. Nonexistent objects are merely intended. Since they do not exist, responding to Quine's famous challenge, we shall not bump into any predetermined finite number of them in the doorway—fat, bald, or otherwise. The situation is no different with respect to not interacting causally with existent classes, numbers or universals, or other *abstracta*, should our explanations together with our semantics generally require us to say that these intended objects exist, in order to explain the meaning of pure and the meaning and efficacy of applied mathematics. Naturally, much more of our thought may intend objects that actually or abstractly exist. We need only consider all the things there are to see in a busy office. Meinongian object theory already covers true and false predications of properties to existent objects. Plus it does something more. It extends the same semantic principles from existent to nonexistent intended objects, in order to explain the meaning and truth conditions of propositions that ostensibly intend nonexistent objects. To assert reasonably enough that Sherlock Holmes is a detective is already enough to raise the argument as to what exactly this pronouncement should be understood to mean. It provokes the question whether Sherlock Holmes is a fictional intended object capable of supporting the constitutive property of being a detective, just like any existent detective. Insofar as they are detectives, Sherlock Holmes and a real detective we may then suppose, among all their other differences, share alike at least the constitutive property of being a detective. To speak of detectives is to intend a semantic subdomain of existent and nonexistent intended objects that have the property of being a detective, including real and fictional detectives alike. Context and conversational implicature often restrict discourse to existent detectives, in the example, or alternatively as a semantic courtesy to nonexistent detectives.

Suppose I write a novel in which someone writes a novel in which Sherlock Holmes at the last moment rescues Anna Karenina from the locomotive's wheels. The two fall madly in love and escape from Russia together to live in disguise on a greenhouse parsley farm where they supplement their herb sales by translating Russian comedies. They don't just live happily ever after, but they face a series of interesting difficulties, in addition to the fact that they are constantly being hunted by Alexei Alexandrovich Karenina's private agents, who eventually team up with Holmes's nemesis, Moriarty, who escaped death by means of a camouflaged helium balloon at Reichenbach Falls. The love of Sherlock and Anna triumphs through every emergency, and their relationship is tested and strengthened, taxed and broken, and finally ambiguously repaired. If I have just described the plot outline of a *logically possible novel*, then I am already intending Sherlock Holmes, Anna Karenina, and a sequence of fictional events in which Holmes and Karenina do things together that presumably were never envisioned by their respective authors. If you understood what I was proposing to write about in the imaginary novel, then you were also intending nonexistent fictional objects. We can agree that one obligatory scene in the novel would have to be when Holmes no doubt ingeniously

removes Karenina in the nick of time from the crushing wheels of the oncoming train. That event, to my knowledge, has not yet been depicted in any extant work of fiction, but to understand the illustration, even as a philosophical thought experiment, is to understand something about how fiction comes to be composed. It is a product of imagination intending nonexistent objects and nonexistent states of affairs, projections of possible predications in which intended objects are imagined to have at least some properties that no existent object fully instantiates in reality.

If we were to formalize Meinong's insight, we might do so by introducing a predicate for existence, $E!$, as several classical logicians for different purposes have also proposed, and so write on behalf of Meinong's mildly paradoxical statement that there are objects of which it is true to say that there are no such objects, $\exists x \neg E!x$. Here the phrase "there are" is understood as an ontically neutral quantifier over the intended objects in an object theory referential domain, *versus* attributions of existence, actual or abstract, to an intended object. To deny the Meinongian insight, the anti-Meinongian extensionalist in philosophical logic must accept the contrary thesis that $\forall x \exists y[x = y]$. Although in one way the formula is logically superfluous, and functions only for emphasis, since conventionally in classical logic the quantifiers are interpreted as ranging over a semantic referential domain exclusively of existent entities, it nevertheless serves a polemical purpose. To further underscore their differences, the classical anti-Meinongian extensionalist might also adopt the $E!$ predicate, in writing $\forall x[\exists y[x = y] \leftrightarrow E!x]$. If the "existential quantifier" $\exists$ is understood as implying actual or abstract existence, then the Meinongian object theory thesis is logically inconsistent, and it follows that $\neg \exists x \neg E!x$. This negative existential, by trivial quantifier duality with negation, is logically equivalent to asserting that $\forall x E!x$. All objects in the logic's extensionalist referential semantic domain exist. All objects, speaking more generally with the Meinongian intensionalist, on the contrary, do not actually exist, unless countless putative intended objects of thought are not really objects. Their exclusion would further imply that they could not be named, counted, quantified over, or the like, all of which operations on the present assumptions can in fact manifestly be performed on existent and nonexistent objects alike.

We can count the number of distinct characters in the canonical Sherlock Holmes stories and say how many there are, even though they do not exist. We can say how many nonexistent cases Holmes solves, and the like. We can speak of all and some of his cases, all and some of his clients, villains he encounters, and so on. If existence-presuppositional semantics in a conventional extensionalist logic is correct, then nonexistent intended objects classically cannot be the predicational subjects of true predications of constitutive properties. Contrary to intuitive assumption and practical experience, if a referentially extensionalist logic and semantics is assumed, then we cannot intend a golden mountain as being golden and a mountain, a round square as being round and square, and Sherlock Holmes as being a nineteenth-century private detective operating in London. That would mean that we cannot think of these things as distinct objects, which we can obviously manage. At the same time, ideal objects like the perfect pendulum, projectiles moving in space unimpeded by impressed forces, and the like, are also excluded

from meaningful true predications. We cannot in that case account semantically for the difference in meaning between a false history about the 1849 California Gold Rush and a false history about the events leading up to the 1455–1487 English War of the Roses. We want to be able to say that they are false because they describe different intended objects or states of affairs that happen not to exist. A semantic referential domain of nonexistent objects is thereby integrated into the theory of meaning and truth conditions for false histories, for whatever shortcoming it is that makes them false. It is generally the nonexistence of exactly that object or event described in the false history, exactly that nonexistent object or event that did not actually occur as the history maintains.

An important question for contemporary logic and semantics is therefore, amid the theoretical wreckage of extensionalism, where do we go from here? From radical extensionalism there is only one alternative, which is an intensionalism that subsumes radical extensionalism as a proper part. This is what a Meinongian logic and semantics affords. The line of reasoning described above is exactly the path by which several years ago I arrived at a philosophical and derivatively historical interest in Meinong's philosophy. There are parts of Meinong's thought that I have not yet probed, and there is always more to learn. My interests, as I hope the reader is about to discover, are limited primarily to Meinong's vintage *Gegenstandstheorie*, and what I think can be done with it, to make it relevant to contemporary universal semantics. I have come to regard nonexistent objects as essential to understanding the meaning of any false thought, interpreted as being false because the state of affairs it symbolically represents does not actually exist.

Anything else, as a platform of an evolving analytic philosophy, can be nothing more substantial than Meinong-bashing ideological indoctrination. Philosophers being more open-minded than one can often give them credit for might largely prefer the neatness and familiarity over the coverage inadequacies of the extensionalist experiment. These are represented by confident, if not exactly heroic and venturesome, extensionalists and actualists, in a heritage line extending from Frege through Russell, Tarski, Quine, Kripke, and much although not all of contemporary analytic philosophy. Its history can be interpreted as progressing toward a more unified and encompassing intensionalist alternative. These mainstream thinkers cannot be credited with comparing their views against a challenging option, on the other hand, if, in the course of their investigations, they have not seriously considered intensionalist Meinongian alternatives to a presupposed radical extensionalism. If we can explain the meaning of true scientific assertions, the anti-Meinongian prides, that is a good enough day's work for semantics. Fiction and entertainment thinking and expression are luxuries, unimportant in their logic and predicational meaning when judged against the main interests of formal structural and interpretive analysis. If we must go that way, kicking and screaming from extensionalism toward the principles of an intensional logic, then we may still prefer to join Richard Montague, a sane person, as exponent of an intensional grammar, before we follow Meinong. Or we may choose to bury structural semantic analysis away in the complexities of occurrent background circumstances that more

finely determine the exact communication of speaker meaning to audience understanding in particular speech act exchanges. We thread the needle of sensitive grammatical distinctions that are brought out only by argument, analogy, and comparison, from a selection of actual usages of the words and sentences whose meanings we propose to explain. Here the established route starts like a trailhead with the later Wittgenstein and extends primarily through Austin and ordinary language philosophy and its splinterings among later pragmatists in philosophy of language and philosophy of mind.

Still, we do not find Meinong along any of these trodden avenues. Meinong is remarkable precisely because he is so philosophically independent and unprecedented. This is in turn partly because his work at least until recently has been dismissed on undeserved and directly unexamined reputation. His ideas, for a variety of reasons, have not been fed into the analytic blender along with those of Frege, Russell, Tarski, Quine, and Kripke. Some thinkers today are interested in Meinong primarily for historical reasons, if they are interested in the Brentano School typified in any of its branches. Or they have sparked an interest as historians of experimental psychology in Europe, Meinong having instituted the first laboratory for the scientific study of psychological phenomena in Graz, Austria. Others are fascinated with Meinong's contributions to phenomenology and descriptive psychology, inspired by Brentano's empiricism in the study of mind. Meinong's theory of perception is especially noteworthy in this regard, but also his more abstract and somewhat hazardous later theory of modalities and probability, as a chapter in the general history of modal and inductive reasoning.

My interests in Meinong have remained specialized, although, I would urge, central to Meinong's philosophy. These are Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* and the intentionality thesis that supports its domain comprehension principle of all existent and nonexistent objects. I accept a version of Brentano's intentionality thesis, although, like Meinong, Twarodowski, and others of Brentano's students and followers, I reject and significantly qualify Brentano's original Humean skeptically distancing immanence or in-existence doctrine of intentionality. I consider the intended objects of perception as standing outside the thoughts by which they are intended. I have now had some years and a variety of opportunities to reflect on Meinong's object theory and its applications, its implications for metaphysics, and a variety of related topics that are featured in the discussion of these essays. Along the way, despite my narrow concentration on developing a revisionary Meinongian logic and semantics, I have gained some knowledge of aspects of Meinong's thought that are indirectly related to my immediate areas of analysis. Where these can be connected, at least tangentially to Meinong's object theory, as in the case of Meinong's analysis of the concept of aesthetic value, I have shadowed Meinong's intrinsically interesting arguments concerning the ontology of aesthetic values as intended objects of aesthetic judgment.

The project of this book, in which the reader is invited now to share, is to explore the prospects for a Meinongian approach to philosophical logic and semantics that is different from the descent of torch-bearing Fregean referential extensionalism in contemporary analytic philosophy. Partly I am interested in seeing how

extensionalism fares in comparison with Meinongian intensionalism. There is something valuable to be learned in the comparison, juxtaposition, and ideological conflict of these two opposed approaches to understanding reference and predication, much as there is in all philosophical oppositions, when multiple sides of the issue are given fair hearing. Beyond idle philosophical curiosity, I have the sense additionally and more significantly that Meinong offers the most intuitive commonsensical semantic solution to explaining the meaning of large parts of discourse for which a purely extensionalist semantics is woefully inadequate. Meinong succeeds in this semantic endeavor entirely by opening the referential domain to nonexistent as well as existent objects, provided they all meet intensional Leibnizian self-identity criteria. I think that Meinongian logic and semantics based on Meinong's mature *Gegenstandstheorie* offers a simpler and more unified semantics for discourse generally than the extensional existence-presuppositional model. More urgently, Meinongian logic and semantics alone offers the ontic neutrality or agnosticism demanded of pure logic, and even a pure first-order predicate-quantificational logic, which in itself knows nothing of what happens to exist and what happens not to exist. It provides a more flexible and ontically neutral semantic foundation for analyzing the meaning of sentences and arguments, both for and against the existence of any ontically controversial intended object.

The theoretical advantage of Meinongianism that inspires efforts at constructing a neo-Meinongian logic and semantics is that it so easily and intuitively facilitates distinguishing truths about intended objects more sensitively and with finer grain than in any conventional classical purely extensionalist formal symbolic logic partnered with any existence-presuppositional referential semantic domain. The existence constraint in classical Fregean logic and semantics extends from limits on what can be referred to in the referential domain as arguments to Fregean unsaturated functions or concepts, where it constrains the meaningful true or false predications that a logic can recognize. It clamps down too hard on the truth values of what we need and want to be able to say in many fields of discourse and the logical inferences that we need and want to be able to make in order to advance explanations in those same fields, ostensibly about nonexistent objects. Whether ideal scientific, fantasy daydreaming, or fiction, projections of nonexistent future events considered to result from contemplated actions, abstract objects if we prefer not to offer them existence status, and many other intendings, are about distinct intended objects with distinguishing properties that we know do not exist. Meinongians do not ask to have nonexistent intended objects admitted to a mathematical or philosophical theory's *ontology*. What sense would that make? Meinongians merely recognize that a complete ontically neutral logic must be interpreted by means of a referential semantic domain for any and all objects meeting intensional identity conditions. The totalities of every intended object's *Sosein* of constitutive properties in turn provide the supervenience or ontic dependence base for the intended object's extraconstitutive ontic properties of existing or not existing, being possible or impossible, relevantly predicationally complete or incomplete, and the like. If we have access to the total *Sosein* of an object, we can in principle know from it whether or not the object exists, and if it does not exist, we

can know why, on the basis of its intensional Leibnizian identity-serving defining complement of constitutive properties. It will always be because the intended object's total *Sosein* is relevantly predicationally inconsistent or incomplete or both.

As to the awkward fusion of Platonism with Aristotelianism in contemporary analytic philosophy, of empirical objects and an extra-spatiotemporal realm of *abstracta*, Meinongian logic and semantics offers the possibility of treating any objects of reference in an ontically neutral way, of speaking of whatever exists or does not exist in the same semantic framework for designation by naming and description by predication, counting, quantifying over, and the like, irregardless of ontic status. There is no need from a Meinongian standpoint for ontic commitment to the existence of physical or abstract intended objects, in order for its theory of referential meaning, naming, counting, truly predicating properties, and hence truly describing, existent and nonexistent intended objects alike, to be fully intelligible and interpretable within an expressively adequate formal symbolic logic. All we need for reference, and with reference the possibility, even the inevitability, of truly predicating constitutive properties of any intended object to which thought and language can refer, are intensional property-related Leibnizian identity conditions that apply to any intended object independently of its ontic status and hence for identifying and distinguishing from one another nonexistent as well as existent intended objects. We must mean what we say in either case, in order for what we mean at last to turn out to be true rather than false or the reverse, which reminds us that we cannot get very far in our philosophical understanding of the subject without recognizing the extent to which logic is the underlying expressive and inferential structure of intentional thought and discourse. For the same reason, we cannot get very far in logic and semantic philosophy trying to prioritize truth over meaning rather than meaning over truth.

If anyone is tempted to reply that the formal structures of a symbolic logic would still exist, even if they were not instantiated by any intending thinker, it may well be true. However, for any sign combination, concrete or ideal, to symbolize any predication of property to an intended object, equivalently, any proposition, depends on the signs being intended to express a particular meaning. The residual formal relations would then exist even if there were no thinkers, assuming some sort of realism in the ontology of relations, but they would not constitute a *logic*, and they would not be specifically formal *logical* relations, if the formalisms did not interrelate some of the properties of *propositions*. An abstract set of formal relations is not a logic unless it is expressive of propositions in inference structures, in the sense of having as its model the predications of properties to objects, as we find in the most elementary case of supposing that intended object a has constitutive property F.

The same is true in whatever has been considered a logic, whether in term or algebraic formulations, not to overdramatize, from Aristotle through Frege and beyond. A logic in the correct sense of the word needs propositions, where propositions are not just abstract sign combinations but abstract sign combinations expressing nothing else and nothing other than potentially intended meanings.

A proposition proposes that a uniquely corresponding truth-making state of affairs exists and is true or false depending on whether or not the proposed state of affairs exists. Proposing that something is true or that something exists is nevertheless not a force of nature in the sense of gravity or electromagnetism. Proposing is something that only thinkers do, in the simplest ideal semantic scenarios, when they intend that a certain sign combination expresses something they want to propose is true, that a certain state of affairs exists. If the thinkers are ideal, rather than actual, then their proposings, the propositions they propose as true or as truths, will also only be ideal. Semantics can and finally needs to work with actual and ideal propositions, but that a sign combination expresses a proposition in particular from a Meinongian perspective is due to an actual or ideal conceptually irreducible intentionality.

It is essentially this Brentanian-Meinongian intentionalist outlook on the background and workings of symbolic logic and its minimally sufficient formal semantics that informs the contemporary investigation of Meinong's object theory in these chapters. There are also other less constructive pathways to Meinong, Meinongianism, and neo-Meinongianism, including applying pressure to purely extensionalist accounts of fiction, false science and history, fantasy, invention, projection of as-yet nonexistent states of affairs as the outcome of contemplated actions, and many other ostensibly intentional phenomenologically accessible psychological occurrences. The present book tries to offer some of both approaches, advancing a Meinongian logic and semantics from a starting point sympathetic to Meinong's intentionalism and carving a corridor back to Meinong through a number of what deserve to be prominently widely shared dissatisfactions with purely extensionalist alternatives. We meet somewhere in the middle of these two directions in object theory studies and intensionalist-extensionalist polemics, hopefully with a better understanding and appreciation of the prospects of a neo-Meinongian logic and semantics as an accepted counterweight to the predominant ontically loaded presuppositions of post-Fregean analytic philosophy.

Chapter 1
Meinong's Life and Philosophy

1.1 The Brentano School

In the constellation of Brentano's students who became renowned scholars and philosophers, Alexius Meinong shines as one of the brightest stars. The founder of *Gegenstandstheorie*, the theory of intended objects, Meinong understood his contributions to metaphysics, philosophical psychology, logic, semantics, epistemology, and value theory, as a systematic continuation of Brentano's Aristotelian empiricism and intentionalist philosophy of mind.

Meinong's philosophy, beginning with a modified version of Brentano's thesis of the intentionality of thought, followed a direction quite different than Brentano's; different, indeed, than that of many others who drew inspiration from Brentano's lectures and writings on philosophical psychology. To situate Meinong's thought in the context of Brentano's school, it is necessary first to sketch his biography, and then to see how he came to philosophy from a nonphilosophical background under Brentano's influence, and quickly emerged as an independent thinker. Despite their later differences, Meinong in his own way elaborated a revisionary Brentanian conception of mind, world, knowledge, and value, together, more importantly, perhaps, with a sense of how philosophical inquiry should be undertaken, which he acquired during his several years of study with Brentano, and which remained throughout his career at the center of his philosophy.

1.2 Biographical Sketch

Meinong was born on 17 July 1853, in Lemberg (Lvov), Poland. His ancestors were German, but his grandfather had immigrated to Austria. At the time of his birth, Meinong's father was serving the Austrian emperor Franz Josef as a senior military officer stationed at the Lemberg garrison. Meinong was related to the royal House

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
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of Handschuchsheim, and legally held title as Ritter von (Knight of) Handschuchsheim. In keeping with his republican convictions, Meinong never used this aristocratic form of address.[1]

In 1862, Meinong began his formal education with 6 years of private tutoring in Vienna, followed by another 2 years at the Vienna Academic Gymnasium. Recalling his early schooling, Meinong pays special tribute to his German professor Karl Greistorfer, and his philosophy professor Leopold Konvalina, whom he credits with guiding him toward historical and philosophical pursuits, and away simultaneously from his family's plan that he become a lawyer and his own desire to study music. In 1870, Meinong enrolled in the University of Vienna, where his first major subjects were German philology and history. Later, he concentrated exclusively on history, completing his dissertation in 1874 on Arnold von Brescia, the medieval religious and social reformer. Meinong reports that during this time his interest in philosophy was overshadowed by historical studies. His philosophical appetite was whetted and reawakened only when, in preparation for the philosophical component of a mandatory examination on topics related to his dissertation research (the *Nebenrigorosum*), he undertook a self-directed study of Kant's 1965 [1781/1787] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*), and 1997 [1788] *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (*Critique of Practical Reason*).

To broaden his historical background, and possibly to appease his parents, Meinong entered the University of Vienna law school in the autumn of 1874. There he devoted his time to Carl Menger's lectures on economics, which influenced his later work on value theory. It was just before the 1874–75 winter term that Meinong decided to turn his attention to philosophy. Brentano had recently joined the philosophical faculty of the University of Vienna, and he and Meinong had met in connection with Meinong's *Nebenrigorosum*. Significantly, Meinong denies that Brentano directly influenced his decision to study philosophy, but acknowledges that as a result of their encounter he was persuaded that his progress in philosophy would improve under Brentano's direction.

Brentano recommended that Meinong undertake his first systematic investigations in philosophy on Hume's empiricist metaphysics. Meinong completed his *Habilitationsschrift* on Hume's nominalism in 1877. This was Meinong's first philosophical publication, appearing as *Hume-Studien I* in 1878, in the *Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften*. It was followed by a sequel on Hume's theory of relations, the *Hume-Studien II*, 4 years later, in 1882. During this 4-year interval, while studying with Brentano and working out his interpretation of Hume, Meinong held the position of *Privatdozent* in philosophy at the University of Vienna. In this capacity, he tutored some of Brentano's most talented students, including Christian von Ehrenfels, founder of Gestalt theory, A. Oelzelt-Newin, and Alois Höfler, with whom Meinong collaborated thereafter in his first explorations of the logical and conceptual foundations of an ontically neutral object theory in their 1890 book, *Logik*.

[1] The principal source of information on Meinong's life is his *Selbstdarstellung* 1921.

In 1882, Meinong was appointed Professor Extraordinarius at the University of Graz, receiving promotion to Ordinarius in 1889, where he remained until his death. At Graz, Meinong established the first laboratory for experimental psychology in Austria, which flourished under his directorship until 1914, when, for reasons of failing eyesight, he turned it over to his protégé Stephan Witasek. Witasek, in turn, because of failing health, was succeeded almost immediately by Vittorio Benussi. Throughout his long tenure at Graz, Meinong was engaged in difficult philosophical problems, and simultaneously occupied with experimental cognitive and phenomenological investigations, especially those Brentano designated as belonging to descriptive psychology. Here, for the philosophically most active 43 years of his life, Meinong wrote his major philosophical treatises and edited collections of essays on object theory, philosophical psychology, metaphysics, semantics and philosophy of language, theory of evidence, possibility and probability, value theory, and the analysis of emotion, imagination, and abstraction.

By 1904, Meinong, like his teacher Brentano before him, was almost totally blind. The affliction did not strike suddenly, but was preceded by degenerating vision that began to plague Meinong from about the age of 30, when he could no longer read well enough to lecture from written text. The hostilities of World War I brought the wounding of his son Ernst, who lost an eye in combat. This tragedy, and the breakdown of human decency in international relations that affected so many persons of good will at the time, left Meinong deeply dispirited. He died on 27 November 1920, survived by his wife Doris and son.

The Graz school of phenomenological psychology and philosophical semantics centering around Meinong and his students made important advances in all major areas of philosophy and scientific psychology. Meinong's most notable students, who entered the field self-consciously also as Brentano's *Enkelschüler*, prominently include Ernst Mally, Rudolf Ameseder, Witasek, Karl Zindler, Ernst Schwarz, France Veber, Johann Clemens Kreibig, Wilhelm Frankl, Hans Pichler, Eduard Martinak, Hans Benndorf, Fritz Heider, and Benussi.[2]

1.3 Meinong's Apprenticeship to Brentano

When Meinong applied to Brentano for advice about his first systematic philosophical studies, Brentano, as we have seen, recommended that Meinong examine Hume's nominalism. The suggestion was significant for several reasons, from Brentano's as well as Meinong's perspective.

Brentano in 1874 had just begun his appointment at the University of Vienna, and was already enjoying the prestige of his famous lectures and the appearance of his *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*. His proposal that Meinong begin his formal philosophical studies with an analysis of Hume reflects the wisdom of

[2] Meinong offers a partial list of distinguished students in 1921, 11. See also Smith 1991.

Brentano's well-meaning counsel. Meinong's background in historical scholarship made the choice of an historical topic in philosophy naturally suited to his demonstrated abilities, and one that by virtue of its subject matter would eventually serve as a bridge to more demanding original philosophical inquiry.

The empiricism in Hume's attempt to apply the 'experimental method of reasoning' to philosophical problems is particularly relevant to Brentano's own interests and inclinations in developing an empirical psychology. It is the ideological and methodological orientation of Brentano's conflicted epistemic and ontic loyalties, that is often in a tug-of-war between an Aristotelian naive empiricism of primary substances, and the phenomenalism implied by Enlightenment era British empiricism. For Meinong, as for Brentano, 'empirical' means external sensory *and* internal 'inner' perception, *innere Wahrnehmung*. The two sources of experiential data, inner sense and, to oversimplify, the five external senses collecting ambient perceptual information, are considered jointly indispensible to an adequate empiricism. The combination fuses two subcategories of inner and outer experience under the single more general category of empirical data. Nor can a committed empiricist easily overlook or ignore such conspicuous sources of experiential information, what today are more often distinguished as scientific cognitive psychology and phenomenology.

Brentano and Meinong might have preferred the description of an empirical psychology as scientific with rather than minus phenomenology. Scientific psychology without phenomenology is scientific psychology relying only on the five external senses and not on the inner sense by which the other senses are surveyed. What could justify ignoring such evidence, when all so-called external objects are experienced as the contents of moments of consciousness? Brentano is convinced by the second of his published studies of Aristotle's philosophy, his 1867 *Habilitationsschrift*, *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles, insbesondere seine Lehre vom noûs poietikos*, overlooks what Brentano and Meinong would have called the intentionality and content, what today is called qualia, and what Husserlians call *noemata*, but *not* what Frege calls *Sinn*. Brentano accepts Aristotle's argument that we can only understand the mind's ability to discriminate and compare the input of two different external senses, yellow color and sour taste simultaneously experienced, by virtue of another sense that cannot be any of the five external senses, and is therefore an inner sense. It is an assumption of this early rootstock of phenomenology that inner sense can be developed and refined as an inner perceptual tool for investigating the structures and contents of the inner empirical world accessible to a scientific descriptive psychology.

If there is such a thing as inner perception, then we can study mental phenomena under its educated scrutiny, so that a scientific study of mind can be founded to investigate consciousness. Its structural features discernible to inner perception, its streaming content, the meaning of our actions, including speech acts and more fundamentally existent or nonexistent object-intending mental acts, can be empirically studied. The relevant factor, in Brentano's scientific philosophy of psychology, turns out to be their intrinsic and expressive intentionality. What logical positivism undermines later in that century, also springing from a Vienna

intellectual hotbed, is Brentano's program for empirical psychology based on inner perception. Scientific psychology outside the Brentano school emphasized publicly observable, testable, verifiable phenomena, and shunned the subjective, individual and unrepeatable as unscientific. The science of mind would make its advances without Brentano's appeal to the inner sense that Aristotle argues on phenomenological grounds must exist as legitimately empirical. However unscientific positivistic psychology regards Brentano's phenomenology and reliance on inner perception, as an empirical approach to psychology, and as a scientific study of psychological phenomena, the positivist turn in scientific psychology can only be considered by the Brentano school as too impoverished a science of mind to be able to ask the right questions or seek the right answers about the nature of thought.

Brentano's stand against idealism in the academic mainstream of neo-Kantianism, dominated by the followers primarily of Johann Gottlieb Fichte and G.W.F. Hegel, has been frequently remarked.[3] Brentano's sympathetic commentary on Aristotle's metaphysics and psychology, in his Dissertation and Habilitationsschrift, his efforts to visit John Stuart Mill at Avignon in 1873, prevented only by the latter's unexpected death, all testify to Brentano's preoccupation with empiricism and his efforts to give impetus to a resurgence of scientific philosophy that would take its bearings from the impressive progress of the natural sciences already in Brentano's time. The subject matter of Brentano's Würzburg and Vienna lectures, and the elaboration of his own empiricist philosophy of psychology, attest to his affinity with the British empiricist phenomenalist philosophers, and with the traditions of realism and empiricism, as opposed to those of Platonism and German idealism (Kraus 1976, 6).[4] The proposal that Meinong devote his first professional philosophical efforts to Hume's nominalism and theory of relations again reflects Brentano's intellectual affinity with British empiricism.

In his *Selbstdarstellung*, Meinong indicates sincere gratitude to Brentano for his early guidance: 'Brentano, by fulfilling my request, gave lavishly from his riches; as an example, as a conscientious teacher and kind adviser, for what may stand the proof of my own academic career' (Meinong 1921, 5; trans. in Grossmann (1974a), Appendix II, 231). Writing after Brentano's death in 1917, in the last few months of his own life in 1920, Meinong's memory of his apprenticeship and later relationship with Brentano is tinged with the bittersweet acknowledgement of an unresolved

[3] Husserl 1976, 50: '[Brentano] had little regard for thinkers such as Kant and the post-Kantian German Idealists, who place a far higher value on original intuition and premonition as to the future than they do on logical method and scientific theory. . .He, who was so devoted to the austere ideal of rigorous philosophical science (which was exemplified in his mind by the exact natural sciences), could only see in the systems of German Idealism a kind of degeneration.'

[4] Stumpf 1976, 20: 'I do not know what induced Brentano to give an additional public lecture on Comte and positivism in the spring of 1869. Perhaps English empiricism (his metaphysics lectures showed that he had studied Mill's *Logic* thoroughly) and Mill's piece on Comte are what spurred him on. This could be seen as an initial step in his interest in foreign endeavours which soon was to assume even greater dimensions.'

estrangement. Immediately following the sentence above, Meinong offers this poignant portrait:

> If I, nevertheless, at no time had so close a relationship with Brentano as, according to [Carl] Stumpf's respectful memorial notes, others were fortunate to have, the still living younger man must undoubtedly shoulder the blame for this, although his own memory does not help him here. I have often experienced in the meantime how students, who have just become independent of their teacher, jealously guard their independence, especially from their teacher, even though it was this very independence which he had unceasingly tried to instill. Such worries may have been caused with special ease by a forceful personality like Brentano; and they may then have become the origin of misunderstandings whose consequences have been with me deep into my later work. But what in life could not be laid to rest, in death has been reconciled; and before the inner eye of memory, there stands, once again, as a treasure I shall never lose, my admired teacher, a figure of spiritual beauty, bathed in the golden sunshine of the summer of his own and my youth. (Meinong 1921, 5–6; Grossman (1974a), Appendix II, 231)

Brentano generously shared his philosophical knowledge. He also encouraged his students' independence of thought, seeking no disciples.[5] However, Brentano could not conceal his disappointment when certain of his students developed his ideas in a direction of which he did not approve.

The exact nature of the breakdown in relations between the two thinkers may never be known. Meinong claims that he did not understand how the loss of empathy and communication with his teacher came about, but apologizes for it after the fact, and consoles himself with an idealized reminiscence of a time when they enjoyed friendlier relations. He has no clear memory of having committed a specific *faux pas*. He admits that in his youthful desire for independence, he may have been too eager to surpass and carry forward Brentano's philosophy in a way that may have implied insufficient recognition or disapproval of his mentor's achievements. That would have probably done it, yes.

To speak of Brentano's sense of betrayal in these circumstances is an exaggeration that nevertheless conveys a grain of truth. What Brentano regarded as a former student's drastic doctrinal and methodological shifts away from the positions he had labored so hard and in the face of such opposition to carve out was something he could not help receiving as an affront. The pride and punishing aloofness of the man are evident in his later correspondence, in his favoritism toward the more loyal (and less heretically imaginative) followers Stumpf, Anton Marty, and Oskar Kraus, and more especially in his deafening silence toward Edmund Husserl, Kazimierz Twardowski, Höfler, and Meinong.

Nor is Meinong alone in perceiving Brentano's coldness. Stumpf, in discussing 'Brentano's Relations Toward his Students' in *Franz Brentano, zur Kenntnis seines Lebens und seiner Lehre*, speaks of: '. . .a certain touchiness on Brentano's part

[5] Stumpf 1976, 44: '[Brentano] was, on principle and with every right, against the development of a 'school' that swears by his every word; he had in mind here the sort of thing that so many philosophers perceive as the main goal of their ambition and their major claim to fame. He once told me that when he was in Vienna that people there had already begun to talk about 'Brentanians' and that this was most disagreeable to him.'

toward dissension that he thought to be unfounded. . .And yet, if he encountered basic intuitions in his students' publications which were considerably different from his own, and which were not thoroughly justified and defended on the spot, he was inclined to consider them at first as unmotivated, arbitrary statements. . .Occasional ill-feelings were unavoidable in the face of this. . .' (Stumpf 1976, 44). Husserl, too, in his memoir, notes that Brentano never acknowledged receipt of his first 1970 [1891] book, *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, and did not discover until 14 years later that the book was dedicated to him. 'Of course I had too high a regard for him,' Husserl diplomatically recalls, 'and I understood him too well to be really hurt by this.' Then he adds: 'I knew, however, how much it agitated [Brentano] when people went their own way, even if they used his ideas as a starting point. He could often be unjust in such situations; this is what happened to me, and it was painful' (Husserl 1976, 53).

The point is not to portray Brentano as a sour pedagogical despot. The personal distance Brentano kept from Meinong is interesting as a symptom of their ideological separation. It is in this sense and in this historical context that we must try to understand Meinong's philosophy in its relation to Brentano's. Meinong was inspired by Brentano's teachings and by his personality and philosophical presence. He came away from his 4-year apprenticeship under Brentano at the University of Vienna with something of enormous philosophical value, and, like Husserl and others who drank deeply from Brentano's *Ursprung*, proceeded to follow out the implications of certain of Brentano's ideas in ways Brentano himself found unacceptable.

To appreciate Meinong's thought as a branch of Brentano's school, we must therefore identify the starting-place Brentano provided, the special meaning it had for Meinong, and finally the heterodox conclusions he reached from some of Brentano's assumptions in articulating his own philosophy. What did Meinong learn from Brentano, and how did he transform and apply what he learned?

1.4 Intentionality Thesis in Descriptive Philosophical Psychology

In the most famous passage of his 1874 *Psychologie*, Brentano maintains that every mental phenomenon exhibits what he alternatively designates as a thought's reference to an internal thought content, its direction upon an object that is not an external thing, and the object's intentional in-existence or immanent objectivity. Brentano's position is not merely that every thought is about or directed toward an object, but that the objects of psychological states are immanent, literally contained within the mental acts by which they are intended. Brentano writes:

> Every psychic phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called intentional (also indeed mental) in-existence of an object, and which we, although not with an entirely unambiguous expression, will call the relation to a content, the direction toward an object (by which here a reality is not understood), or an immanent

> objectivity. Every [psychic phenomenon] contains something as an object *within itself*, though not every one in the same way. *In* presentation something is presented, *in* judgment something acknowledged or rejected, *in* love loved, *in* hate hated, *in* desire desired, and so on Brentano (1924 [1874]), 115 (my translation; emphases added).

The immanent intentionality thesis in Brentano's early psychology rightly or wrongly prompted accusations of psychologism. Brentano afterwards rejected the immanence thesis, and vehemently denied commitment to psychologism in any philosophically objectionable sense. He reformulated the intentionality of mental phenomena in ontically neutral terminology, and offered a reductive reist metaphysics that countenanced only existent particulars. The shift from the immanent intentionality thesis to reism in Brentano's thought exactly reflects his journey from Enlightenment British empiricism back to an Aristotelian empiricism of existent individuals that are none other than Aristotle's primary substances (Kraus 1924, I, *liv-lv*, *lxii*; II, 179–82. See Aquila 1977, 1–25).

The consequences of Brentano's early immanent intentionality thesis were far-reaching. They were felt and responded to in different ways by virtually all of his students. For Meinong, the influence of Brentano's concept of immanent intentionality was three-fold. In the first place, Meinong acquired from Brentano a respect for empiricism as the only sound basis for a scientific philosophy. Brentano's account of the intentionality of thought assumes that phenomenological investigation of psychological content by the inner sense is as legitimate an empirical source of data for scientific theoretization as external sense perception. Meinong's writings bear the unmistakable stamp of this systematic scientific approach to philosophical inquiry. Secondly, Meinong accepted that part of Brentano's intentionality thesis by which intentionality is regarded as the characteristic property of the mental, distinguishing psychological from purely physical states by the intentionality or object-directedness exclusively of the psychological. Thirdly, Meinong inherited from Brentano the rough outline of a research program, which Meinong subsequently extended and embellished, establishing the intentionality of thought as the basis for a unified scientific descriptive and normative philosophy. The project as Meinong conceived it was first to elaborate a general ontically neutral theory of intended objects, in terms of which it would then be possible to investigate and map out, like other empirical explorers, a detailed intentionalist taxonomy of particular types of mental states, including sensations, perceptions, emotions, belief, memories, and other intentional or propositional attitudes, love, hate, fear, and so on, as a framework for the philosophical analysis of mind, world, knowledge, and value.

Where Meinong in company with others departed from Brentano's teachings was in rejecting the notion of the immanence of intended objects prescribed by the early in-existence intentionality thesis. Brentano's revival of the medieval Aristotelian doctrine of the intentionality of thought was a brilliant rediscovery. Meinong agreed that thought is intentional, and that psychological states cannot adequately be explained except in terms of their intended objects. That thoughts as mental occurrences should always have as their intended objects something immanently contained within themselves smacked of the same sort of self-enclosed idealism

implied by Berkeley's empiricist phenomenalism that most scientific philosophers rejected, unwilling to purchase the world's objectivity with belief in God's archetypal perception of all sensible things as a basis for scientific and philosophical explanation. To his chagrin, immanent intentionality leads to an introspective idealism similar to that which Brentano struggles against in the German academy, in developing an Aristotelian empirical scientific alternative.

Meinong sought to rechannel Brentano's ideas. He would preserve the three elements previously described, accepting an empiricist (including inner perceptionist) methodology for scientific philosophy, the intentionality thesis shorn of its immanence doctrine, and the program to develop an intentionalist philosophy of fact and value. Intended objects, if they are not necessarily immanently contained within the thoughts directed toward them, must then be something else, and must in particular belong to some domain outside the mind. Among intended objects, taken at face value in everyday thought and discourse, some ostensibly intended objects exist, others do not, whereas others cannot exist. To what kinds of things could nonexistent objects belong, if they are not mental or conceptual? What would a theory of thought-transcendent intended objects be like?

To answer these questions, Meinong expounds the principles of *Gegenstandstheorie*, object theory. In retrospect, it may have been to Meinong's advantage that he came to philosophy relatively late in his course of studies. As a result, he did not have the prejudices and impediments that often attend a more doctrinaire grounding in a discipline. Rather, the momentum Meinong received from his 4-year apprenticeship with Brentano gave him the sense of a space to be filled in the larger project of building up a new kind of intentionalist philosophy and scientific experimental psychology that would complement Brentano's phenomenology. Meinong had to fashion his tools and shape his raw materials almost entirely on his own, in a new frontier where there were few guideposts to show the way. This is partly why Meinong's first writings have the energy and enthusiasm of a pioneer in uncharted territory, a spirit with which Meinong is sometimes said to have infused his students. It was the kind of undertaking that by its very nature required a disciplined systematic investigation of naively conceived hypotheses.

1.5 Logic and Phenomenology: Höfler, Meinong, and Twardowski on the Act-Content-Object Structure of Thought

There is an irony in the way history of philosophy retells the development of *Gegenstandstheorie* in the work of Graz school thinkers on the one hand, and transcendental phenomenology as it was to unfold in the thought of Husserl and his followers (for example, Grossmann 1974a, 48–56).

The usual account is that Twardowski, Meinong, and the Graz school adhered more closely to Brentano's conception of intentionality, while Husserl, in what has

come to be known as his transcendental phase after 1913, marked by the publication of *Ideen I* and the second edition of volume I of the *Logische Untersuchungen*, strayed farthest from the Brentanian party line. The incongruity is that in fact it was Husserl in his 1891 *Philosophie der Arithmetik* who assimilated Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis almost uncritically, and used it as a philosophical springboard for explaining the conceptual grounds of knowledge of arithmetic in terms of the intentional in-existence of elementary mathematical objects (Husserl 1970. See Harney 1984, 24–5, 122–5. Smith and McIntyre 1982, 171–4). It was not until Frege's 1894 criticism of Husserl's *Arithmetik*, in which some of the limitations of the immanence thesis were highlighted, that Husserl began publicly to distrust the psychologism latent in Brentano's theory. This marked the first step in Husserl's dramatic turn from Brentano's Aristotelian realism toward a Kantian transcendentalism (Frege 1894). Or so the story goes.

Höfler in the meantime in collaboration with Meinong published in 1890 his *Logik*. Here Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis is superseded by a conception of intentionality in which the transcendent (not to say Kantian transcendental) intended object (*Gegenstand*) at which thought aims or toward which it is intentionally directed is distinguished from the immanent component of thought regarded only with respect to its content (*Inhalt*) (Höfler (with Meinong) 1890, 6–7). Twardowski, in his 1894 *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*, credits Höfler and Meinong as having first distinguished psychological content and intended object (Twardowski 1894, 4. See Findlay 1995 [1963], 7–8).

In a characteristic paragraph from which Twardowski quotes with approval, Höfler maintains:

> (1) What we above called the 'content of the presentation and of the judgment' lies entirely within the subject, like the presenting- and the judging-act itself. (2) The word(s) 'object' ['*Gegenstand*'] (and 'object' ['*Objekt*']) is used in two senses: on the one hand it is used for the thing existing in itself [*an sich Bestehende*], the thing-in-itself, the actual, the real. . .to which our presentation or judgment so to speak is directed, and on the other hand it is used for that which exists 'in' us psychically [*für das 'in' uns bestehende psychische*], the more or less accurate 'image' ['*Bild*'] of this reality, which quasi-image (more correctly: sign), is identical with the 'content' mentioned under 1. In order to distinguish it from the object taken to be independent of thinking one also calls the content of a presentation and judgment (the same for feeling and will) the '*immanent or intentional object*' ['*immanente oder intentionale Objekt*'] of these psychical phenomena. . . (Höfler (with Meinong) 1890, 7 (my translation). See Twardowski 1894, 4)

There is already in Höfler and Meinong's treatment a significant abandonment of Brentano's immanence or intentional in-existence thesis. The content of the presentation, like the intentional act, is distinguished from the object. However, only the content is said to be immanent, as something belonging to and literally contained within the presentation as a 'quasi-image' of the object. The object itself, toward which the thought is intentionally directed, is expressly described as mind-independent.

Höfler, Meinong, and Twardowski, less than 20 years after the publication of Brentano's *Psychologie*, by these principles, laid the groundwork for Meinong's

later refinements of non-Brentanian object theory. The amendment was to discern in every psychological state an act-content-object structure. Mental acts intend or are directed toward intended objects, mediated by means of their lived-through experiential contents. Much of the terminology of the renegade theory had its roots in Brentano's early immanent intentionality thesis, adapted for different use. Where Brentano had spoken of the content of thought as its object, Meinong and company referred to content as the immanent component of descriptive psychology, but refused to identify it with the thought's intended object. Their desire to distance themselves from the immanence thesis is so pronounced that in their expositions of the theory they separate act, content, and object into mutually exclusive categories, deliberately or by oversight forbidding thoughts from reflectively intending their own contents as intended objects (see Jacquette (1987), esp. 194–95).

A semantic referential domain of transcendent intended objects is first suggested by Höfler and Twardowski. A full-fledged theory of mind-independent existent and nonexistent intended objects first appears in 1902 in Meinong's *Über Annahmen*, and reverberates throughout his subsequent writings. It is useful to compare Meinong's terminology with Brentano's and Twardowski's, since Twardowski sees part of the difficulty in Brentano's immanence or intentional in-existence thesis as stemming from the ambiguity noted by Höfler in such philosophically-loaded expressions as 'object', 'thing', and 'presentation'. Meinong in many respects follows when he does not actually lead the way for Höfler and Twardowski. Having broken with Brentano's content-object confusion, Twardowski discards the Scholastic term 'immanence' in characterizing intentionality, and never uses the word again after mentioning it on the first few pages of his treatise to identify Brentano's thesis as the one he proposes to replace. Meinong, by contrast, nominally retains a version of the Brentanian distinction between immanent and transcendent intended objects, although he gives these terms a decidedly Twardowskian interpretation. Meinong's efforts to clarify his exact use of these expressions are sometimes difficult to follow, and his repeated attempts to achieve precision sometimes further obscure things. By comparison, one cannot but admire Twardowski's decision to cut the Gordion knot by setting aside Brentano's immanent object terminology, and proceeding only with newly clarified terms for mind-dependent 'content', and often mind-independent 'object'.

Meinong nevertheless appears to mean by 'immanent' object roughly what Twardowski refers to as a presentation's content. It is that which is part of or contained within the experience. By 'transcendent' object, Meinong intends the mind-independent object which a thought is about, which it targets, or toward which it is directed. In *Über Annahmen*, Meinong maintains:

> There exists no doubt at all as to what is meant by the contrast of 'immanent' and 'transcendent' object, and one is so accustomed to the use of the expressions, that one does not as a rule have occasion to worry about the participial form of the word 'transcendent'. But once one does, it proves difficult enough to justify this form as long as one thinks by 'object' only of what is apprehended or apprehensible by means of an affirmative judgment. It is not the table or armchair that 'transcends', but rather the judgment, that which in its way apprehends an actuality, in a certain manner reaching beyond itself and

'exceeding' the limits of subjectivity. (Meinong, *Über Annahmen*, 2nd ed. (1910); *AMG* 1968–78, IV, 229 (my translation); see also 237)[6]

The point is that although Meinong preserves vestiges of Brentano's Scholastic terms 'immanence' and 'immanent object', he so alters their meaning that in his object theory they have no more import than Twardowski's term 'content'. Meinong holds with Twardowski that there is an immanent object contained within every psychological state, but that it is the *content* of the mental act, not generally the intended *object*, toward which the intending state is directed. The transition to Höfler's and Twardowski's way of thinking about immanent objects is so complete in Meinong's work by 1902 (perhaps even by 1890, depending on the unspecified nature of his collaboration with Höfler), that Meinong complains in an aside that Marty's attacks against the concept of immanence in the latter's *Untersuchungen zur Grundlegung der allgemeinen Grammatik und Sprachphilosophie* cannot apply to him, but only to those who accept the traditional Scholastic immanence doctrine (Meinong *AMG*, IV, 85–6, n. 3. See Marty 1908, 761).

1.6 *Gegenstandstheorie*: Existent and Nonexistent Objects

Object theory is the centerpiece of Meinong's intentionalist philosophy. By distinguishing the kinds of mind-independent intended objects available to thought, Meinong provides a new subject matter for philosophical psychology, epistemology, and value theory, in a combined ontology and extraontology consisting of existent and nonexistent objects.

Meinong begins with the principle that thought is unlimited in its free assumption of objects. This is Meinong's thesis of the unrestricted freedom of assumption or *unbeschränkte Annahmefreiheit*. The transcendent intentionality thesis complements the unrestricted freedom of assumption by implying that thoughts intend whatever mind-independent objects they freely assume (Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 483–5). The direction of thought upon freely assumed intended objects entails that some thoughts intend contingently nonexistent and metaphysically impossible objects like Berkeley's golden mountain and the round square. If the domain of intended objects includes whatever freely assumed objects thought ostensibly intends, then, since thought is often ostensibly about objects that do not and cannot exist, nonexistent as well as existent objects must be included for reference and predication by any adequate intentionalist semantic comprehension principle. If intended objects transcend rather than being immanently contained within the thoughts by which they are intended, then existent and nonexistent objects cannot owe their objecthood or membership in the domain of objects to the contingent occurrence or nonoccurrence of thoughts by which they may but need not be

[6] See Meinong 1899, in *AMG* II, 382–3. Compare also the *Sach-Index zur Logik und Erkenntnistheorie, AMG* VIII (*Ergänzungs Band*), 61–3.

actually intended. Nonexistent objects are neither spatiotemporal nor abstract, they neither exist nor subsist, because they are incomplete or impossible, or both.

The domain of intended objects is accordingly said by Meinong to be beyond being and nonbeing, *jenseits von Sein und Nichtsein*. Instead of an extensionalist domain of actual existents or Platonic heaven of abstract entities, Meinong speaks of the realm of *Außersein* as the domain of intended objects, and of the *Außersein* of the pure object or *reiner Gegenstand*. The pure object is any and every intended object considered outside of being, independently of its ontic status. Thought is free to intend existent spatiotemporal entities, subsistent abstract entities, and nonexistent nonsubsistent incomplete and impossible objects. Intended objects, considered only as such, cannot be restrictedly spatiotemporal, abstract, nor immanently conceptual, but are described by Meinong as homeless (*heimatlose*), belonging to no traditional ontic category (Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 490–3. See Chisholm 1972. Grossmann 1974b). Such objects are considered as particular structural combinations of constitutive properties. The concept is intensional, which is to say property-based. An intended object, existent or nonexistent, is identified and individuated from among all other objects by virtue of having a particular set of distinguishing constitutive properties. It is Leibnizian identity conditions applied indifferently to any unique set of constitutive properties to enable intended objects regardless of their ontic status to be named as abbreviations for convenient referential expression and cognitive processing, described in true predications, counted, quantified over, and in other ways treated in logic exactly as existent objects are in an exclusively extensionalist referential semantics and matching ontology. Positing an intended pure object as *außerseinde* in the object theory domain is comparable to Husserl's exercise of bracketing the ontic status of the *noemata* of thought in the phenomenological *epoché*, for those more familiar with his terminology, in attaining the first stage of transcendental subjectivity (Husserl 1973, 20–6).

Meinong distinguishes between judgments of an intended object's being or *Sein*, and judgments of its so-being or *Sosein*, which is to say its nature, character, or set of distinguishing constitutive properties. He maintains that an intended object's *Sosein* is independent of its *Sein*, or ontic status. Objects truly have whatever constitutive properties they have, regardless of whether or not they exist, and regardless of whether or not they are actually intended. This allows nonexistent objects to be referred to or designated in thought and language, truly possessing the constitutive properties stipulatively or otherwise truly predicated of them. From an intensionalist perspective, it only makes sense to conclude that the round square does not exist because the nonexistent intended object referred to in these and other deliberations truly has the metaphysically incompatible properties of being simultaneously globally and uniformly round and square. When we accept the possibility of intending distinct objects independently of their ontic status, we in effect admit the possibility of individuating nonexistent and existent objects alike by their distinctively characterizing constitutive properties.[7]

[7] The independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis was formulated by Mally 1904, 127. See Findlay 1995 [1963], 44.

Meinong's object theory evolved over a period of years, and underwent various additions and revisions. In vintage form, the theory includes the following principles:

Meinongian Object Theory

1. Every assumption is directed toward an intended object. (Intentionality thesis)
2. Any thought or corresponding expression can be assumed. (Principle of unrestricted freedom of assumption, or *unbeschränkte Annahmefreiheit* thesis)
3. Every intended object has a nature, character, *Sosein*, 'how-it-is', 'so-being', or 'being thus-and-so', regardless of its ontological status. (Independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis)
4. Being or non-being is not part of the *Sosein* of any intended object, nor of the object considered in itself. (Indifference thesis or doctrine of the *Außersein* of the homeless pure object)
5. There are two modes of being or *Sein* for intended objects: spatiotemporal existence and platonic abstract subsistence. (*Existenz*/*Bestand* thesis)
6. Some intended objects do not have being or *Sein* at all, but neither exist nor subsist. (There are objects of which it is true to say that there are no such objects—*Es gibt Gegenstände, von denen gilt, daß es dergleichen Gegenstände nicht gibt*)

Meinong proposes an ontically neutral science of intended objects. He thinks of object theory as a wrongfully neglected branch of philosophy, and he seeks to restore it to its proper place among other technical philosophical disciplines. Of these, object theory must be the most fundamental, since it deals with the intended objects of thought of all kinds and in the most general sense, including but not limited to those of metaphysics, and mathematics and the natural sciences (Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 485–8).

If all thought in unrestricted freedom of assumption is directed toward existent or nonexistent intended objects, then Meinong's semantic domain of existent dynamic and abstract entities, and beingless intended objects may offer the most flexible, comprehensive, and ontically neutral semantic foundation for a satisfactory philosophical explanation of the intentionality of thought and its symbolic expression in language, art, and other artifacts. Meinong is impressed by the fact that when we consider the objects of our mental states without inquiring into their ontic status, it is plain to empirically naive introspection by inner perception that the nature of thought is structurally the same whether we are thinking about the existent Mount Everest or Berkeley's nonexistent golden mountain. From within the confines of what thought knows about its intended objects, there is no discernible difference in the mind's being directed toward existent or beingless objects. The ontic status of intended objects is accidental to the mind's intentionality, so that the most general theory of mind and meaning must equally be indifferent to the being or non-being of intended objects, and of their ontic status generally. To assume that thought can only be about or truly predicate properties of *existent* objects is epitomized by Meinong polemically as the 'prejudice in favor of the actual'

(Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 485. Here Meinong speaks of '*Das Vorurteil zugunsten des Wirklichen*').

We have seen that for Meinong, even beingless objects, though nonexistent, have *Sosein*. An object's *Sosein* is the set of properties that constitute it intensionally as the unique particular intended object it is, under intensional property-based Leibnizian identity principles, and by virtue of which, despite its beinglessness, it can be thought about and referred to in language. These are the properties that determine and individuate intended objects. The round square is the object that has the constitutive properties of being simultaneously round and square. The golden mountain is the intended object that has the constitutive properties of being golden and a mountain. The round square is truly round and square, or has the constitutive properties of being round and square in its *Sosein*, even though it does not, and, indeed, cannot, exist. It is precisely because no existent or subsistent object can be both round and square that the round square necessarily lacks being, a fact that is otherwise awkward to explain.

Objects are categorized as complete or incomplete according to the completeness or incompleteness and exact content of their *Soseine*. Complete objects have a complete *Sosein*. They are such that for any property and property complement pair, say, being red or non-red, the object has either the property *or* its complement in its *Sosein*. Objects with being are not only complete, but consistent, in the sense that, for any property, their *Soseine* do not contain both the property *and* its complement. Incomplete objects are those whose *Soseine* are lacking at least both one relevant constitutive property and its complement. This is seen in the instance of a fictional or mythological object, in which certain properties are left open or undetermined. A mythical flying horse is an incomplete object with respect to color (among other properties), if in a story its coat is not stipulated as being either white or any other specific color. Impossible objects are also typically incomplete, but have ontically incompatible properties. If being square implies being non-round, then the round square has in its *Sosein* both the property of being round and the complementary property of being non-round. Despite its ontic or metaphysical impossibility, there need be no logical inconsistency in the inventory of the round square's incomplete *Sosein*, provided that the complementary predication being non-round does not imply the negation of the predication being round. The object theory tolerates impossible objects, but it is not embroiled in the outright logical inconsistency presented by an object which is such that it is both round and it is not the case that it is round, or for which it is both true and false that it is round. *Seiende* objects are those with being, including existent or spatiotemporal and subsistent or abstract entities. They are definable, once down the road we have answered some reasonable but indecisive potential counterexamples, as objects whose *Soseine* are both consistent and complete. Existent objects, if we are observing the distinction, are consistent and complete and exemplify at least some spatiotemporal properties. Subsistent objects are Platonic entities that, although consistent and complete in

their *Soseine*, do not exemplify any spatiotemporal properties (Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 488–90).[8]

Meinong further distinguishes between what he calls objects of lower and higher order, *inferiora* and *superiora*. There are several different kinds of higher-order objects, each based superveniently on objects of lower order. As an illustration of Meinong's distinction, consider its application to the category of relations. Relations are intended objects, in that thoughts can be directed toward them, as when we think or speak about the relation between a circle and its radius. For Meinong, relations are not ordinary objects, but rather comprise a special kind of intended object, in that they would not obtain even as beingless intended objects, were it not for the objects they relate. It is this connection to which Meinong calls attention by means of his distinction between *inferiora* and *superiora*. The relation between a circle and its radius is a *superiorum* or higher-order intended object, in that the relation supervenes or depends logically on *inferiora* or lower order objects, here the circle and its radius. If the circle and its radius were not available as lower order intended objects, then, Meinong holds, there could be no higher order intended object consisting of the relation between the circle and its radius. Among higher order objects, Meinong identifies families of several kinds of relations, complexes, and ideal objects ('Über Gegenstände höherer Ordnung und deren Verhältnis zur inneren Wahrnehmung', *AMG* II).

Finally, Meinong distinguishes between *objecta*, or things in the ordinary sense, like tables and chairs, golden mountains and round squares, with or without being, and *Objektive*, or states of affairs, including propositions, which may be subsistent or nonsubsistent. Objektive are further divided into *Seinsobjektive*, *Nichtseinsobjektive*, and *Soseinsobjektive*. As the labels indicate, these are states of affairs involving an object's being, non-being, and so-being. Meinong disambiguates *Soseinsobjektive* into *Wasseinsobjektive* and *Wieseinsobjektive*, to distinguish the states of affairs of *what* an object is from precisely *how* it is. In a third main category, Meinong distinguishes between *dignitatives* and *desideratives*, as the special normative objects of his value theory. The branching structure of so many types of objects in *Gegenstandstheorie* signifies the range of conceptual labyrinths Meinong found it necessary to explore in pursuing a nonimmanent mind-independent adaptation of Brentano's insight that every thought intends an object (Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 489–91).[9]

[8] An excellent exposition of object theory principles is found in Lambert 1983.

[9] See Findlay 1995, 42–101.

1.7 Ontic Neutrality in Logic and Semantics: Problems for Meinong's Object Theory

Criticisms of several kinds have been raised against Meinong's object theory. These are taken up in the context of developing a revisionary Meinongian logic and semantics in the following chapters. It may nevertheless be worthwhile, without anticipating later solutions, to mention a few notable objections, which have led critics after Russell to conclude that Meinong's project to develop an object theory is hopelessly confused.

The most frequent objection to Meinong's object theory is also the easiest to answer. Meinong is often said to have planted an 'ontic jungle' of possible and impossible nonexistent entities. This is supposed to have inflated ontology to unacceptable proportions, particularly for those with desert landscape aesthetic preferences in semantics and metaphysics. The reply to this unwarranted charge is that Meinong could not possibly have inflated ontology with *nonexistent* objects, since *ontology* is the domain exclusively of *existent* entities. Meinong's semantics permits reference and true predication of properties to existent and nonexistent objects alike, regardless of their ontic status. It does not imply that nonexistent objects in any sense exist. Sometimes one reads, without citation of text, that Meinong thinks that the golden mountain *exists* or has *being* in some 'secondary' or 'shadowy' sense. Meinong's *ontology*, despite all, is roughly the same as Frege's, Russell's or Quine's. Meinong's intensionalism surpasses extensionalism by swallowing it whole, and adding to the ontology an *extraontology* of nonexistent objects that satisfy Leibnizian self-identity criteria, and as such can be thought about, referred to, named, described in true predications, counted, quantified over, and the like, regardless of their ontic status, as the intended objects of actual, ideal, and imaginary thoughts. Meinong takes at face value the introspective data that we can think and talk about the round square, even though it does not exist, and respects the judgment that the round square cannot exist precisely because it truly is both round and square. Meinong's object theory does not postulate a superabundance of entities. In some applications, on the contrary, it permits a reduction in the ontology especially of abstract subsistent objects to which a theory is otherwise committed. Object theory does not overpopulate ontology, but in the realm of *Außersein* offers an extraontological ontically neutral semantic domain of all mind-independent intendable objects of thought and language, existent, dynamic or abstract, and beingless (Routley 1979).

Russell extends a more provocative challenge when he observes that if for Meinong thought is free to assume any object, including incomplete and impossible nonexistent objects, and if intended incomplete and impossible nonexistent objects truly have the properties attributed to them in thought, then it should be possible to intend as an object of thought the *existent* round square, just as it is possible to intend the (plain, unadorned) round square. If the round square is truly round and square, then the existent round square presumably is existent, round, and square. However, the round square as an impossible object cannot possibly exist, as

Meinong rightly insists, because its *Sosein* contains the metaphysically incompatible combination of properties of being simultaneously overall round and square. It seems to follow that Meinong's object theory, with its inflated domain of existent, subsistent, and beingless intended objects, and its liberal interpretation of true predication for the properties even of nonexistent impossible intended objects, is caught in an inescapable contradiction (Russell 1905a, 484–5, b, 533).

Unfortunately, Meinong's response to Russell's objection introduces a confusing distinction. He maintains that the existent round square is existent, even though it does not exist. Russell claims he was unable to make sense of this reply, and as a result lost interest in Meinong's theory.[10] Russell's theory of definite descriptions, published in the same year 1905 as his objection about the existent round square, disallows reference and true predication of properties to nonexistent objects. The position marks Russell's commitment to a radically extensionalist ontology. Russell treats names as incomplete symbols to be replaced by definite descriptions, and analyzes definite descriptions in terms of a triad of conditions, including existence, uniqueness, and predication. Nonexistent objects in Russell's austere ontic extensionalism cannot even intelligibly be denoted by names or descriptions, since they fail to satisfy the existence condition (Russell 1905a). Meinong's official solution to Russell's problem of the existent round square involves yet another complicated distinction between properties that have and those that lack the 'modal moment'. The modal moment is supposed to lend an object real being or full-strength as opposed to watered-down (*depotenzierte*) factuality. When Meinong claims that the existent round square is existent, he means that the existent round square has a watered-down version of the property of being existent in its *Sosein*. This individuates the existent round square from the intended object of thoughts about the (plain, unadorned) round square. Meinong also insists that the existent round square lacks the modal moment that would entail its actual existence, and so does not exist (*Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften*, *AMG* V, 16–7. *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit*: *Beiträge zur Gegenstandstheorie und Erkenntnistheorie*, *AMG* VI, 272–82).

Meinong's defenders have since lamented the fact that he did not answer Russell's objection by appealing to a much simpler and more fundamental distinction already available in the theory. This is the distinction, derived by Meinong from a suggestion of Mally's, between *nuclear* or constitutive (*konstitutorische*) and *extranuclear* or nonconstitutive properties (*außerkonstitutorische Bestimmungen*).[11] We shall speak alternatively and synonymously of nuclear or constitutive and extranuclear or non- or extra-constitutive properties. The constitutive-nonconstitutive terminology for this Meinongian distinction among properties is more descriptive and faithful to the original categories in Mally

[10] See Griffin 1986. Smith 1985.

[11] *AMG* VI, 176–77. Meinong credits Mally with the distinction. See Findlay 1995, 176. The standard English translation of Mally's and Meinong's terminology as 'nuclear' and 'extranuclear' is owing to Findlay. Parsons 1978, 1980, 23–4.

adopted by Meinong. Despite literal redundancy, it is sometimes worthwhile to be reminded that nuclear properties are constitutive of intended objects, in the sense of belonging to their distinguishing intensional identity conditions.

The nuclear-extranuclear characterization of the same constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction nevertheless has widespread currency in the secondary philosophical literature about Meinong's object theory since Findlay's proposed translation, and is unavoidable in quoting and discussing the two divisions of properties appearing in such sources. Nuclear properties are ordinary garden variety properties, like being red or round. Extranuclear properties are properties that determine an object as belonging specifically to one or another particular ontic category, such as the properties of being existent, nonexistent, possible, impossible, complete, incomplete. The distinction is entailed by the *indifference thesis* in object theory, restricting nuclear properties only to membership in an object's *Sosein*. If an object's *Sosein* provides the identity conditions by which an object is determined as a particular existent or nonexistent object, and if an object's *Sosein* can contain the (non-watered-down modal-momentous) property of existence, completeness, or any other extranuclear property, then the object's so-being is clearly not indifferent to its being or non-being, as the indifference principle requires.

A judicious application of Meinong's nuclear-extranuclear property distinction via the indifference principle enables object theory to avoid Russell's problem of the existent round square. If nuclear constitutive properties alone belong to an object's *Sosein*, to the absolute exclusion of extranuclear properties, then, since to exist is an extranuclear rather than nuclear property, Meinong can simply reject out of hand Russell's counterexample as violating the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction. The existent round square in that case is not existent, even in the watered-down sense of a property lacking the modal moment, because the distinction implies that the only properties truly predicable of an object are the nuclear properties in or compatible with those explicitly belonging to its *Sosein*.

Largely as a result of Russell's influential criticisms, Meinong's object theory fell into disregard in much of twentieth century analytic philosophy. It is not difficult to find discussions, often by writers who have not troubled to read Meinong, rejecting a logical, semantic, or metaphysical theory merely on the grounds that it condones or requires nonexistent objects. These criticisms, it is both amusing and disheartening to see, typically dismiss a philosophical position with a wave of the hand, and the disdainful pejorative that the theory is 'Meinongian'.[12] Ryle, though familiar with Meinong's texts, and in some ways sympathetic to Meinong's ideas, must have believed he was sounding Meinong's final epitaph, when, in the quotation chosen to front this book, he contributes to the parody of Meinong as a metaphysician gone mad, or anyway destined for perpetual misunderstanding and unpopularity (Ryle 1973, 104).

[12] For example, see Hacker 1987 rev. [1972], 8: 'The Theory of Descriptions. . .enabled Russell to thin out the luxuriant Meinongian jungle of entities (such as the round square) which, it had appeared, must *in some sense* subsist in order to be talked about. . .'

Despite its detractors, a resurrection of Meinongian object theory is underway. Following Meinong's death, and Mally's some 25 years later, the interesting work done by object theory philosophers in logic, metaphysics, scientific psychology, philosophy of mind, philosophical semantics, and value theory, were sunk with one stone by Russell's supposedly 'devastating' refutations. As such, they were thought to be not worth serious consideration. There were nevertheless a few philosophers who defied analytic fashion and pursued what they found valuable in Meinong's thought, keeping the Graz school wing of Brentano's intentionalist tradition in empirical psychology alive. Meinong's object theory, and to a lesser extent his value theory, is now enjoying an unprecedented renaissance of interest and activity, and there is a vital continuation and development of the research program in logic and philosophy of language that Meinong and his followers initiated more than a century ago.

1.8 *Werttheorie*: Values in Emotional Presentation

Object theory also provides the basis for an intentionalist theory of value. Value for Meinong is explained from the dual standpoint of the subject who confers value on intended objects by psychological attitude and in moments of emotional response, and of the objects that are valued. To regard something as valuable is to intend it in a special way. What is valued is always an object or an 'objective' (*Objektiv*) or state of affairs, including the higher-order subsistence or nonsubsistence of a lower-order objective or state of affairs.

Meinong's theory can accordingly be divided into two parts: (a) analysis of the psychological aspects of valuation and the mind's conferring of values on objects, and (b) treatment of the distinguished valuational objectives he calls *dignitatives* and *desideratives*. Meinong's value theory investigations, like his work in philosophical psychology, metaphysics, and semantics, are continuations in new directions of areas of inquiry that had preoccupied Brentano. Meinong's theory of emotional presentation, presupposed by his later value theory, takes up themes that can be traced to Brentano's analysis of value in terms of correct and incorrect emotion (see essays on Brentano's value theory in Chisholm 1982a, b, c, 1986).

Like Brentano, Meinong is empiricist not only in his philosophical methodology as it pertains to the development of logic, metaphysics, and psychology, but also by extension to the consideration of moral and aesthetic value. Brentano's recommendation that Meinong study Hume's empiricist theory of universals and particulars laid the groundwork not only for Meinong's object theory, but also for his later treatment of valuation. Meinong's value theory follows Hume and Francis Hutcheson in its reliance on emotion and the passions in providing a psychological account of value attributions. Unlike Hutcheson's account, however, Meinong's theory does not postulate a special moral or aesthetic sixth sense. Nor, like Hume's and Hutcheson's discussions, does Meinong's analysis depend on a narrowly construed associationist psychology. Meinong interprets value as arising from the

emotional presentations subjects experience, and the emotional attitudes they assume toward intended objects, including intended states of affairs. He agrees with his empiricist predecessors that value, though in some sense impersonal and amenable to scientific explanation, has no higher or absolute objective source.

The fundamental concept in Meinong's value theory is that of 'value-feelings'. These occur in several types and degrees, and, like feelings generally in Meinong's intentionalist psychology, they are about or directed upon intended objects. The objectives toward which emotions are aimed in valuation include four types of dignitatives, which Meinong distinguishes as the Pleasant, the Beautiful, the True, and the Good. The capital letters by which Meinong's terms for the dignitatives are naturally translated indicate that these objectives are not merely the properties of objects, but are also objects in their own right, about which psychological subjects can experience feelings and emotional attitudes, and with which they can engage in cognitive states. At the same time, dignitatives are also valuational feelings and values conferred on objects and objectives. The dignitatives can be used to describe the subject's experience as well as the intended object of the experience. This application of technical terminology in Meinong's theory accords in part with ordinary usage, in which it is common to speak of a good or pleasant or beautiful feeling, and of that toward which the feeling is directed as good or pleasant or beautiful. The remaining dignitative, the True, may belong to a somewhat different subcategory. It may be stretching things, but it is not unheard of for subjects to speak even of feelings as true in the sense of corresponding to facts or as authentic emotional responses. Meinong's selection of these four dignitatives indicates the generality to which his value theory aspires, encompassing sensory, aesthetic, semantic, and moral values (*AMG* III; see Findlay 1995, 303–21).

As a platform for ethical philosophy, Meinong's analysis supports a subdivision of emotional presentations into such categories as the meritorious, correct, allowable, and censurable. *Actions* in Meinong's system are the primary vehicles of moral value, and these in turn are motivated by *desire*. Desire is a distinctively intentional concept, since desire is always desire for something or to do something, and is therefore directed toward an intended object or state of affairs. Meinong distinguishes between self- and other-regarding, or egoistic and altruistic, voluntary actions, and applies the four categories of emotional presentations to each. Meinong's value classification scheme, parallel in many ways, but also complementary to, his taxonomy of intended objects, provides a place for value judgments in every major category of ethical judgment. The basic concepts of value in the theory make it possible for Meinong to define such higher-level moral notions as justice and injustice, virtue and vice.

Desires for Meinong are intentional attitudes accompanied by emotional presentations directed toward desideratives. Desideratives, like dignitatives, in the previously explained sense, are objects of higher order. As such, desideratives are not fully reducible to ordinary objects and objectives, but constitute an additional subdivision supplemental to the extraontological semantic domain of object and value theory. By contrast with dignitatives, Meinong maintains that desideratives are not merely the result of emotional attitudes, but are in some sense 'objective'

subsistent abstract entities, and that desideratives presuppose dignitatives in somewhat the way that objectives presuppose objects. A nonsubjective desiderative or objective of desire might be to maximize happiness, or to treat all persons with respect. In this way, the category of desideratives fulfills the function otherwise served by abstract goals and principles in traditional normative theories. These, despite being proper objectives of desire, as subsistent entities, are more impersonal and absolute, and hence more removed from the vagaries of emotional presentation and psychological inclination, than dignitatives.

As in the development of object theory, there is a complex history of theoretical elaboration and refinement in Meinong's reflections on problems of value. These begin with the early *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie* (1904), extending to the mature work, *Über emotionale Präsentation* (1916), the posthumous *Zur Grundlegung der allgemeinen Werttheorie* (1923), and unpublished *Ethische Bausteine*. Meinong's later object and value theories together constitute an integrated if unfinished intentionalist system of descriptive and normative philosophy (see also Findlay 1995, 264–302).

1.9 Meinong's Philosophy in the Brentanian Legacy

In or around 1905, Brentano experienced what historians sometimes refer to as his *Immanenzkrise*, a crisis of lost confidence in the immanent intentionality or intentional in-existence thesis of 1874. In the 1911 edition of *Psychologie*, titled *Von der Klassifikation der psychischen Phänomene*, Brentano rejects immanent objects, and announces his commitment to reism, an ontology restricted to 'individuals' or actual particular existents. Brentano writes in the Foreword to his new treatise: 'One of the most important innovations is that I am no longer of the opinion that mental relation can have something other than a real thing [*Reales*] as its object' (Brentano 1911a, 'Vorwort'; reprinted, Brentano 1924, 2nd ed., II, 2 (my translation)).

There follows from the first appearance of the *Psychologie* a wave of explanations and polemical replies meant to turn aside objections about the psychologism apparently implied by the immanence thesis as misunderstandings of the original doctrine.[13] By the time Brentano publicly repudiated the immanent intentionality

[13] Brentano 1924 [1874], 2nd ed., II, 179–82, 275–7 ('Vom ens rationis. Diktat vom 6. Januar 1917'). See Mayer-Hillebrand, 'Einleitung der Herausgeberin', in Brentano 1966a, Letter from Brentano to Anton Marty, 20. April 1910, 225–8. Gilson 1976, 63: 'Some of [Brentano's] disciples strongly resent the accusation of psychologism which is often directed against his philosophical attitude. In what measure they are justified in their protest is a difficult problem, whose solution would require a discussion of Brentano's doctrine as a whole. The truth about it seems at least to be, that Brentano often resorted to psychological and more or less empirical explanations, without ever losing the right feeling that, in philosophical problems, psychological necessities are of a more than empirical nature.'

thesis it was too late. The 1874 immanence thesis had already exerted both a positive and negative impact on the circle of thinkers that surrounded Brentano. The philosophers he had imbued with his vision of an intentionalist philosophy reacted in a variety of ways to the claim that thought is immanently intentional, for the most part accepting the intentionality of thought while rejecting its immanent intentionality. The perceived need to develop a nonimmanent intentionalism gave rise to object theory in the philosophy of Meinong and the Graz school, and eventually to transcendental phenomenology in Husserl. The thinkers who were to advance new approaches to the problems of philosophical psychology, epistemology, metaphysics, and value theory, adapting Brentano's empirical methods in psychology, had, before his rejection of immanent objectivity, launched out in several directions. All recognized that intentionality was somehow the key to the mind and the expression of thought in language and art, and in action more generally, but all shared a sense of discomfort in a theory that seemed to seal off the mind from the world by making the intended objects of thought the mind's immanent residents.

Meinong's view of intentionality found expression in the domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects, and the *Außersein* of the pure object. Without some version of Brentano's intentionality thesis, Meinong's object theory could never have taken flight. In comprehending its semantic domain, *Gegenstandstheorie* depends essentially on the concept of ostensibly intended existent and nonexistent objects of thought. Without rejecting Brentano's early immanence or intentional in-existence thesis, on the other hand, Meinong's theory of existent and nonexistent mind-independent objects equally could never have gone beyond the self-contained internal contents of thoughts. The origins of Meinong's object and value theory lie in his modification of Brentano's early intentionality thesis, accepting thought as essentially intentional, but denying that thought is essentially immanently intentional.

Chapter 2
Origins of *Gegenstandstheorie*: Immanent and Transcendent Intended Objects in Brentano, Twardowski, and Meinong

2.1 Immanent Objectivity

The theory of objects, phenomenology, and intentional philosophy and psychology, are products of Brentano's 1874 revival of the medieval Aristotelian doctrine of intentional in-existence or intentionality thesis. In what is probably the most famous previously quoted passage of *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, Brentano maintains that every mental phenomenon exhibits in Scholastic terms the intentional in-existence of an object, reference to a content, direction upon an object that is not an external thing, or immanent objectivity (Brentano 1874, 115).

Brentano's conclusion is to be read with special emphasis, not merely as saying that every psychological act is directed toward an object, but that the objects of psychological states are literally contained immanently within the mental acts directed intentionally toward or upon them. The meaning of 'in-existence' is not that of nonexistence, in the way that inability is the contrary of ability. Rather, 'in-existence' is locative. It refers to the place where intended objects are supposed to be found, within the mental acts by which they are intended. The 'in' in 'in-existence' is supposed to refer to the location of an intended object within the thought that intends it, rather than, as is sometimes incorrectly assumed, as a negation or complementation designating intended objects, where to be inexistent means to be nonexistent.

The immanent intentionality thesis in Brentano's early philosophical psychology is undoubtedly responsible for the later charges of psychologism raised against him from several quarters. Brentano afterwards rejected the immanence thesis, maintaining the intentionality of mental phenomena in more neutral terminology (Kraus 1924, I, liv–lv, lxii; II, 179–82).

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_2

2.2 Immanence in a Closed Circle of Ideas

The difficulty with Brentano's early immanent objectivity thesis, as with the idealism implicit in eighteenth century British empiricism, is that it seems to place the real world beyond the reach of thought. Objects of thought, which with certain qualifications Brentano also characterizes as thought contents, belong to the mental act itself, and as such are contained within it. To take just one of Brentano's examples, *in* desire something is desired. Thus, desire has an intended object. The metaphysical categories to which the desired object belongs, and in particular an answer to the question where it is located, are not explicitly posed.

Brentano's official answer is that the desired object is contained *in* the psychological experience of desire. Suppose one desires a glass of wine. The glass is poured and standing on the table. According to Brentano's immanent objectivity thesis, the desired wine is immanent within the desire for it. Such a conception is empiricist in the classical British Enlightenment sense supporting some version of phenomenalism, where the sensible ideas of the wine glass before me alone are immediately perceived, and exist only within a mind. The dilemma is that there either is or is not a bridge from thought to the transcendent objects of intentional attitudes outside of thought. If there is no bridge, then experience is necessarily cut off from the world as in the most radical idealism, and implies the counterintuitive consequences that the objects of distinct intentional states are themselves distinct, and never shared by the intentions of different thinking subjects. If there is a bridge, then the link to external reality is more economically made directly from thought to potentially shareable transcendent objects, without positing any immanent intentional objects as intermediaries.

It might be said from an idealist perspective that the glass of wine on the table is equally an immanent object. Just as the desired wine is included in the desire for it, so the wine glass on the table is contained in the perception of it. The perception of the wine for the idealist is after all nothing other than an intentional psychological state, whose objects have no existence independent of their presentation. The idealist assumption is not sufficient for the immanent perceived glass of wine to be identical to the immanent desired glass of wine. The perception and desire are distinct psychological episodes, that need not occur at the same time, and can even occur one without the other, as when one desires an unseen or nonexistent glass of wine. This implies that the immanent objects of these different mental states have different constitutive properties, so that, by Leibnizian indiscernibility of identicals, the immanent objects of the perception of and desire for a glass of wine are strictly nonidentical. The conclusion is that one cannot desire the very same numerically identical glass of wine which one perceives, remembers, despises, relishes, or eagerly anticipates, since as distinct psychological states, each of these presentations has strictly nonidentical immanent intentional objects. Nor can you desire the same glass of wine that another person desires.

This is sufficiently paradoxical to raise doubts about the theory's plausibility. It has the counterintuitive consequence that one can only desire something contained

within the act of desiring, see, fear, or love only the immanently intentional object belonging to the respective acts of seeing, fearing or loving. The implications are untenable for five reasons: (1) The theory multiplies intentional objects beyond necessity, positing as many different immanent intended objects as distinct psychological states. (2) There is no suggested explanation of the relation if any between these intended objects, say, between the glass of wine I see and the glass of wine I desire or fear, though, even if distinct, these objects must presumably have some intimate connection. (3) Idealism in and of itself embodies an intuitively objectionable segregation of thought and external reality. (4) This version of immanently objective idealism in particular has the further paradoxical result that the intended objects of distinct psychological states are themselves distinct, contradicting intuitive data about the convergence on or directedness of at least some different psychological states toward identical intended objects. (5) The immanent intentionality thesis in the idealist framework has the undesirable consequence that different subjects can never stand in intentional attitudes toward identical objects, no two persons can desire or despise the very same glass of wine, for each will desire or despise the distinct intentional objects immanently contained within their distinct psychological states and the mental acts by which a glass of wine is intended.

It is interesting in this first horn of the dilemma to discover that the theory, like classical British phenomenalism, is driven toward a radical idealism, intuitively problematic in and of itself, and moreover inadequate to account for even the most fundamental presumed facts about the intentionality of thought. The account cuts off experience from contact with the external world, and precludes the direction of thought upon identical intended objects by distinct psychological states of the same or different subjects, while at the same time claiming to be observing a type of empiricism. The difficulty is not entirely the fault of idealism *per se*, though the idealist ontology already lifts a barrier between thought and reality, but specifically of idealism coupled with Brentano's immanent objectivity thesis.

The alternative is to deny idealism, positing instead a kind of duality of objects. The modified realist proposal posits external mind-independent objects, and immanent intentional objects contained within psychological states, by virtue of which mental phenomena can still be distinguished from nonmental phenomena through the immanent objectivity of the mental. The dual categories of objects can be related in such a way, that, when one desires a glass of wine, there is an immanently desired glass of wine which refers to or stands in some other relation to the glass of wine on the table in the external world, by virtue of which the subject can also intelligibly be said to desire not just the wine contained within the moment of desire, but the glass of wine on the table in the extra-mental world.

This otherwise more satisfactory compromise is beset by difficulties that also make it ultimately unacceptable. Like the idealist approach, the modified realist proposal still multiplies intended objects beyond explanatory necessity, positing immanent and external or transcendent objects at least whenever thought is in some sense about existent or subsistent objects. The relation between the two categories of objects is equally mysterious in this moderate explanation as under the idealist

assumption. The connection linking immanent and transcendent or external objects moreover cannot simply be referential as indicated, since reference is itself an intentional feature of a psychological state, and so presumably partakes of an immanent objectivity. To paraphrase Brentano, *in* referring, something is referred to.

This approach provides no outlet from the closed circle of ideas to the external world. It remains necessary to forge the link between an immanent object of desire, perception, or reference, and the transcendent object that in some as yet unspecified sense corresponds to the thought's content. Suppose that the elusive relation could be identified, directly tying immanent to external objects, so that it becomes intelligible to say that an immanent intentionality directed toward the object the thought contains can also bear the same appropriate intentional attitude toward the corresponding external thought-transcending object. If this can be done, then at once there is no further motivation for assuming that there are immanently intended objects in the first place. It must then suffice to characterize psychological states as bearing the unknown relation directly to thought-transcending intended objects of thought, without postulating thought-immanent objects as intermediaries.

In desiring the glass of wine, instead of assuming that there are two objects, immanent and transcendent, strangely related to each other so that both are desired in one occurrence of thought, the desire for the transcendent wine somehow dependent on the desire for the immanent wine, it would evidently be simpler and more economical to maintain that the transcendent wine is directly desired, and that there simply is no immanent wine *qua* intended object of desire. The elimination of immanently intended objects has the further advantage of avoiding the need to explain the inscrutable relation between immanent and transcendent objects, and of explaining away counterintuitive consequences like the implication that every intentional state must contain within itself its own immanently intended objects that are never shared by distinct psychological states.

The objection need not be decisive in overturning Brentano's early immanence or intentional in-existence doctrine. Considerations of this sort nevertheless indicate that the theory can only be salvaged by heroic and intuitively unsupported additional distinctions and assumptions. The theory must stray from ordinary ways of thinking about intentional connections between ideas and their objects, if immanent intentionality is to remain the criterion of psychological phenomena. Whether these exact problems eventually caused Brentano to abandon the immanent intentionality thesis is not now and may never definitely be known. The subsequent development of intentionality theory by Brentano's students and others influenced by his early work, the reactions against the immanence or intentional in-existence thesis, and the solutions their writings contain, taking what they want from the intentionality thesis and leaving behind what they do not want, testify unmistakably to these difficulties in particular as the source of new directions in intentionalist philosophy.

The rise of transcendental phenomenology in Husserl's thought is well documented, and needs for its completion only the acknowledgement that its occasion was most probably provided by the failure of Husserl's own early attempt

to explain the philosophical foundations of arithmetic with Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis as a cornerstone.[1] The unwritten chapters in the history of object theory as it emerged in Austria at the turn of the century in the philosophy of Meinong, Twardowski, Mally, Ameseder, and others, reveal an important, and, because they follow a contrary path, equally if not more insightful assessment, of the important truths in Brentano's intentionality thesis, and limitations and explanatory inconveniences of the immanent intentionality thesis.

2.3 Twardowski's Content-Object Distinction

Twardowski's 1894 *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* is often described as a milestone in object theory psychology and philosophical semantics. Twardowski distinguishes the mental act, content, and object of every presentation, in somewhat the way that Brentano had previously distinguished between act and immanent object. Brentano had incidentally described the immanently intended object contained in each psychological phenomenon as itself a content, and intentionality as a relation between a mental act and its content. Twardowski does not so much introduce a new set of philosophical concepts as restructure the terminology he inherits from Brentano.

The concept of a psychological act in which a presentation appears is essentially unchanged from Brentano's discussion of characteristic mental acts. Brentano's original doctrine of the immanent object of an intentional attitude is revised by Twardowski and reinterpreted as the content (*Inhalt*) of the presentation. Brentano had already suggested that objects contained within the psychological states directed toward them were in some sense also the contents of the experience. Twardowski goes beyond this by relegating the immanent component of psychological presentation to the status of content as distinct from intended object, offering four different arguments to prove that the content of a presentation cannot be identical to its object.[2] The concept of the content of a presentation is already available to Brentano's immanence thesis, but from the standpoint of Twardowski's categories, Brentano confuses the content of a presentation with its object. The content only, and not the object of the presentation, is immanent, lived-through and

[1] Brentano 1924, II, 179–82, 275–7 ('Vom *ens rationis*. *Diktat vom 6. Januar 1917*'). Letter from Brentano to Anton Marty, 20. April 1910, in Mayer-Hillebrand 1966, 225–8. For a rather different picture of the later relations between Brentano and Husserl, see Spiegelberg 1977. Morrison 1970. Philipse 1986–1987.

[2] Twardowski 1894, §6, 'Die Verschiedenheit von Vorstellungsinhalt und -Gegenstand', 29–34. Meinong, as might be expected from his collaboration with Höfler and the influence of their *Logik* on Twardowski's categories, accepts Twardowski's content-object distinction, but rejects his third and fourth arguments. Meinong 1899. See also Husserl 1979. I criticize Twardowski's arguments as establishing only a nonexclusive rather than exclusive distinction between content and object in Jacquette 1987.

contained within the psychological state to which the content belongs. The object of a presentation in contrast is transcendent, not in the Kantian sense of an unknowable noumenal thing-in-itself, but in the general sense of being mind-independent, with an extra-psychological semantic status, whether existent or nonexistent (Twardowski 1894, 24–25, 27, 36).

This is importantly different from the modified realism described in the second horn of the dilemma for immanence theories. Twardowski argues against the possibility that contents could ever be objects, and therefore denies that there could be both immanent and transcendent intended objects. That is part of his reason for distinguishing content from object. Although content is immanent, content is in no sense the intended object of a presentation, which on intuitive grounds remains transcendent. Nor is Twardowski's distinction faced with the problem of explaining the mysterious relation between immanent and transcendent objects, since on his account immanent content in some sense mentally represents a corresponding thought-transcending intended object of thought.

Twardowski never openly accuses Brentano of confusing thought content with intended object, but on the contrary credits him with the important rediscovery of the intentionality of thought. He then proceeds immediately to reconstrue Brentano's original categories for his own purposes, turning Brentano's immanent object into mere content, and positing distinctively nonimmanent mind-transcendent objects as the only legitimate intended objects of presentations. Twardowski begins with an homage to Brentano's immanence theory, linking the doctrine explicitly to its author in the footnote:

> It is one of the best known propositions of psychology, disputed by almost no one, that every psychical phenomenon is related [*beziehe*] to an immanent object. The existence of such a relation is a characteristic feature of the psychical phenomena which by means of it are distinguished from the physical phenomena. . .One is accustomed on the basis of this relation to an 'immanent object', which is peculiar to psychical phenomena, to distinguish between the act and content of every psychical phenomenon, and so each of them is represented under a double viewpoint.[3]

Twardowski argues that the distinction between act and content or immanent object is not enough. It is also necessary, he claims, to distinguish immanent content

[3] Twardowski 1894, 3 (my translation). Grossmann gives a somewhat different translation of Twardowski's term '*beziehe*' as 'intends'. See Twardowski 1977, in Grossmann's trans., 1: 'It is one of the best known positions of psychology, hardly contested by anyone, that every mental phenomenon *intends* an immanent object' (emphasis added). This gives a misleading impression of Twardowski's careful attempt to say only that an immanent component of every presentation is in more neutral terminology 'related' (as his further references to the '*Beziehung*' also make evident) to a psychological phenomenon. Grossmann's choice of 'intends' here suggests on the contrary that the immanent component of thought is the one everyone agrees is *intended* or toward which the thought is *directed*. But this would contradict most of Twardowski's subsequent discussion, since it makes the immanent component of thought the intentional object rather than merely the content. Twardowski says only that there is general agreement about every psychological phenomenon being *related* to an immanent object, which permits him to lean heavily on Brentano's intentionality thesis without commitment to immanent objectivity.

from transcendent object. He appeals to the authority of Höfler and Meinong's *Logik*, although the distinction occurs in a series of bold pronouncements supported only by an intuitive yearning for objectivity in psychology and semantics, and an unexamined denunciation of the idealist alternative.

The conclusion Twardowski reaches, beginning with Brentano's early immanence thesis, in which the objects of thought are contained in the psychological acts that apprehend them, implies an outright contradiction of immanent intentionality. The contradiction is disguised only by the fact that Twardowski relocates the immanence of the objects of thought by consigning them to the category of contents, and then distinguishing on the grounds of a perceived ambiguity or confusion between immanent content and transcendent intended object, denying that the intended objects of presentations in the proper sense are immanent, while insisting for the sake of clarity or disambiguity that they be regarded as nonimmanent, mind-independent:

> Accordingly, one has to distinguish the object at which our idea 'aims, as it were,' and the immanent object or the content of the presentation. . .It will also turn out that the expression 'the presented' is in a similar way ambiguous as is the expression 'presentation'. The latter serves just as much to designate the act and the content, as the former serves as a designation of the content, of the immanent object, and as a designation of the non-immanent object, the object of the presentation (Twardowski 1894, 4 (my translation)).

At this stage, Twardowski has renounced if not effectively refuted Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis. What is now 'the object of the presentation' in the correct disambiguated sense of the word, is independent of thought, and only the content is immanent and literally contained within a thinking subject's thoughts. Twardowski further motivates the ambiguity by an apt analogy with equivocations surrounding the phrase 'painted landscape', on the basis of a distinction between *determining* and *modifying* properties. A 'painted landscape' can mean either the canvas or the terrain that has been painted, in much the same way that 'object of thought' can mean either the representational thought content, or the intended object of which the content is an image. Twardowski's official terminology for disambiguating these aspects of presentations is to speak of objects as presented *in* (contents) or *through* (intended objects, properly so-called) presentations (Twardowski 1894, §4, 'Das 'Vorgestellte", 12–20).

The argument acknowledges Brentano's contribution to philosophical psychology, and perhaps unintentionally also permits Brentano leave from an untenable position by extending the ambiguity of immanent contents and transcendent objects to Brentano's own statements about the immanence of intended objects. If, by the immanence of intentional objects, Brentano had meant just what Twardowski describes as the immanence of content, then the threat of idealism would be removed. This is plainly not what Brentano believes, and Brentano of all thinkers could hardly be expected to choose this way out. Twardowski's failure more directly to criticize Brentano is curious, given that his reinforced distinction between content and object flatly contradicts the immanent intentionality thesis. Perhaps it is a matter of pupil-teacher gentility or temerity on Twardowski's part, for he shows no hesitation in attacking lesser lights including Christoph Sigwart,

Moritz W. Drobisch, Benno Kerry, and Marty, even though none of these offend any worse against the content-object distinction than Brentano, and even though their content-object confusions can be traced directly to Brentano's 1874 *Psychologie* (Twardowski 1894, esp. 55–102).

The requirement that intended objects transcend the psychological states that apprehend them, the hint of an ontic domain of transcendent objects, some of which exist in space and time, while others of which are abstract or even nonexistent, is an almost inevitable counterreaction to the complications entailed by Brentano's early immanent intentionality thesis. The origins of *Gegenstandstheorie* are to be found in Twardowski's Höfler-Meinong initiative to free intended objects from the closed circle of ideas implied by Brentano's early immanence or in-existence of intentionality thesis. By indicating a domain of existent and nonexistent thought-transcending intended objects, Twardowski sets the stage for later more extensive semantic-psychological investigations of Meinong and the Graz school.

2.4 Mind-Independence Beyond Being and Non-Being

Meinong always insisted that the objects of the object theory domain were mind-independent, thereby avoiding association with idealism, subjectivism, or psychologism.[4] However, he never tried to prove by argument or evidence that intended objects were extramental or could obtain independently of thought or thinking. That task was left for his closest student and longtime collaborator Ernst Mally, who in his 1914 essay 'Über die Unabhängigkeit der Gegenstände vom Denken', offers an informal diagonalization against the possibility of self-referential thought in order to prove that at least some objects in the object theory referential semantic domain are unapprehendable, and therefore entirely independent of thought.

Mally in Section 5 of the essay begins with the question, "*Ist jeder Gegenstand erfassbar*?" ('Is every object apprehendable?'). Mally observes that an argument from experience or inductive proof would not settle the matter, since even if every thought that occurs in experience has an object, it does not follow that there are no remaining unapprehendable objects. He concludes that the question must be answered *a priori*, and examines but finally rejects an argument from the generality of reference in quantified sentences of the form 'All objects…' and 'Every object…'.

> One can perhaps say: Whether every object is apprehendable is a question which can dispose of itself; for in the question itself every object will be treated, which would make no sense unless the questioning had already apprehended every object… (Mally 1914, 47 (my translation). See Jacquette, trans. 1989d).

The idea is that in asking whether *every* object is apprehendable, each and every object is already apprehended and therefore intended by the question itself, in

[4] Meinong 1910, 271–3, 1921. Smith 1982, 205–9.

accord with an implicit semantic principle governing the interpretation of universally quantified expressions. Mally rejects this solution because of a paradox about the impossibility of self-referential thought (See Jacquette 1982, 1989b).

1. Thought D' intends only thought D.
2. D is any thought that does not intend itself.

3. D' intends itself if and only if D' does not intend itself.

Mally understands the paradox to imply that the concept of a thought which refers to itself and the concept of a thought which does not refer to itself are alike meaningless. This enables him to challenge what he somewhat misleadingly describes as the epistemological or critical idealist in object theory, claiming that if thoughts that ostensibly make general reference to 'all objects' or 'every object' actually entail the apprehension of *all* objects, then the thoughts or presentations containing these generalizations would have to apprehend themselves, since they are also objects (Meinong 1899, 189–90). This is just what Mally's paradox about self-referential thought is supposed to prove impossible. Mally claims that a general science of objects can therefore be obtained only if the objects are stratified into an ascending hierarchy of ordered types, on the model of Russell's type theory.[5]

In section 6, Mally proposes to answer the idealist question, '*Ist Sein identisch mit Erfasstsein*?' ('Is being identical with being apprehended?'). Here it may suffice to suggest the way in which a vicious infinite regress is supposed to obtain if being is identified with apprehendability. Mally argues that if the identification is made, then '*A* exists' means '*A* is apprehended'. On the critical or epistemological idealist thesis, this is equivalent to 'It is known that *A* exists', which in turn means 'It is known that it is known that *A* exists', and so on *ad infinitum*. Mally writes: 'In order to apprehend the sense of our thesis, one must go back again and again from one assertion of knowledge to another, i.e. one never comes to a sense of the assertion at all' (Mally 1914, 51 (my translation)).

Mally's arguments appear to refute the proposition that all objects are apprehendable, or that there are no unapprehendable Meinongian objects. In fact, they are inconclusive, and do not even purport to establish the more important positive proposition that there definitely are unapprehendable Meinongian objects in the object theory referential semantic domain. It is possible to circumvent Mally's paradox as Mally himself suggests by a Russellian hierarchy of ordered objects. This means that the paradox cannot be relied on to confirm the meaninglessness of general reference to and apprehension of every object in universal quantifications over objects. The infinite regress objection to the radical idealist

[5] Mally 1914, 49: 'At least this much is established with all clarity. . .The question whether every object is apprehendable is too general, i.e. put in too undetermined a way to have a legitimate sense. One can only sensibly ask whether the objects of such and such kind (which represent a totality) are apprehendable by means of thoughts of such and such kind' (my translation). The position is reinforced by Twardowski's view about the inability of a plurality of objects to fall under a general concept or presentation. See Twardowski 1894, 34.

or conceptualist is also inconclusive. At most Mally's regress shows that there may be *existent* unapprehendable objects. The difficult problem for object theory has to do with the unapprehendability of *non*existent objects like the golden mountain and round square. What object theory status does an incomplete or impossible object have, if it is not even potentially apprehendable as the target of an actual or possible thought?

It can only be concluded that nowhere in Meinong's object theory or the immediate satellite theories that developed around its core is there a satisfactory refutation of Brentano's original immanence or intentional in-existence thesis. There is at most an intuitive rejection or repudiation of the theory, based on a repugnance for its idealist consequences. It is in vain to look in any of the masterworks of the object theory philosophers for a sound argument against immanent intentionality, since to disprove the immanence thesis would in effect be to disprove idealism itself. Like most grandscale metaphysical ideologies, idealism is sufficiently complex and conceptually rich to contain the resources to withstand direct attack for any proponents willing to live with even its most counterintuitive implications.

The most powerful inducement to accept the transcendence version of the independence thesis in Meinongian object theory is that by positing a semantic domain of mind-independent objects beyond being and non-being, it is possible to explain facts about the intentionality of thought and language, the nature of ontic commitment, and ordinary ways of speaking about existent and nonexistent objects and their properties, which otherwise at best can only be implausibly explained or explained away. The justification for an object theory of mind-independent transcendent intentional objects is the scientific one that Brentano and Meinong would have agreed on in principle, despite all other disagreements of substance, of satisfactorily and economically accounting for all relevant pre-theoretical data. In this way, the scientific approach to philosophical psychology that Brentano emphasizes from the outset is not lost sight of in Meinong's object theory.

2.5 Brentano's Later Reism

It may be wondered how Brentano got himself into the predicament of maintaining the immanent intentionality or intentional in-existence thesis in the first place. There are several possible explanations, but the complete story may never be told.[6]

Brentano's philosophical training inclined him to an appreciation of Aristotle and the Scholastics to an extent that, outside of specialized scholars of these figures, such as his own teacher Friedrich Adolf Trendelenburg, was almost unprecedented among professional philosophers of his time. The dominant trend against which

[6] The best accounts are found in Chisholm 1967. See also Hedwig 1978, 1979. Marras 1976. Spiegelberg 1936, 1978a, b, Volume I, 27–50. Howart 1980. See also Rancurello 1968.

Brentano struggled was woven out of several strands of post-Kantian idealism and Hegelianism (See Chisholm 1960, 'Editor's Introduction', 4–6; Srzednicki 1965, 10–11, 114). This may explain Brentano's affirmation of an immanence theory of intentionality, and his reluctance to embrace the contrary transcendentalist terminology, with its whispers of Kant's thing-in-itself. It cannot be overemphasized that Brentano sought to develop the philosophy of mind on empirical grounds, adapting scientific methods to his subject. From a strictly empirical point of view, it may appear unnecessary and perhaps even unintelligible to ask whether intended objects transcend or actually exist beyond or outside of experience. Brentano's main purpose in resurrecting the Scholastic immanence or intentional in-existence thesis is to pin down his subject matter in Aristotelian fashion, articulating a criterion to distinguish the mental or psychological from the nonmental and nonpsychological. With this limited end in view, Brentano may have judged it unnecessary, if not unscientific, to trespass into speculative metaphysics from the confines of empirical knowledge.

Radical empiricism leads to phenomenalism and idealism in Brentano's early thought, just as surely as in Berkeley's philosophy. The dilemma of respecting both empiricist methodology and commonsense pretheoretical beliefs about the mind-independence of objects of experience is dramatically, dialectically played out in the transition from Brentano's acceptance to his rejection of the immanent intentionality thesis. Guided by the desire to set psychology on a firm scientific methodology, Brentano begins first with an empiricist criterion for distinguishing mental from physical phenomena, perhaps in the conviction that a sound method could not yield incorrect results. As indeed it could not. Only later, when the theory has achieved sufficient definition, does the nature of the idealistic consequences inherent in its radical empiricism become evident. The choice, at least to those of anti-idealist temperament, was obvious, historically, and meant the abandonment of Brentano's immanence or intentional in-existence criterion of the psychological. Husserl blazed a trail in one direction, leading toward a phenomenology of subjective quasi-abstract thought content *noemata* and corresponding transcendental objects. The founders of object theory developed another related but different direction leading to immanent contents and existent or nonexistent mind-independent intended objects beyond being and non-being.

Brentano also finally rejected the immanent intentionality thesis. He did so in his own way, however, not following either of the splinter groups among his students whose point of departure was the immanence criterion. Instead, Brentano traveled in the furthest, most opposite extreme, adopting for his later Aristotelian reist ontology the proposition that only concrete physical objects can legitimately be intended in thought or language, and purging his technical philosophical vocabulary entirely of references to immanence and immanent objects. The progress of this period of Brentano's thought is represented by his correspondence with Kraus, Marty, and Stumpf during 1902–1916, particularly in the collection of exchanges edited as *Die Abkehr vom Nichtrealen*, and the early letters to Marty assembled in *Wahrheit und Evidenz*. Reist objects are obviously transcendent, so that the

immanence thesis gives place in the later Brentano as in Twardowski, Höfler, and Meinong, to direct apprehension of objects as mind-independent intentionalities.[7]

In a letter to Marty dated March 17, 1905, Brentano writes in a passage worth quoting at length:

> As for what you say about Höfler's remarks, the 'content and immanent object' of the presentation was surprising to me…When I spoke of 'immanent object', I added the expression 'immanent' in order to avoid misunderstandings, because many mean by 'object' that which is outside the mind. By contrast, I spoke of an object of the presentation, which it likewise is about, when there is nothing outside the mind corresponding to it [*wenn ihr außerhalb des Geistes nichts entspricht*].
>
> *It has never been my opinion that the immanent object* = '*object of presentation*' (*vorgestelltes Objekt*). The presentation does not have 'the presented thing', but rather 'the thing', so, for example, the presentation of a horse [has] not 'presented horse', but rather 'horse' as (immanent, that is, the only properly so-called) object (Brentano 1966a, 119–20 (my translation; author's original emphases); compare the translation of this letter in Brentano 1966b, 77).

These remarks require careful scrutiny if Brentano's exact meaning is to be understood. Brentano is not saying that he never accepted immanent objects as the intended objects of thought, but only that he did not regard immanent objects as conceived of *as* contents, or *as* immanent intended objects. Thus, in thinking about a horse, the immanent object of the thought is a horse, not a thought-of- or presented horse (Brentano 1966a, Letter to Oskar Kraus, 8. November 1914, 250–2; 'Worterklärungen', 27. Januar 1917, ibid., 390–1).

Brentano's conclusion seems to be that, phenomenologically speaking, when thinking about a horse, one simply thinks about the horse, not about the horse *as* thought of. The horse itself is intended, not the presented horse or horse as presented. This part of Brentano's clarification agrees fully with common sense, but it does not help to explain how an intended flesh and blood horse can belong immanently to a psychological state, to literally exist within it. Brentano's letter to Marty obscures rather than illuminates his position vis-á-vis the Höfler-Meinong-Twardowski distinction between act, content, and object. Brentano denies that the immanent object of the presentation of a horse is the horse-as-presented, but the horse itself, except on the most extreme idealism, is not an appropriate candidate for immanent objectivity. What makes more sense is to take the line of Höfler, Meinong, and Twardowski, assuming that the immanently intentional component of a psychological state is the content, the contemplated horse or horse-as-presented, which Höfler describes as a quasi-image, and Twardowski likens to a painting or representational artwork of an intended object.

The intended object of a thought as Brentano maintains is indeed standardly not the thought-of-object. Those of his distant followers who rejected the immanence thesis would warmly applaud Brentano's claim that only the horse and not the contemplated horse is correctly designated the intended object under the circumstances described. That is why the act-content-object distinction was advanced, so

[7] Kotarbinski 1976. Körner 1977.

that horses rather than presented horses could be regarded as the intended objects of thought, and presented horses could be understood not as intended objects, but as the contents of the relevant thoughts. What remains puzzling is not Brentano's claim that horses are the proper intended objects of thought, but that he should continue to insist even in 1905 that they are the *immanent* objects of thought. The only conclusion to draw is either that Brentano does not understand the content-object distinction, or that he means something entirely different by his own use of the term '*immanentes Objekt*' than his students and contemporaries, and subsequent traditions, have understood him to mean.

Many if not most of Brentano's arguments for reism emerge only in scattered remarks and correspondence from his later period, as piecemeal efforts to show that this or that non-individual cannot be a genuine intentional object of thought. For example, in the draft titled 'Entwurf zur Klassifikation der psychischen Phänomene', dated March 1910, Brentano writes:

> 17. We have only things as objects, all fall under a higher concept.
>
> The majority of things are also regarded as real. Look at the so-called objective [*Objektiv*] (contents of judgments such as for example that all men are mortal).
>
> 18. Negatives are not objects. Past and future tenses are not objects. Possibilities are not objects. Origin of the so-called concept of possibility. . .Psychic correlates such as that which is acknowledged, that which is denied, the loved, the hated, the presented, are not objects. Truth, error, good, bad, are not objects. That for which the abstract names are signs, are not objects (Brentano 1910, 219–20 (my translation)).

By contrast, in a letter to Kraus on October 31, 1914, Brentano offers a more general argument to establish the truth of reism:

> . . .I shall begin immediately today giving you in what I believe to be a simple and rigorous manner a proof that nothing other than things can be objects of our presentations and therefore of our thinking generally.
>
> The proof is founded on the fact that the concept of presenting is a uniform [*einheitlicher*] one, that the term is therefore univocal [*univok*], not equivocal [*äquivok*]. It belongs again to this concept that every presentation presents something, and if this 'something' were not itself univocal [*eindeutig*], then the term 'presentation' would also not be univocal. If this is certain, then it is impossible to understand as this 'something' at one time a real [*Reales*] (thing) [(*Ding*)], and at another time a non-thing [*Nichtreales*]. There is no concept which could be common to things and non-things.
>
> This proof in my opinion is absolutely decisive. One finds a very expedient manifold verification, and more and more so, in the analysis of cases in which a non-thing appears to be the object of a presentation (Brentano 1966a, Letter to Oskar Kraus, 31. October 1914, 249 (my translation)).[8]

Brentano's proof, despite its bravado, is anything but decisive. It is unclear what Brentano intends in the first place by analyzing situations in which a non-thing appears to be an object of thought, in order to 'verify' the proof of which he speaks, since Brentano does not explain in this short epistle to Kraus, nor elsewhere in his

[8] Brentano 1982, 131: 'Die Realitäten, die in unsere Wahrnehmung fallen, sind psychische, d.h. sie zeigen eine intentionale Beziehung auf ein immanentes Objekt.'

writings, what the analysis is supposed to consist in, what direction it should take, and what conclusions it would support.

There is no alternative in evaluating Brentano's 'proof', except critically to examine the argument itself in detail. The demonstration has this form:

1. Thinking is thinking about something.
2. The concept of thinking is uniform [*einheitlich*], so that the term 'presentation' is univocal, not equivocal.

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3. If the term 'something' were equivocal, then the term 'presentation' would also be equivocal. (1)
4. Therefore, the term 'something' is univocal. (2, 3)
5. In particular, therefore, the term 'something' is not equivocal as between designating alternatively either a thing or a non-thing. (4)

The argument, unfortunately, is defective. As it stands, the conclusion no more upholds reism than anti-reism, since the deduction shows only that 'something' cannot mean both sometimes a thing and sometimes a non-thing. This modest result by itself does not prove that the something toward which a thought is directed is always a thing rather than a non-thing.

Brentano can obtain his conclusion by bringing forward the suppressed assumption that:

2a. Some presentations are about things.

From this and proposition (5) it then follows that:

6. Therefore, only things can be the objects of presentations, to the absolute exclusion of non-things. (2a, 5)

Without reasoning in a circle against the idealist, Brentano has no solid foundation for blocking the very opposite conclusion from the equally pre-analytically intuitive assumption that:

2a′. Some presentations are about non-things.

Within his own argument structure, it could then validly be deduced that:

6′. Therefore, only non-things can be the objects of presentations, to the absolute exclusion of things. (2a′,5)

Brentano cannot simply insist on (2a), and refuse to consider the intuitive merits of (2a′), unless or until he has satisfactorily established the reist conclusion in (6). The reist conclusion in (6), in turn, cannot be reached within Brentano's proof structure unless or until (2a) is sustained and (2a′) justifiably withdrawn. Brentano asserts that, 'There is no concept which could be common to things and non-things'. This pronouncement once again merely begs the question against the anti-reist, for whom the very terms 'something' and 'object of thought' denote a concept they believe to be common to things and non-things. The prospects for a noncircular defense of Brentano's argument for reism appear increasingly unlikely.

The circularity objection presupposes the validity of Brentano's basic argument structure, but this too can be called into question. The premise in (1) is a modified version of Brentano's intentionality thesis, formulated in more neutral terminology with respect to its original commitment to the immanence of intended objects. There remains something suspect, almost sophistic, about the body of the derivation. The fact, if it is a fact, that the word 'presentation' is univocal, and that every presentation is always about something, may be sufficient to uphold the conclusion in (4) that the term 'something' is also univocal. The sense in which 'something' is univocal does not imply the final conclusion in (5), that 'something' therefore cannot be ambiguous as between designating alternatively either a thing or a non-thing. To take an obvious counterexample, consider by immediate analogy that if this mode of argument were logically valid, then it would be equally correct to conclude from the claim that the term 'human' is univocal, having an unambiguous meaning, that therefore 'human' must also be unambiguous in the sense of not designating alternatively men or women.

Brentano seems to confuse the univocity or unambiguity of a concept or term for a concept with the rather different question of whether the objects falling under a concept or denoted as a set by the term all belong to the same metaphysical category. The term 'something', as Brentano uses it is consistent with its being understood as a higher-order metaphysical category term, perhaps of the very highest order, subsuming the lower-order metaphysical category terms 'thing' and 'non-thing'. It may be true that if 'presentation' is univocal and every presentation is about something, then 'something' is also univocal in the sense of having a single unambiguous meaning. This implication, nevertheless, does not prevent 'something' from subsuming ontically diverse lower-order metaphysical categories. There is an equivocation in the meaning of the words 'univocal' and 'not equivocal' as they occur in conclusions (4) and (5) of this reconstruction of Brentano's proof, which renders the argument invalid.[9]

The difficulty with the austere reist ontology Brentano introduces in this later phase is plausibly accounting for apparent reference to abstract and nonexistent objects, problems for which Husserl's phenomenology and Meinong's object theory are better adapted. Brentano's reism appears in many ways intended to refute the *irrealia* of object theory.[10] Brentano goes to ingenious lengths to tailor intentional objects in these categories to his minimalist reist framework, but from the volume and difficulty of his attempts to reconcile reism with pre-analytic intuition, the high costs of reism like the high costs of idealism quickly become apparent.

[9] For another assessment of the proof, see Terrell 1976.

[10] Brentano 1966a, Letter to Oskar Kraus, 14. September 1909, 201–2. Letter to Anton Marty, 20. April 1910, ibid., 225–8. Letter to Marty, 28. Dezember 1913, ibid., 240–1. Letter to Kraus, 16. November 1914, ibid., 255–9. Letter to Kraus, 10. Januar 1915, ibid., 274–5. Brentano 1930, 87–9.

If, from an anti-idealist anti-reist perspective, Brentano's immanence thesis and later repudiation of abstract and nonexistent objects appear to be metaphysical mistakes, they are undoubtedly among the most interesting, challenging, and theoretically fertile mistakes ever made in the history of philosophy.[11]

[11] I am grateful to Wilhelm Baumgartner for advice about useful sources in Brentano's correspondence and *Nachlaß*.

Chapter 3
Meinong on the Phenomenology of Assumption

3.1 On Intentionality

As a student of Brentano's, Meinong pursued his teacher's thesis of the intentionality of mind in his own distinctive way and in a direction that was not only unlike but antithetical to Brentano's. Where Marty in his philosophy of language adheres closely to Brentano's reductive reist conception of existent individuals and their particular instantiated properties, and Husserl develops a version of descriptive psychology that culminated in transcendental phenomenology, Meinong proposes his *Gegenstandstheorie* as a supporting complement for Brentano's commitment to the division between physical and psychological phenomena, on the basis of the intentionality of the psychological and nonintentionality of the physical. Meinong's effort in this regard is one that Brentano, in light of his Aristotelian ontology of dynamic spatiotemporal particulars, emphatically rejects.

Meinong assimilates Brentano's doctrine of the intentionality of thought, but, like most of Brentano's disciples, could not make friends with the original immanence version of Brentano's intentionality thesis. Brentano argues that intended objects are the contents of thoughts immanently contained within the thoughts themselves (Brentano 1924 [1874], 115). It is possible to interpret many of the philosophical movements that radiated from Brentano's early philosophy after 1874 with the publication of *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* as logical alternatives to Brentano's immanent or in-existence intentionality thesis, as the previous chapter also contends (see Chisholm 1967; Rancurello 1968; Howart 1980). None of the circle of Brentano's pupils found the idea of immanent intentionality philosophically acceptable, even though they were convinced that every psychological state is intentional, directed toward or upon an intended object. If every thought is about or mentally directed upon something which it intends as an object, and if some thoughts are psychological episodes ostensibly about objects that do not actually exist, as Brentano freely admits, then there is a metaphysical issue concerning the exact ontic status of intended objects in such everyday conscious

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_3

occurrences that stems directly from Brentano's intentionalist philosophical psychology (see Chrudzimski 2001).

Brentano might be said to avoid the problem of the immanence or in-existence intentionality thesis, by including every intended object in a manifestly existing or ideal intending mental act. The price Brentano pays by upholding the implausible counterintuitive immanent intentionality thesis in order to avoid anything like a Meinongian object theory of nonexistent as well as existent intended objects can only be explained as a deeply entrenched commitment to an ontology of individuals, in the sense of Aristotelian primary substances. Nevertheless, Brentano could maintain a naive realist Aristotelian ontology of existent individuals, and still allow reference to and true and false predications of properties to nonexistent objects.

Assume with Brentano that only Aristotelian primary substances exist. How does that settle the question as to the semantics and truth requirements for putatively meaningful sentences ostensibly about nonexistent objects? To inch forward, ask, Can we not meaningfully say that a nonexistent object does not exist? We hope so, since otherwise *tertium non datur* it must appear that a nonexistent object exists. Can we ascribe meaning to such an intuitively meaningful pronouncement, the follow-up question now becomes pertinent, without distinguishing between existence as some kind of property of intended objects, and ontically neutral 'existential' quantification, signifying only membership in a referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects alike? Ontically neutral 'existential' quantification is predicated entirely on the possibility of reference, of referential semantic domain membership, which is predicated in turn on the satisfaction of intensional property-related Leibnizian identity conditions. That a nonexistent object does not exist should be a dumb tautology. The classical existence-presuppositional Fregean functional calculus or predicate-quantificational logic of universal quantifiers and negation disappointingly cannot intelligibly formalize this informal truism, without introducing a predicate for existence alongside and in addition to the classical existence-presuppositional existential quantifier. If not already convinced, try in a standard first-order quantifier logic to express the tautology that a nonexistent object does not exist. We might also ask how it is supposed to be known that Aristotle would not have countenanced nonexistent objects in a referential semantic domain that includes but extends beyond the ontology of existent primary substances. Brentano cites no text for this interpretation, but seems to infer from Aristotle's commitment to an ontology of exclusively existent primary substances that Aristotle's semantic referential domain would also therefore need to coincide precisely with his ontology or *ousiology*. Brentano in this regard, wanting for unexplained ideological reasons to insist on the ontology of individuals as coincident also with the only semantic referential domain, eliminates reference to nonexistent intended objects, even as nonexistent.

In *Psychologie*, Brentano seems to have assumed that a strict empiricism requires neutrality about the ontic categories of intended objects. Just as Hume in *A Treatise of Human Nature* argues that we cannot be justified in claiming to know the reality of body or of things existing outside the mind, so Brentano seems to have been content in formulating his early immanent or in-existence intentionality thesis

to maintain that from an empirical standpoint intended objects need not be considered as existing anywhere beyond or outside the contents of mind, where they are empirically discernible by inner perception.[1] Anything further that might be claimed about the ontic status of intended objects of thought is a matter concerning which experience taken only in and of itself is never in a sound position to judge.

Brentano changes his mind about several key distinctions in his theory during the course of his philosophical career, but on certain matters he was consistent and implacable. These notably include his resolute stand against theoretical acknowledgment of abstract entities or nonexistent objects. The former position is unmistakably in keeping with Brentano's general empiricist outlook in philosophy of mind, epistemology and metaphysics. The latter opposition to nonexistent objects seems to have been understood by Brentano also as dictated by the roughly neo-Aristotelian kind of empiricism he had chosen to espouse, which we have now seen reason to question.[2] There may be room for dispute with Brentano's interpretation of the scope and limits of empiricism as a proper philosophical methodology. It should be possible in principle to be an empiricist of a somewhat different sort than Brentano, while still falling within the general outlines of Brentano's reliance on experiential evidence as the deciding factor in philosophical controversies. If intended objects are associated even if not identical with the internal contents of phenomenologically experienced thoughts, then there need be no obstacle to regarding a theory of objects that transcend thought contents as properly empirical, in a sense kindred to if not entirely compatible with Brentano's. This is precisely the proposal Meinong develops, toward which his way of thinking seems naturally to gravitate, as a way of honoring Brentano's intentionality thesis in its most general terms, while avoiding the ontic embarrassments of the early immanence or intentional in-existence doctrine of intended objects. Brentano, as

[1] Hume 1978, 67. In Book I, Part II, Section VI, '*Of the idea of existence, and of external existence*', Hume argues that: '[N]o object can be presented resembling some object with respect to its existence, and different from others in the same particular; since every object, that is presented, must necessarily be existent. / A like reasoning will account for the idea of *external existence*. We may observe, that'tis universally allow'd by philosophers, and is besides pretty obvious of itself, that nothing is ever really present with the mind but its perceptions or impressions and ideas, and that external objects become known to us only by those perceptions they occasion.' Later, in Part IV, Section II, '*Of scepticism with regard to the senses*', Hume concludes that philosophy cannot rigorously prove the existence of external reality, even if the passions and in particular the imagination are psychologically compelled to accept the existence of a real world beyond the contents of impressions and ideas. Hume adds, 187: 'We may well ask *What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?* but'tis in vain to ask, *Whether there be body or not?* That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasonings'.

[2] See Weiler 1986, especially 31–9. Smith 1994, 7–34. Jacquette 2001b, 2002b, Jacquette et al. 2001. Husserl 1976, 50: '[Brentano] had little regard for thinkers such as Kant and the post-Kantian German Idealists, who place a far higher value on original intuition and premonition as to the future than they do on logical method and scientific theory. . .He, who was so devoted to the austere ideal of rigorous philosophical science (which was exemplified in his mind by the exact natural sciences), could only see in the systems of German Idealism a kind of degeneration'.

a matter of historical record, was neither personally pleased nor philosophically impressed by Meinong's efforts.

3.2 Meinong's Intentionalist Object Theory

Meinong's object theory adapts Brentano's intentionality thesis by collecting intended objects in a variety of ontic categories. It is possible, according to Meinong's use of an established terminology, to intend *existent* spatiotemporal objects, *subsistent* abstract or nonspatiotemporal objects, and *beingless* objects of several kinds that are neither existent nor subsistent. For convenience, we have generally collapsed existent and subsistent objects into the single category of existent objects without qualification, in keeping with most contemporary usage, which is then opposed in this technical sense to the single contrary category of nonexistent objects. Within this general taxonomy, Meinong further considers subcategories of intended objects, including *objectives*, or *Objektive*, which is to say propositions or states of affairs. In company with predecessors especially in the nineteenth century German tradition in logic, Meinong treats states of affairs and propositions equivalently. Among the values of moral and aesthetic judgment, Meinong includes such intended normative objects as previously mentioned dignitatives and desideratives (see Jacquette 1996a, 7–11).

Like any logician, semanticist, or ontologist, Meinong needs a comprehension principle to populate and delimit his domain of intended objects. Existent dynamic and abstract objects are relatively easy to accommodate in Meinong's object theory, because these in a sense are already available objectively for thought to intend. They are the common property of thought in physicalist and Platonic realist ontologies of abstract entities, to begin only there. What Meinong notably adds to these categories of intended objects is a subdomain of beingless objects. These are intended objects that neither exist in space and time nor subsist in Platonic heaven with the Forms or Ideas, mathematical entities, universals, if there are any, properties, relations, propositions, sets, and nonactual merely logically possible worlds. Meinong's unique contribution to philosophy is to have maintained that some thoughts intend beingless objects that do not belong to an ontology at all, but to what might be called an *extraontology*. Meinong speaks explicitly in this connection of beingless intended objects as having or belonging to *Außersein*, literally outside of all being, which in their pure form merely as intended objects Meinong also describes revealingly as homeless objects beyond being and non-being (*AMG* II, §4; IV, Chap. 7).

What constitutes an adequate comprehension principle for a Meinongian object theory? Phenomenology is somehow related to the object theory's domain, since object theory is an outgrowth of Brentano's intentionality thesis taken at face value in its most general interpretation. The descriptive psychology of thoughts, independently of the question of the immanence or transcendence of intended objects as occurring within or outside of thought, cannot afford to overlook or downplay the

fact that some thoughts, more than one might at first imagine, intend ostensibly nonexistent objects. The novelty of Meinong's object theory is that beingless intended objects are said to be neither physical nor abstract existents. This classification is already an extraordinarily revolutionary position for Meinong to take, but what makes his object theory even more radical is that beingless intended objects are also not described as immanently contained within the thoughts that intend them, as the in-existent objects or thought contents of Brentano's early intentionality thesis. Meinong does not shrink from the consequences of beingless mind-independent objects, but argues that only in this way can object theory aspire to be a genuine science like metaphysics or mathematics. He maintains that beingless intended objects do not belong to any of the categories or subcategories of things to which all the things that can be thought about had previously been allocated in 2,000 years of traditional metaphysics. Object theory is meant to stand alongside theories that are diametrically opposed to one another, notably Platonism and Aristotelianism, that have otherwise been assumed to exhaust the possibilities for an ontology or referential semantic domain. Meinong in contrast tells us something new, something that does not fit into the expected patterns by which the objects of the special sciences have usually been defined. The peculiarity of Meinong's object theory compared with conventional semantics and metaphysics has caused it to be widely misunderstood, falsely criticized, and offhandedly dismissed as patent nonsense.

This is probably not the place to try to set the record straight in every respect about what Meinong says and how his object theory should be correctly understood. Instead, it may be more worthwhile to consider some of the more interesting difficulties that arise for Meinong's intended objects, granting his right philosophically to advance an extraontology of homeless pure objects beyond being and non-being, and of beingless intended objects that cannot be classified as belonging to any of the standard kinds of logical, semantic and metaphysical domains. There are difficulties enough for Meinong's analysis of thought and meaning, even when the theory is charitably interpreted. It is a challenge for Meinong to explain how it is that all the intended objects belonging to object theory's ontology and extraontology are comprehended in its combined referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent objects. By what principle are Meinongian objects supposed to be herded into the Meinongian corral? As we shall see, despite having its roots in Brentano's empiricist philosophy of mind and generalized intentionality thesis, a phenomenological criterion of beingless intended objects will not adequately serve the purposes of Meinong's object theory. Meinong begins with descriptive psychology and justifies the fundamental principle of his domain of beingless objects phenomenologically, but ultimately finds it necessary to go beyond phenomenology in order to establish the object theory's extraontology. We shall therefore need to inquire what alternative comprehension principle can fulfill these theoretical requirements, and how Meinong's domain of existent and beingless intended objects is related to the phenomenology and empirical descriptive philosophical psychology that underwrites the extraontic and referential and predicational semantic novelties of Meinongian object theory.

3.3 Phenomenology and the Meinongian Domain

Object theory requires a domain of existent and beingless intended objects. Beingless Meinongian objects are suggested in exercising, but cannot be fully comprehended by, phenomenology. Meinong's debt to Brentano is profound, but primarily as philosophical inspiration rather than as providing a complete adequate methodology to be applied without modification in establishing the intended objects of his own intentionalist philosophy.[3]

What is lacking in Brentano's phenomenology in advancing a Meinongian comprehension principle is that it does not include the kind of mind-independence that Meinong demands of the object theory's intended objects. The objects in a Meinongian domain are not simply intended, since it is not even true from an anthropological point of view that all existent or subsistent objects are actually intended by the historically occurrent thoughts of actually existent thinkers. Rather, Meinongian objects, whether existent, dynamic or abstract, or altogether beingless, are at most ideally intendable or objectively available for intending instead of being in every instance actually intended. As seen in Mally's paradox, Meinong recognizes that there may be a need to include as objects of reference unintendable objects belonging indispensably to a complete object theory domain. If it is true that there are such beingless objects in the most general sense of 'object' that Meinong's theory requires, then phenomenology in and of itself will obviously not be enough to bring extraphenomenological actually un-thought-of objects into the Meinongian domain.

Meinong's object theory begins with phenomenology, which it eventually surpasses. Without phenomenology, lacking philosophical motivation, object theory cannot get started. Meinong's philosophy is thoroughly grounded in Brentano's intentionalist descriptive psychology, which it modifies by distinguishing a mental act-content-intended-object structure underlying every psychological state. This three-part distinction follows the same revisionary Brentanian theory of transcendent rather than immanent or in-existent intentionality that Höfler and Meinong presented in their 1890 *Logik*, and that Twardowski articulated, acknowledging Höfler and Meinong as antecedents (Höfler and Meinong 1890, 6–7; Twardowski 1894, 4). Every psychological state has an intended object, Meinong wants to say with Brentano, but not every beingless Meinongian object is intended. The relationship in Meinong's object theory between phenomenology and the object theory referential semantic domain is complex. Were it not for Brentano's philosophical psychology, Meinong, presumably, would never have been led to consider that some mental acts intend beingless objects. This fact is enough to indicate the need for a Meinongian domain of nonexistent objects, but it is not enough more positively to supply the beingless objects needed to populate the domain.

[3] Meinong explains his philosophical debt to Brentano's intentionalist descriptive empirical psychology in his 1921, 91–150; reprinted, *AMG* VII, 3–62.

Meinong recognizes the requirements of a mind-independent object theory as establishing the objectivity of its extraontology. It is only in this way that Meinong believes object theory can take its rightful place alongside metaphysics and mathematics. These are also in Meinong's view objective disciplines concerning a mind-independent set of objects and relations as befits a proper scientific methodology (*AMG* II, 485–8). Meinong, in a different way, is in this important shared sense every bit as empirical in his philosophical outlook as Brentano. In Meinong's hands, empiricism as a methodological orientation in philosophy is made a mode of discovery that through phenomenology reveals the need for an object theory domain of beingless objects, but that does not necessarily in itself constitute the principle by which a complete object theory referential semantic domain is comprehended with all existent and beingless objects.

The principle by which Meinong's object theory referential semantic domain is occupied is *intensional*. It concerns the *properties* by which objects are uniquely identified and individuated one from another. Meinong speaks of an object's *Sosein* as the constitutive properties that identify the object as the particular object it is. Properties and the combinations of properties that enter into the *Soseine* of every object, including especially the beingless objects that are otherwise known only phenomenologically, are independent of thought and hence of inner perception, descriptive psychology and phenomenology, just as they are independent of their ontic status of being or *Sein*, and their opposites or property complements. The Meinongian domain is suggested by but goes far beyond the limits of empirical psychology and the contents and objects of thought presented especially in what Meinong describes as all possible assumptions or *Annahmen*. We can accordingly think of the complete Meinongian domain of all objects, including beingless objects and even objects that can be described as falling beyond the limits of the thinkable and as such inaccessible to phenomenology, as comprehended by all logically possible combinations of all logically possible constitutive properties. Each combination of constitutive properties characterizes a distinct Meinongian object, some of which by definition can only exist, others subsist, and still others will be altogether beingless. Among the beingless objects must be included even those that by definition are unthinkable, that cannot be grasped in any occurrent psychological intending. Meinongian object theory domain can thus be considered mind-independent, objective, and, in the appropriate sense, scientific, despite being in a narrow sense extra-empirical.[4]

[4] The independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis was formulated by Mally 1904, 127. See Findlay 1995, 44. Griffin 1979. Lambert 1982, 1983.

3.4 Inner Perception and Unrestricted Freedom of Assumption

Meinong characterizes assumptions as belonging to an 'intermediate domain' falling between presentations (*Vorstellungen*) and judgments (*Urteile*). The intermediate domain of assumptions that Meinong describes consists of thoughts that are more than mere presentations, but less than judgments. Thus, Meinong writes:

> In what follows, the word "assumption" will be used as a technical term for all those experiences which, as I hope to show, belong to the previously mentioned intermediate domain between [presentation] and judgment. As for defining the sense in which we are to speak of assumptions here, it will be obvious to anyone who has given any serious attention to this matter of definition that the foregoing is no more than provisionally adequate, adequate for the purposes of preliminary guidance. [I]n the choice of the word "assumption," I myself have been anxious not to lose contact with linguistic usage. But my subject is not primarily whatever it is that is called an "assumption," to the extent that it is called that; my subject is certain experiential facts. (Meinong 1983, 12)[5]

The point Meinong wants to emphasize is that, while he finds it important to remain consistent with the way in which the word 'assumption' or '*Annahme*' is used in ordinary language, he does not regard linguistic convention as the final arbiter of the concept's meaning and philosophical significance. Rather, these questions, he clearly signals in the final sentence above, are to be determined phenomenologically, by inner perception or internal experience.

What reflection on the categories of experience reveals, Meinong maintains, is that what are generally called assumptions belong to an intermediate domain between the more widely discussed and in a way phenomenologically more obvious or conspicuous categories of presentations and judgments. Brentano distinguishes between three very broad categories of psychological phenomena, including only presentations, judgments, and emotions (Brentano 1924, 112 and *passim*). With these three types of thoughts available for his intentionalist philosophical psychology, Brentano believes that he can account for most if not all the contents of mind, and thereby provide a solid phenomenological, psychognosic or descriptive psychological foundation for all of philosophy, including metaphysics, epistemology, and value theory in ethics and aesthetics. Meinong, building on Brentano's groundwork distinctions, claims to have identified a fourth category of thoughts, *assumptions*, that are essential to developing object theory as a natural extension of Brentano's phenomenology.

Assumptions, Meinong contends, are different from both presentations and judgments. The reason is that, phenomenologically, they are experienced and

[5] All quotations from the Heanue translation, unless otherwise indicated. Meinong's original text is *Über Annahmen*, second edition 1910, *AMG* IV. I have replaced Heanue's translation of Meinong's '*Vorstellung*' as 'representation' with '[presentation]' in square brackets throughout to preserve consistency with standard English practice in commentary on the Brentano school's use of this term, and to avoid confusion with other quotations from discussions of Meinong's work.

evidently have characteristics that place them halfway between these two mainstays of Brentano's phenomenological categories. When we make an assumption, we are not merely presented with something passively, as in perception or emotion. Assumption is active. To assume is to *do* something, to entertain a thought and consider it as a posit, so to speak, for the sake of argument, to see where it might lead or what implications it might have. A mere presentation by contrast, as even the name suggests in both English and German, is something that occurs to thought, that literally presents itself or stands before the mind to be considered. It is not something the mind calls forth to consider or does anything proactively in order to produce in thought. Presentations as such are phenomenologically different than assumptions, which have precisely this active quality as capable of being engendered willfully by an act of deliberation.

If assumptions are more than presentations, they are also less than judgments. A judgment, as reflection on inner perception phenomenologically reveals, involves a commitment to the truth or other value of a proposition or object or state of affairs. When I judge that $2 + 2 = 4$ or that it is true that $2 + 2 = 4$, I am not merely passively presented with a fact to contemplate, but I am again doing something characteristic of that mode of thought, adopting an attitude toward its truth in thinking that amounts to accepting it, making it a part of my beliefs, acknowledging its truth, holding it as worthy of positive epistemic appraisal, or assigning it to a special category of propositions or related belief states. Such mental activity evidently makes judgment something more than, something over and above, presentations. To judge is not merely to be presented with a fact or state of affairs, but, again, to do something with the presentation, to intend a proposition as true, putting it into a category of positive or negative semantic or epistemic value, as Meinong says, with a certain greater or lesser degree of 'conviction'. The same is true *pari passu* with respect to judgments about other kinds of value, as when we judge that murder is morally wrong or that a painting or sculpture is beautiful. The mind is merely presented with a painting as an object of thought when standing before it and taking in the colors, shapes and textures as what Hume would call impressions of sensation. When the mind admires a painting, or decides that it is beautiful or the opposite, that it is pleasing, displeasing, balanced, sonorous, evocative of Greek ideals, neoclassical, expressionistic, romantic, realistic, kitsch, or the like, then something is added to the presentation that goes beyond its merely standing before the mind. The mind in that case actively places the painting or certain of its presented qualities into a particular value classification, into one box of desideratives rather than another. We do not need to rely on abstract theory for such a distinction, because we discern this additional feature of judgment phenomenologically.

Assumptions are different again from judgments in an obvious, internally introspective way. When we make an assumption, we are not merely passively confronted with a presentation, but call forth an idea for consideration. In the case of assumptions, we do not go as far in definitely assigning the idea to a particular value subcategory as we do in judging that a proposition or other kind of thing is true or false or has some other positive or negative moral or aesthetic or

other type of value. Assumption can be thought of phenomenologically as a preparation for certain kinds of judgments, often but by no means exclusively in theoretical disciplines including mathematics and the natural sciences, where they are often introduced explicitly as hypotheses. Assumptions are also frequently invoked and used with less dramatic flair in everyday reasoning, in snap decisions when we must size things up and choose what to do in practical situations, or in evaluating a course of action under a variety of constraints, trying to determine what would happen if we did this or if we did that. An assumption is something we make in order to be able to reach a judgment, in a process of thought that phenomenologically is not yet but may in some instances be on its way to becoming a judgment.

It is because Meinong regards assumptions as falling halfway between presentations and judgments that he believes he has discovered a fourth kind of consciousness or mode of thought beyond Brentano's three categories of presentations, judgments, and emotions. In itself, Meinong's identification of assumptions is an important contribution to phenomenological psychology and intentionalist philosophy of mind. It has enormous potential for explaining the kinds of thinking we do in the sciences and in practical reasoning, one that promises to shed light on the way we entertain hypotheses that is indispensable in many kinds of imaginative intellectual activities, and arguably the key to understanding human creativity. It is for precisely this reason also that Meinong recognizes the need to carve out an intermediate domain between presentations and judgments into which assumptions can be neatly fit, as stronger or more complicated or elaborate than presentations, and weaker or less complicated or elaborate than judgments. The intermediate domain to which assumptions properly belong in Meinong's object theory is inserted into the basic framework of Brentano's scheme of thought categories. They are established in the only empirically justified experiential way available to descriptive psychology, by a self-conscious reflective phenomenology of assumption-making as a characteristically intentional mental act. Meinong does not so much discover assumptions in the way that a new previously unknown species of beetle is discovered by a field entomologist. Rather, what Meinong does is call attention to a previously under-emphasized category of thoughts that Brentano's newly emerging philosophical theory of phenomenology had not taken sufficiently into account, and whose significance for the concept of mind other writers had not yet adequately appreciated. Meinong explains:

> There are. . .two things which, in my opinion, anyone will grant as being present in judgdment, but lacking in representation. A person who judges believes something, or is convinced of something; it is only by a quite obvious extension of verbal usage that we can speak of judgments in which the subject leaves his conviction *in suspenso*. Furthermore, every judgment, by its very nature, occupies a definite position within the antithesis of yes and no, of affirmation and negation. If I have a definite view, a conviction, in regard to A or in regard to its connection with B, then this must necessarily either be to the effect that A is (or is B) or be to the effect that A is not (or is not B). And this holds true not only in the case of judging with certainty, but likewise in the case of uncertain judgment: Even when I merely surmise, the surmise ineluctably has an affirmative or negative character. (Meinong 1983, 10)

It is precisely these two phenomenologically recognized and extracted factors, the sense of conviction and the antithesis or opposition of yes and no, of affirmation and negation, that Meinong regards as essential to judgment and altogether lacking in the case of both presentations and assumptions. Meinong waxes autobiographical briefly as he recounts his own earlier confusion of the categories of judgment and assumption, which he believes he has now sorted out more clearly. He relates that he has recently better understood the significance of the lack of conviction in the affirmation or negation that accompanies those states of mind he now describes as belonging to an intermediate domain between Brentano's categories of presentations and judgments, and which he will soon identify more positively as assumptions. He adds, drawing explicitly again on the phenomenological evidence of inner perception, in league with a particular method of philosophical reflection:

> In everything that is entitled to be called a judgment, I find, therefore, without exception, the two factors mentioned above, the element of conviction and the position within the antithesis of yes and no; and I cannot help thinking that no theory a person has could ever prevent him from likewise meeting with these factors. For a long time, though, I regarded the two of them as being simply one; or at least, I regarded the second as a sort of determination of the first — and this as one of those determinations that cannot be found apart from what they determine. I would have always thought it obvious that any conviction had to be affirmative or negative, but I would never have expected to find affirmation or negation in any case where conviction was lacking. . .As soon as it can be agreed that not only the element of conviction but also the opposition between affirmation and negation creates a fact that is essentially different from [presentation], then our approach to convictionless affirmation and negation will also lead us directly to the previously mentioned intermediate domain, the one between [presentation] and judgment. (Meinong 1983, 10–11)

In his final chapter 'Results: Steps Toward a Psychology of Assumptions', Meinong maintains: 'Thus, one can say, "An assumption is a judgment without belief"; and of course one can just as well say, "A judgment is an assumption with the addition of belief," or something similar' (Meinong 1983, 242).

Having situated assumptions phenomenologically as intermediate between presentations and judgments, Meinong is in a position to explore this 'new' territory. He more finely distinguishes kinds of assumptions, objects and objectives (*Objekta*, *Objektive*), subsuming, equivalently, propositions or states of affairs, and among the latter dignitatives and desideratives as normative objectives of value assumptions. He distinguishes between *Seinsobjektive*, *Nichtseinsobjektive*, and *Soseinsobjektive*, and within the later subcategory again between the further subcategories of *Wasseinsobjektive* and *Wieseinsobjektive*, articulating the difference between *what* an object is and *how* it is. He analyzes the relations between assumptions within these subdivisions and their phenomenological roles in the descriptive psychology of a number of different kinds of thinking styles and episodes (*AMG* II, 489–91; see Findlay 1995, 42–101).

As worthwhile and independently interesting as these further implications of Meinong's theory of assumptions are, for present purposes it is important to highlight only two major uses Meinong makes of assumptions in his object theory. These concern the relation of assumptions as fundamental to judgments, and the

application of assumptions in the determination of an object theory domain of beingless intended objects. Assumptions are the foundations of judgments in Meinong's characterization of assumptions as yes-or-no states of mind lacking belief or conviction. The mind must already be in possession of an assumption which becomes a judgment when the content of the assumption is believed. A judgment, in other words, is a transformation of an assumption, a mental saying of yes or saying no to a proposition or state of affairs, supplemented by a phenomenologically transparent psychological conviction of some degree that the assumption is true, a yes-conviction, so to speak, or alternatively a psychological conviction again of some degree or other that the assumption is false, reflected psychologically and phenomenologically in a no-conviction. Value judgments that are not obviously semantic or epistemic can be accommodated if necessary by a straightforward extension of the theory whereby to judge that a painting is beautiful is to judge that the *Objektiv*, proposition or state of affairs which is such that the painting is beautiful, is true.

The hierarchy holding between assumptions and judgments further explains the role of assumptions in comprehending the objects in a complete Meinongian object theory domain. The only acceptable basis for Meinong's doctrine must consist of some version of Brentano's concept of descriptive empirical psychology. An object to be included in the object theory owes its origins to the internal experiential phenomenology of inner perception. The connection between phenomenology and a Meinongian object theory domain can be direct or derivative. If an object is to be included in Meinong's object theory as a result of its experience in or relation to empirical psychology, as an idea, thought, or mental state, then it will obviously be inadequate to limit the theory exclusively to presentations. Presentations as purely passive psychological phenomena cannot be expected to incorporate all logically possible objects of thought, since not all logically possible objects of thought will necessarily happen to actually be presented to all historically existent thinking and referring psychological subjects. Something more general is needed.

The same is true of whatever limited range of judgments are actually made in the entire history and future of referential thinking. Meinong is interested in the larger and more objective less psychologistic but still psychologically grounded domain of objects, a domain consisting of all the logically possible objects of presentations and judgments, including judgments that many such objects do not actually exist or metaphysically cannot possibly exist. To speak in this sense of all logically possible presentations and all logically possible judgments is in effect to refer at once to all of the objects that might be *assumed*, without the actual passive occurrence to thought of presentations, and without the accompanying feeling of conviction that Meinong considers essential to judgments. This gives assumptions and the phenomenology of assumptions an explanatory priority in the foundations of Meinong's object theory.

3.5 From Intentionality to Intensionality, Phenomenology to Object Theory

Phenomenology is the basis for Meinong's object theory. Despite providing at most an incomplete and inadequate comprehension principle for the theory's semantic domain, descriptive empirical psychology supports the idealization of objects on which the object theory depends. There is a natural progression from presentations to judgments in Brentano's original division of conscious states to Meinong's intermediate category of assumptions.

All three varieties of thought are experientially encountered by inner perception. In an obvious sense, judgments are more internally complicated than presentations, because they involve the additional elements of conviction and affirmation or denial of a proposition's content. Assumptions, lacking the conviction of judgments, are more sophisticated than both presentations and judgments, by virtue of requiring a deliberate and self-conscious suspension of commitment. Whereas judgments are made naively by every thinker, in deciding, for example, that it is raining when presented with the sight of falling rain, assumptions presuppose special training. We learn to make assumptions, to hypothesize. To suspend judgment, one must first be capable of judging, whereas judging can and generally does take place without the benefit of assumption.

Although assumptions according to Meinong occupy middle ground between presentations and judgments in terms of their epistemic strength and complexity of internal phenomenologically discernible structure, assumptions in another way are more advanced kinds of thoughts that typify a higher level of thinking than either presentations or judgments. Looking beyond some of the conflicting ways of stratifying these three categories of psychological occurrences, in which assumptions are placed alternatively in different respects as wedged between or perched atop presentations and judgments, assumptions are singled out methodologically by Meinong as the phenomenological starting place in specifying the complete set of objects belonging to an object theory referential semantic domain.

What furnishes the object theory with objects is what Meinong elsewhere refers to as unrestricted freedom of assumption (*unbeschränkten Annahmefreiheit*) (*AMG* II, 483–5). Phenomenologically, in keeping with his commitment to a Brentanian empirical psychology as the cornerstone of his philosophy, Meinong is encouraged by the fact that thought is never inhibited in its ability to assume anything whatsoever, including the (manifestly false) assumption that nonexistent things exist. Thought is free to entertain whatever assumptions it likes, with absolutely no restrictions. The fact that there are no unicorns, flying horses, centaurs, mermaids, or golden mountains, does not prevent thought from freely (falsely) assuming that there are or that there might be. The fact that metaphysically there cannot possibly exist round squares or circular triangles does not prevent thought from freely (again, falsely) assuming that there are or could be such things in another imaginable world. Indeed, although Meinong does not especially emphasize the case, the assumptions made in every mathematical demonstration by indirect proof and in

many rational arguments *reductio ad absurdum* outside of mathematics, are logically impossible. The hypotheses of such proofs are nevertheless assumed, entertained in thought, considered in the critical examination of their consequences, where they are essential to such reasoning, and when they are seen to entail an outright logical contradiction, reflect back on the falsehood of the assumptions, whose negations are thereby proved.

Reflecting on thought processes when we engage in hypothetical reasoning reveals that there are literally no barriers to making whatever assumptions we like, no matter how false, fanciful, or even self-contradictory. More importantly, free assumption is directly linked to many invaluable intellectual activities. When a myth-maker considers the possibility that there could be a creature with the torso of a man and the trunk and legs of a horse, or with the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a fish, or a horse with wings, no obstacles are phenomenologically experienced in even the most fanciful inventions of fiction. All imaginative literature owes its origins to the unrestricted freedom of assumption, in which imagination is given free play to describe characters and situations that do not actually exist, but are assumed and presented for entertainment and instruction, or as an exploration of the deeper dimensions of the human condition (Meinong 1983, 82–6). To generalize even further, it is no exaggeration to say that all creativity begins with free assumption, in putting together concepts and evaluating the possibilities of things that do not actually exist, but that might potentially be useful, endearing, frightening, or the like, if they were to occur. Assumption and imagination provide the blueprint for new directions in every avenue of human endeavor, as we consider assumptions about new machines and untried freely entertained ideas and ways of doing things. If we think of action intentionally as always directed toward the attainment of an objective that does not already exist while the decision making process is still taking place, then all action, regardless of whether it is creative in the ordinary sense or the most ordinary and commonplace, essentially involves free assumption. All action in that case is predicated on a thought's intending a state of affairs that does not yet exist as the agent's goal or purpose, which the agent resolves and dedicates energies directed to try to bring about, and without reference to which the action, even if it is not successful in attaining its end, cannot adequately be explained (Meinong 1983, 85–7, 116–24).

The concept of boundlessly free assumption comprehends the range of objects of all logically possible presentations and judgments. By this, Meinong cannot mean merely the free assumptions that actual psychological subjects happen to make, even if we include the entire history and future physical and psychological states of all thinking beings. Logical possibilities for intended objects outstrip the objects that are actually intended in real time by actually existent thinkers. Free assumption nevertheless points the way toward a fully general comprehension principle for mind-independent objects of the sort Meinong needs in his vision of an objective scientific object theory. The transition required in order to achieve an object theory of mind-independent objects originates with descriptive empirical psychology, and hence with actually intended objects and the phenomenology of unrestricted free assumption. In due course, as the theory is developed, the domain of all objects is

eventually extended beyond the thoughts that psychological subjects actually happen to entertain and the objects those historical thoughts happen actually to intend. The phenomenology of free assumption in occurrent intending suggests a more general principle incorporating all ideally or logically possible intended objects, by which Meinong advances object theory from occurrent intentionality to intensionality.[6]

Intensionalism is an approach to philosophical semantics based on the properties of things and the combinations of properties that define and serve to uniquely identify logically possible objects of thought and reference. The difference between intensional and extensional theories of meaning is a matter of whether semantics begins with objects in terms of which it defines properties as the values of predicates, or begins with properties in terms of which it defines objects, as the bearers of certain constitutive property combinations. An extensional semantic theory interprets reference in terms of existent objects only, and provides truth conditions for predications of properties to objects as a function of the extensions of predicates. A predication of a property to an object is true in an extensional semantics just in case the object to which the property is predicated belongs to the extension of the predicate consisting of all and only the existent objects that instantiate the property. An intensional theory proceeds in the opposite way, beginning with properties, and establishing identity conditions for objects by associating each distinct object with a unique combination of constitutive or identity-determining properties. Reference to a particular object is intensionally explained in terms of the constitutive properties uniquely associated with an object. An object referred to in thought or language is thus the particular intended object with a particular combination of constitutive properties. A true predication is intensionally explained as the inclusion of the property predicated of an object in the combination of constitutive properties by which the object is defined and with which it is intensionally identified. A false predication involves the exclusion of the property (falsely) predicated of an object from its identifying property combination.

The reference class of an intensional semantic theory is not limited to existent objects. There are indefinitely many combinations of properties that do not happen to be exemplified by any existent objects, or, for that matter, even by metaphysically possible objects. If we consider all possible combinations of properties and associate an object with each such combination, namely, the object that has just each such combination of properties, then we will include in an intensional semantic domain the kinds of objects for which Meinong's object theory is most notorious in mainstream extensionalist analytic philosophy. The names of these intended objects can be understood as abbreviations for the corresponding distinguishing constitutive property clusters. We include thereby the so-called incomplete objects

[6] The difference between intentionality and intensionality is sometimes characterized as a distinction between an abstract relation obtaining between thought and its intended objects, and the mode of linguistic expression of intentional states. Quotation, numbering and certain modal contexts are thought to represent counterexamples that are intensional but have nothing immediately to do with intentionality.

(*unvollständige Gegenstände*), like Berkeley's golden mountain, whose properties are only to be golden and mountainous, while lacking any particular height or shape, and (metaphysically) impossible objects (*unmögliche Gegenstände*), like the round square, whose properties of being both simultaneously and uniformly round and square are metaphysically incompatible, and hence cannot possibly be exemplified by any existent object.

The two categories of incomplete and impossible objects jointly constitute the order of beingless intended objects in Meinong's object theory, as combinations of properties that are psychologically intendable even if they are never actually intended. The comprehension principle for a Meinongian semantics is phenomenological in origin, inspiration, and ultimate justification. It can be symbolized as including in the Meinongian object theory domain δ an existent, subsistent, or beingless object for any combination of properties *P*, symbolized as: $\exists\delta\forall P\exists x[x \in \delta \leftrightarrow Px]$. The intensional combinatorial principle for the domain of Meinongian objects goes beyond the phenomenology of occurrent intending. It embraces all logically possible intendable objects intensionally, as the aggregate of all logically possible combinations of all logically possible constitutive identity-determining properties. The Meinongian domain is determined by such objects as constitutive property combinations, whether or not they happen ever to be actually intended by real time thoughts. The domain includes beingless distinctively Meinongian objects that are constitutionally incomplete, lacking both at least one constitutive property and its complement, or, nonexclusively, metaphysically impossible intended objects, involving both at least one constitutive property and its complement (Jacquette 2002a, 42–88).

Meinong's terminology for his intensional object theory referential semantic domain distinguishes between being (*Sein*) and so-being or propertyhood (*Sosein*), over which it superimposes a principle of the independence of so-being from being. According to this essential thesis of object theory, an object has whatever properties it has in its *Sosein* or constitutive property combination, independently of its ontic status. The independence of *Sosein* from *Sein*, and the indifference of an object's *Sosein* to *Sein* and *Nichtsein*, pave the way for Meinong's neo-Brentanian transition from phenomenology to object theory, and from occurrent intentionality to intensionality. In order for objects to be truly independent of being, they must be independent of the actual existence of thinkers who may happen to intend them in thought. This kind of mind-independence can only be guaranteed in a semantic theory and philosophical psychology by defining objects intensionally as constitutive property combinations, which do not presuppose that they exist or are actually intended by any actually occurrent thoughts.[7]

[7] Meinong went even further by accepting a version of his student Mally's argument by referential diagonalization to show that there are psychologically unapprehendable objects. See Mally 1914; Jacquette trans. 1989d. Meinong discusses Mally's argument in *Über emotionale Präsentation*, *AMG* III, where he responds by offering a theory of defective objects. See also Jacquette 1982, 1996a, 37–55 and 70–9.

If the objects included in a Meinongian object theory are defined in this way, then object theory can be objective, scientific, and mind-independent, avoiding the objectionable psychologisms that otherwise threaten an intentional theory of actually intended objects identified in relation to particular intending episodes by particular psychological subjects. It is the phenomenology of assumptions that indicates the direction by which Meinong's object theory can exceed the practical limits of phenomenology, by which the intensionality of mind-independent property combinations establish a domain of intendable objects, including beingless incomplete and impossible objects that are ideally objectively available for thought, but need never be actually intended. Without the phenomenology of unrestricted free assumptions, Meinong's object theory could not possibly get off the ground. If object theory were constrained by phenomenology in establishing its domain of objects, it would be subjective, psychologistic, and to that extent nonscientific. It would lack an objective mind-independent domain of objects available to thought but not limited to whatever thoughts may contingently happen to occur.

The role of phenomenology and descriptive empirical psychology in Meinong's object theory is proportionately complex. It begins with phenomenology, and in particular with the inner perception of unrestricted free assumption, by which it justifies a first glimpse experientially of the objective mind-independent domain of existent and beingless objects that transcends occurrent phenomenology. Meinong's object theory domain goes beyond the limited implications of phenomenology. It moves theory forward by aspiring to establish a mind-independent and generally existence-independent domain of existent and beingless objects, transforming the ontic intentionality of thought into its semantic intensionality, and carrying over into its expression in language, art, and other value- and intention-loaded artifacts. The independence of Meinongian objects from actual thought, the independence of so-being from being, the indifference of objects to questions of ontic status, in turn provides a scientific basis in terms of which Meinong is better positioned than his teacher Brentano to explain the intensional semantics and intentional descriptive psychology of inner perception in phenomenology.

Chapter 4
Außersein of the Pure Object

4.1 Beyond Being and Non-Being

Meinong's doctrine of the *Außersein* of the pure object posits a semantic domain of absolute ontic neutrality. *Außersein* is literally outside being, a realm of object theory objects that comprehends, not an ontology in the strictly correct sense of a domain of existent entities, but an extraontology of nonexistent objects, or of objects considered independently of their ontic status. Meinong describes *Außersein* as beyond both being and non-being, *jenseits von Sein und Nichtsein*.[1]

The concept of *Außersein* occurs relatively late in Meinong's philosophy. It emerges at the end of a process of having considered and rejected alternative ways of thinking about the peculiar metaphysics of intended objects. Meinong eventually concludes that intended objects are capable of being referred to and made true constitutive property predicants regardless of their ontic status. Along the way, he experiments with a compromise solution that introduces the weakest imaginable category of *Quasisein* or almost-being that is minimally enough to support the true predication of properties. Meinong's liberation from the tyranny of being in philosophical semantics was a gradual process occurring over the course of several distinct stages. Meinong first attributed the category of *Quasisein* to what he would later boldly admit as beingless objects. *Quasisein* was meant to provide a kind of middle ground between being and non-being, such that intended objects belonging neither to the spatiotemporal world nor to an abstract Platonic order could nevertheless have at least enough semantic presence to stand as subjects of reference and true predication. Later, Meinong further frees object theory of even this vague quasi-ontic requirement, extending reference and true predication of properties, and

[1] The principal source for Meinong's abandonment of his early concept of *Quasisein* is his essay, 'Über Gegenstandstheorie' in *AMG* II, §4.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_4

by implication naming, counting, quantifying over, and all the logical privileges of existent entities to any intended objects regardless of their ontic status.[2]

The intermediate category of *Quasisein* is transparently inadequate, and was eventually discarded by Meinong in the ongoing development of object theory. The concept of *Quasisein* is, first of all, problematic to define, except negatively, as the ontic or quasi-ontic order of objects that are neither existent nor subsistent, but that despite these ontic deficiencies can somehow stand as the subjects of reference and true predication of constitutive properties. Why, however, attribute even quasi-being to such intended objects as the incomplete golden mountain and the impossible round square? If it is just as acceptable or unacceptable to refer to and truly predicate constitutive properties to beingless objects as to objects with *Quasisein*, then, as Meinong also came to see, object theory does not gain anything by positing this additional category. The *Quasisein* episode more than anything suggests Meinong's hesitation and timidity in saying at first what *Gegenstandstheorie* was eventually to trumpet: That an intended object is identified and individuated by its totality of constitutive properties under intensional property-based Leibnizian identity conditions, the same that must be satisfied by any dynamic or abstract existent entity in the ontology. Ockham's razor would then seem to rule against *Quasisein*, purely on grounds of its failing to accomplish any legitimate theoretical work, and hence of being explanatorily superfluous. The difficulty is not only that *Quasisein* is unnecessary if beingless objects can be referred to and have properties truly predicated of them without further ado, but that *Quasisein* has no independent justification as a metaphysical category, other than giving a name to a questionable quasi-ontic status. It attempts to collect together all beingless objects of reference and predication comprehended in a semantic domain of intended objects, regardless of their ontic status. The concept unsurprisingly is never adequately clarified by Meinong, and there is scarce time for him to do so before he has moved beyond the suggestion, appearing to appreciate after all that not much good can be made of a category of almost-being.

Actually being intended is eventually also surpassed in Meinong's object theory as a criterion for objecthood or inclusion in the object theory reference domain. Meinong, relying on a diagonal argument of his student Mally's, involving object-theory-definable thoughts about an unapprehended and hence unintended object, concludes that Meinongian objects so construed are mind-independent. The argument depends on classifying the property of being unapprehended, unintended, as of being intended, as a constitutive property entering into a Meinongian object's *Sosein*. Object theory, disconnected in its logic and semantics from its inspirational phenomenology, attains mind-independent comprehension of all and only intendable and perhaps one unintendable object, if Mally's paradoxical unapprehended object is comprehended by the Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain. This shepherding comprehends all logically possible objects, intended and otherwise, only if it populates its domain with a distinct object satisfying self-identity conditions under intensional property-based Leibnizian

[2] Meinong refers to his 1910 *Über Annahmen*, *AMG* IV, Chap. 7.

identity criteria. Every Meinongian existent or nonexistent intended and perhaps one unintendable object enters the referential domain of semantic *Außersein* only by virtue of being nominally associated with a distinct combinatorially identifiable unique set of characteristic constitutive properties.

It is natural in this light to interpret Meinong's brief flirtation with *Quasisein* as a transitional phase by which he weans himself from the referential extensionalist assumption that an object must have some sort of positive ontic status, some sort of being, that it must exist in at least some thin sense, in order to be capable of being referred to as an intended object of true attributions of properties. Prior to fully embracing the maximally ontically rarified atmosphere of *Außersein*, Meinong transitions through the nebulous paper category of *Quasisein*. His digression unfortunately left a lasting impression with some readers, who falsely, suppose that Meinong clings to the category of *Quasisein* later in his mature *gegenstandstheoretischen* referential semantics.

The fact is that Meinong replaces *Quasisein* as a metasemantic category with the ontically and semantically more fearless concept of *Außersein* relatively early in the evolution of object theory. He begins to see that an intended object's ontic status is irrelevant to its satisfying self-identity conditions, and so of being named as an individual referent, described, counted, quantified over, and so on, irrespective of whether or not it exists. The being or non-being of an intended object is oblique to its being the particular intended object it is, with all the constitutive properties by which its intensional Leibnizian identity conditions are satisfied. A nonexistent intended object generally does not have as many constitutive properties and or their complements in its Meinongian *Sosein*, as an existent object before us for consideration in real physical time and space. Nonexistent Meinongian objects tend to be incomplete even when they are also metaphysically impossible. We know right away that Sherlock Holmes $\neq$ Anna Karenina, and that Holmes $\neq$ Winston Churchill. Although we might know roughly the same relatively manageable amount of information about the total constitutive properties of fictional Meinongian intended objects Holmes and Karenina, if you add up all the uses of proper names and true predications, we could never exhaust the facts about the constitutive properties of an existent intended object like Churchill.

Quasisein, in the early production stages of Meinong's object theory, does not satisfy the intuitive requirements of either the traditional extensionalist in semantics or the Brentanian phenomenology and inner perceptual empiricism of intended objects. The extensionalist is not mollified by efforts to refer to and predicate properties of objects like the golden mountain or round square that do not actually exist or subsist, when the early Meinongian declares that they have *Quasisein* merely in order to be able to say that they can be referred to and stand as the bearers of properties. The extensionalist continues to complain that objects that do not actually exist or subsist cannot be the subjects of reference or true predication. What does not exist, they exclaim rather than explain, cannot have any properties! Another line of argument, begins with the rhetorical question that tries to make the same point, asking, If there is no golden mountain, how can we think or speak of it? If the golden mountain does not exist, how can it be golden and a mountain? How

can what does not exist have any properties? If the golden mountain does not actually exist, then there is or exists nothing to be or to have the properties of being golden and a mountain. If there is nothing with the properties of being golden and a mountain, if the golden mountain does not actually exist, moreover, then what is there to speak of or refer to as the golden mountain? More importantly, how could it possibly convince a philosophical opponent that an undeniably nonexistent intended object like the round square can meaningfully stand as referent and true predicant merely by relegating it to the category of *Quasisein*?

The semantics in either case comprehends necessarily nonexistent referents, necessarily nonexistent intended objects, like the round square. The round square remains just as stubbornly truly round as it is truly square. These facts for object theory do not change whether or not Meinong extends to the round square a weakly-defined meta-semantic category of *Quasisein*, or cut it ontically free, on the strength of its satisfying general intensional Leibnizian self-identity conditions. We require semantically no more of existent objects. Satisfying Leibnizian identity conditions guarantees an intended object's inclusion in the Meinongian referential semantic domain, even if not in the ontology. Meinong thereby leads the golden mountain and the round square into the greener pastures of ontically neutral *Außersein*.

4.2 Ontology of Reference and Predication

To refer to an object presupposes that the object meets uniquely distinguishing identity conditions. These in turn seem to presuppose that the object truly has properties. How, then, can we either refer to or truly predicate properties of such nonexistent objects as the golden mountain? It is presumably these or similar philosophical concerns that imaginably were the nagging doubts behind Meinong's original idea of postulating *Quasisein* as a compromise solution. *Quasisein* is meant to meet the intuitive desire to attribute some kind of being for nonexistent and nonsubsistent intended objects, just like existent intended objects, so that they can be respectably referred to and bear properties. However, nothing short of actual existence or subsistence can go far enough to answer the requirements of critics who are persuaded that there is no possibility of referring to or truly predicating constitutive properties of a nonexistent golden mountain, no matter to what strange made-up metaphysical category the object might be said to belong.

Russell, in his classic counter-Frege, counter-Meinong study 'On Denoting', puts the objection most concisely when he maintains that: '. . .if we enumerated the things that are bald, and then the things that are not bald, we should not find the present King of France in either list' (Russell 1904; rpt., Lackey 1973, 36). Meinong would say that it is true that the present King of France is not included on the list of bald or nonbald things, since the present King of France is an incomplete object whose *Sosein* lacks both the constitutive property of being bald and its complement. To accept that predicationally incomplete intended objects can

fail to be bald or nonbald, is not to deny either that it is not the case that the present King of France is bald, nor that it is not the case that the present King of France is not bald, both of which propositions are true in a standard kind of Meinongian semantics. It is certainly not to deny that the present King of France can be referred to and truly has other constitutive properties, such as being a king, being a king of France, and being a king of France at the present time, even though there exists no present king of France, and France is not currently a monarchy. It is to provide the grounds for concluding that a relevantly predicationally incomplete neither bald nor nonbald object like the present King of France does not exist.

If we acknowledge a distinction between constitutive properties and their complements and the propositional negation of predications of a property or its complement to an intended object, then the object can have property F (being a frog, say) or complementary property non-F (being other than a frog), and it can also *not* be the case that an object a has property F, that a does not have property F, or $\neg Fa$, or does not have the complement non-F of property F, $\neg$non-Fa. Applying the distinction between internal 'negation' or predicate complementation and external or propositional negation, Russell can be said to move too quickly from recognizing that the principle of excluded middle, in the form, throughout, for any property F, $\forall x[Fx \vee \text{non-}Fx]$, does not apply to all Meinongian objects, in particular to incomplete Meinongian objects like the golden mountain and round square, to the conclusion that therefore Meinong's object theory violates the more sacrosanct principle of noncontradiction, $\forall x\neg[Fx \wedge \neg Fx]$. The criticism only spins in circles against Meinongians who distinguish between internal and external negation, or, equivalently, between predicate complementation and propositional negation, for predications involving specifically constitutive properties like being golden or a mountain, round or square. By such a distinction, useful in formally distinguishing constitutive from extraconstitutive properties in a Meinongian semantic framework, for any constitutive property F, $\neg\forall x[\text{non-}Fx \leftrightarrow \neg Fx]$, and, indeed, $\forall x\neg[\text{non-}Fx \leftrightarrow \neg Fx]$.[3]

A Russellian, in all consistency, must deny that a nonexistent object like the golden mountain is even nonexistent in the sense of an intended object having the property of being nonexistent. This is not confusedly to say that an object must exist in order to have the property of not existing. Rather, taking a page from Russell's influential analysis of definite descriptions, it is possible, and from the standpoint of traditional extensionalism in the semantics of ordinary language, preferable, to maintain that the apparent subject-predicate statement, 'The golden mountain is nonexistent', says simply that $\neg\exists x[x = {}^{\circ}yGy \wedge My]$. Here the nondenoting phrase 'The golden mountain' has what Russell refers to as 'primary occurrence', is eliminated in a reformulation where it is given only a 'secondary occurrence'.

[3] Meinong introduced the distinction between *konstitutorische* and *ausserkonstitutorische Bestimmungen* (constitutive and extraconstitutive properties) in *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit*, *AMG* VI, 176–7. Findlay 1995, 176, proposed the English translations 'nuclear' and 'extranuclear'. See Jacquette 1985–86, 1994b. Also Jacquette, Nuclear and Extranuclear Properties, Chap. 5 this volume.

The phrase's secondary occurrence is one in which the phrase does not appear to be a denoting subject term to which a predicate is attached, in the ontically unproblematic equivalents, 'There exists no golden mountain', or, more canonically, in 'There exists no *x* such that *x* is identical with the golden mountain'.

If *Quasisein* is not enough for the traditional extensionalist, who will only recognize the possibility of referring and truly predicating properties to existent dynamic or abstract entities fully possessed of being, neither does the concept offer what Meinong needs in order to make sense of reference and predication to any and every intended object of thought. What does it add to a nonexistent intended object to label it as having *Quasisein*, merely for the sake of being able unpersuasively to maintain that it can thereby be referred to as the subject of properties? The introduction of *Quasisein* in this light appears to be little more than a rhetorical trick. We are accustomed to thinking in an extensional mode of referring and truly predicating properties to entities that have some sort of being. Since the term '*Quasisein*' or 'quasi-being' appears to involve some sort of being, we should then be on safe ground to refer and truly predicate properties to nonexistent nonsubsistent objects, provided that we say they at least have *Quasisein* or quasi-being.

What could be gained by trying to wedge in quasi-being between being and non-being? If we can refer to and truly predicate properties of an intended object that neither exists nor subsists, then, arguably, a beingless object must already be capable of having properties, if we are ever to be in a position even to say that the object has the property of having *Quasisein*. If we can do that, then why not simply say that a beingless object like the golden mountain has the constitutive properties of being golden and a mountain? Why not conclude that we can distinguish the golden mountain from all other existent and beingless objects by intensional property-related Leibnizian identity conditions that comprehend all intended objects regardless of their ontic status? Why not put predication before reference, as in some intensional logics, and as even Frege's distinction between sense and reference, and the thesis that intension determines extension, requires, rather than making reference exclusively to existent or subsistent objects a precondition for true predication, as in Russell's more thoroughly extensionalist semantics?

4.3 From *Quasisein* to *Außersein*

The purpose of Meinong's early concept of *Quasisein* is to provide a sense in which it could be said that any subject of reference and predication has a qualified kind of being that falls short of real being or actual dynamic or abstract existence. The temptation is to create a special category for objects that is not quite being, but that still makes it intuitively palatable to refer to and predicate properties of otherwise beingless objects. The persistent idea is that there must be something to which properties can attach, even when the objects of predication are not physical or abstract existents.

Meinong explainss the problem of being and predication that motivated his postulating the category of *Quasisein* in his insightful 1904 essay, '*Über*

Gegenstandstheorie', included in his edited volume of that year, titled, *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie*. He considers the argument that when an object A is beingless or has *Nichtsein*, the *Nichtseinsobjektiv* that attributes beinglessness to the object is true, and therefore has being after all, which he at first supposed could only or best be understood if the object A itself has being, despite being nonexistent. That would not be good, and Meinong responds by advancing the category of *Quasisein*. The idea is that *quasiseiende Gegenstände* do not fully exist, but they have just enough self-identity to be the objects of reference and true predications of constitutive properties. It will not be long before Meinong recognizes that reference and true predication of constitutive properties to intended objects functions semantically structurally exactly alike in every instance of thought and its expression, regardless of the intended object's ontic status. Meinong maintains that:

> [S]ince the Objective strictly prevents us from assuming that A has being (being, as we have seen, can sometimes be understood as existence, sometimes as subsistence), it appears that the requirement that the Object have being (which was inferred from the being of the *Nichtseinsobjektiv*) makes sense only insofar as the being in question is neither existence nor subsistence — only insofar as a third order of being, if one may speak this way, is adjoined to existence and susistence. This sort of being must belong, therefore, to every Object as such. A *Nichtsein* of the same type cannot be set in opposition to it, for a *Nichtsein* even in this new sense would have to immediately produce difficulties analogous to those which arise from *Nichtsein* in its ordinary sense, and which the new concept was to have eliminated. The term '*Quasisein*' seemed to me for a while to be a completely suitable expression for this rather oddly constituted type of being. (Meinong 1960, 84)

The problem is not resolved in this way, but only pushed back a step. In considering the semantic domain of intended objects generally, the early Meinong must be just as insistent that it is possible in principle to think about *Quasisein*-less objects as it is to think about beingless objects. The theory collapses into logical incoherence if it is maintained in spite of these considerations that *quasiseinlose Gegenstände* must have *Quasisein* in order to be referred to or have properties truly predicated of them, including the property of being *quasiseinlose*. To suppose that an object must have *Quasisein* in order to be referred to and have properties truly predicated of it is logically as unwarranted as agreeing with the traditional extensionalist that an object must have *Sein* in order to be a subject of reference and predication. Why should an object of thought have any sort of being or quasi-being? Meinong had argued that there must be a kind of qualification of objects that admits of no opposite whereby they can be thought of, referred to, and stand as subjects of true constitutive property predications. For a time he considered *Quasisein* as providing the shred of almost-being, being-lite, minimally needed for reference and predication of properties even to intended objects that are neither spatiotemporal nor abstract existent entities. He indicates that afterward he quickly became dissatisfied with the concept of *Quasisein*:

> This designation ['*Quasisein*'], however, like others that were approved earlier [in *Über Annahmen*, 95] (for instance, '*Pseudoexistenz*' and 'Quasitranszendenz,') runs the risk of causing confusion. More important, meanwhile, are the following pertinent considerations. Can being which is in principle unopposed by non-being be called being at all? However much we are permitted in this connection to judge that there is a being which is neither

> existence nor subsistence, nowhere else do we find grounds for such a postulate. Must we not take thought to avoid it in our case also wherever it is possible? (Meinong 1960, 85)

In replacing the concept of *Quasisein* with that of *Außersein*, Meinong had grasped the inadequacies of *Quasisein*. By postulating the category of *Außersein* as an extraontology, Meinong proposes to make sense of objects considered only as intended objects, which is to say in terms of their *Sein*-independent *Soseine*, their identity-conditional constitutive properties, regardless of their ontic status, as existent, dynamic or abstract, or altogether beingless. Findlay recounts Meinong's idea of *Quasisein*, and speculates about his reasons for rejecting the theory:

> Meinong tells us that he originally believed in a variety of being possessed even by chimeras, to which he gave the name of *Quasisein* (quasi-being). This sort of being, like the being of Russell, pertained to everything; it was distinguished from other varieties of being by the fact that it had no contrary. For if it had a contrary, the entities which lacked *Quasisein* would have to possess *Quasisein* of a higher order, since they would certainly not be nothing. And so we should be drawn into an infinite series of orders of *Quasisein*; which is not an impossible but a very unplausible assumption. *Quasisein* had therefore no contrary, but belonged to all entities whether they existed or not. Meinong rejected the doctrine of *Quasisein*, because he could not conceive that there should be a variety of being to which no corresponding non-being was opposed. If being means anything at all, the statement that *X is* must contribute something to our knowledge, and this will only be so if it is conceivable that *X is not*. A being which automatically belongs to every entity and whose contrary is inconceivable is really nothing at all. (Findlay 1995, 47)

Findlay considers two arguments Meinong mentions in support of *Quasisein* as an alternative to being, but which he did not finally accept, as a prelude to introducing Meinong's ontic-neutral concept of *Außersein*:

> Meinong then formulates his own doctrine on the subject: the pure object stands beyond being and non-being; both alike are external to it. Whether an object is or not, makes no difference to *what* the object is. The pure object is said to be *außerseiend* or to have *Außersein*; it lies 'outside'. What the object is, its real essence, consists in a number of determinations of so-being; the object 'elephant' for instance is determined by the determinations of being an animal, having a thick hide, having a trunk, and so on. Meinong believes that such determinations are genuinely possessed by an object whether it exists or not; the roundness of the round square is a fact about it which is unaffected by its non-existence. (Findlay 1995, 49)

The problem that led Meinong to postulate *Quasisein* is the same difficulty that Parmenides and Plato wrestled over (Plato, *Parmenides* 160b-e; *Sophist* 237–264; also *Republic* 478b6-c2; *Euthydemus* 283e7-284d7). To say that the golden mountain is beingless is to say something true about the golden mountain. The *Objektiv*, and, more specifically, the *Nichtseinsobjektiv*, that the golden mountain is *nichtseiend*, by this line of reasoning, must therefore also in some sense have being. According to Meinong's semantics, a proposition is true if and only if its corresponding *Objektiv* or state of affairs has being.[4] The *Nichtseinsobjektiv* that

[4] The distinction between *Gegenstände* and *Objektive*, whereby *Objektive* are essentially characterized as that which not only *has* but *are* being or non-being, is owing to Ameseder, quoted in *AMG* IV, 61.

the golden mountain is *nichtseiend* has being, even though the golden mountain does not. At first, Meinong was reluctant philosophically to detach the being of an *Objektiv* from the non-being of the *Objekt* that enters into the *Objektiv*. In the linguistic mode, Meinong hesitates to separate the ontic status of a beingless object from the truth of a predication about a beingless object, and thus from the being of the *Objektiv* or state of affairs which is such that the object is beingless. He reports on his original philosophical misgivings in these terms:

> Without a doubt it would be comforting to be able to say that the strange kind of being which belongs to that which does not have being (*Sein des Nichtseienden*) is just as absurd as it sounds. Such a view could recommend itself to us were it not for the fact that the Objective, which has being, always seems to require in turn an Object which has being. (Meinong 1960, 85)

The breakthrough occurs when Meinong finally comes to accept the fundamental distinction between *Objekta* and *Objektive*, whereby the opposition of being and non-being applies to every *Objektiv*, but not to any *Objekt*, considered in and of itself. It is fair to say that Meinong's program for a *Gegenstandstheorie*, with its characteristic theses of the independence of *Sosein* from *Sein*, and the indifference of the intended *Objekt* to *Sein* and *Nichtsein*, which is to say the *Außersein* of the pure object, beyond being and non-being, was born precisely at this moment of revelation. Meinong describes his account of *Außersein* in reaching these historic conclusions, in an important passage worth quoting in its entirety:

> If the opposition of being and non-being is primarily a matter of the Objective and not of the Object, then it is, after all, clearly understandable that neither being nor non-being can belong essentially to the Object in itself. This is not to say, of course, that an Object can neither be nor not be. Nor is it to say that the question, whether or not the Object has being, is purely accidental to the nature of every Object. An absurd Object such as a round square carries in itself the guarantee of its own non-being in every sense; an ideal Object, such as diversity, carries in itself the guarantee of its own non-existence. Anyone who seeks to associate himself with models which have become famous could formulate what has been shown above by saying that the Object as such (without considering the occasional peculiarities of the accompanying Objective-clause which is always present) stands 'beyond being and non-being.' This may also be expressed in the following less engaging and also less pretentious way, which is in my opinion, however, a more appropriate one: The Object is by nature indifferent to being (*ausserseiend*), although at least one of its two Objectives of being, the Object's being or non-being, subsists. / What one could thus call with propriety the principle of the indifference of pure Objects to being (*den Satz vom Aussersein des reinen Gegenstandes*) finally eliminates the appearance of a paradox which was the immediate occasion for the assertion of this principle. As soon as it is recognized that, apart from special cases, both being and non-being are equally external to an Object, it is then understandable that nothing more, so to speak, is involved in comprehending the non-being of the Object than there is in comprehending its being. The above-mentioned principle of the independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* now presents a welcome supplement to this view. It tells us that that which is not in any way external to the Object, but constitutes its proper essence, subsists in its *Sosein* — the *Sosein* attaching to the Object whether the object has being or not. (Meinong 1960, 86)

4.4 Russell's Being-Predication Thesis

Ironically, despite Meinong's emphasis on the *Außersein* of the pure object, he has frequently been misunderstood as supposing that even nonexistent objects must have some sort of *being* in order to stand as referents or true constitutive property predicants. The *being-predication thesis* originates with Parmenides, as represented in several of Plato's dialogues, notably the *Sophist* and *Parmenides*. The thesis is misattributed and misapplied to Meinong in Russell's influential but partially misinformed commentary. Russell encourages the misinterpretation when he describes Meinong's theory as involving a version of the subsistence thesis committed to the 'logical being' of nonexistent objects, without which, he maintains, reference and predication are meaningless. Thus, in *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, Russell writes:

> It is argued, e.g. by Meinong, that we can speak about 'the golden mountain', 'the round square' and so on; we can make true propositions of which these are the subjects; hence they must have some kind of logical being, since otherwise the propositions in which they occur would be meaningless. (Russell 1971, 169)

This is obviously a misconstrual of Meinong's theory that the object theory domain contains beingless referents and beingless subjects of true constitutive property predications. Meinong in his mature philosophy abandons *Quasisein*, and permits reference and true predication of properties without further ado to *nichtseiende Gegenstände* (*AMG* II, 481–530). I shall not comment on Russell's faulty exposition in more detail, since this has already been done in historical-philosophical criticism of the so-called Russell-Meinong debate by Findlay, Routley, Grossmann, Smith, and others.[5] Russell through his own philosophical lenses sees only a fictitious Meinong committed to the being-predication thesis of Russell's *Principles of Mathematics*. There Russell expresses unequivocal commitment to the being-predication thesis:

> Whatever may be an object of thought, or may occur in any true or false proposition, or can be counted as *one*, I call a *term*. This, then, is the widest word in the philosophical vocabulary. I shall use as synonymous with it the words unit, individual, and entity. The first two emphasize the fact that every term is *one*, while the third is derived from the fact that every term has being, i.e. *is* in some sense. A man, a moment, a number, a class, a relation, a chimera, or anything else that can be mentioned, is sure to be a term; and to deny that such and such a thing is a term must always be false. (Russell 1903, 43)

The implication is that Russell, as a result of his own deep attachment to a being-predication thesis, cannot conceptualize reference and predication, as Meinong does, to beingless objects. Russell mistakenly ascribes the being-predication thesis to Meinong as a cornerstone of object theory, because he cannot imagine reference and true predication functioning in any other way. Russell acknowledges Meinong as the source of the concept underlying his doctrine of 'terms', in an early Russellian version of Meinong's object theory. He is impressed with Meinong's

[5] Findlay 1995, 43–6; 100–10. Routley 1980, 117–31. Grossmann 1974a, 114–6. Smith 1985.

recognition of the need for the most general encompassing theory of the existent or nonexistent objects of thought and language, which Russell calls 'terms'.

Unaccountably, in the period between 1903 and 1905, at some time between the publication of *The Principles of Mathematics* and 'On Denoting', interspersed with his review essays on Meinong's philosophy for the journal *Mind*, Russell repeatedly challenges an erroneous interpretation of Meinong's object theory presupposing the being-predication thesis. Russell wholeheartedly accepts the being-predication thesis in his own semantic theory, and foists it onto Meinong's philosophy where it does not belong, as though there were no alternative. The being-predication thesis, after Meinong's turn from *Quasisein* to *Außersein*, is nevertheless logically inconsistent with the principles of Meinong's later *Gegenstandstheorie*. When the difficulties of admitting beingless objects with logical, semantic, or any other qualified kind of being later dawn on Russell, he criticizes Meinong's theory as incoherent, and in his own logic and reference and predication semantics swings far in the opposite direction toward the robust realism of a radical referential extensionalism. Instead of rejecting the being-predication thesis as false or antithetical to Meinong's object theory, Russell narrows his conception of being, by restricting the possible subjects of reference and predication to existent concrete (dynamic, physical or spatiotemporal) and abstract (relations and other universal) entities. In falsely imputing the being-predication thesis to Meinong's object theory, and in his inability to make sense of reference and true predication of properties to altogether beingless objects, Russell misunderstands Meinong all along.[6]

A revealing passage in which Russell discloses his attribution of the being-predication thesis to Meinong appears in Russell's 1904 *Mind* review, where he states: 'The process suggested by Meinong's argument is. . .exceedingly and curiously complicated. First we think of a golden mountain, then we perceive that we are thinking of it; thence, we infer that there is a presentation of a golden mountain, and thence finally that the golden mountain subsists or has Being' (Russell 1904, 36). Later in the same criticism, Russell adds:

> The immanent object does not exist, according to Meinong, and is therefore no part of the mental state whose object it is; for this mental state exists. Yet, although not part of any mental state, it is supposed to be in some sense psychical. But it cannot be in any way bound up with any particular mental state of which it is the object; for other states, at other times and in other people, may have precisely the same object, since an object or a proposition can be presented or believed more than once. I confess these facts seem to me to show, without more ado, that objects and propositions must always have being. . . (Russell 1904, 59)

[6] See Smith 1985, 1988. Compare Russell 1903 [1938], 71: 'It should be observed that *A* and *B* need not exist, but must, like anything that can be mentioned, have Being. The distinction of Being and existence is important, and is well illustrated by the process of counting. What can be counted must be something, and must certainly *be*, though it need by no means be possessed of the further privilege of existence. Thus what we demand of the terms of our collection is merely that each should be an entity.' Russell accepts a peculiar version of the being-predication thesis that attributes being even to nonexistent objects. This is the very sort of confusion that he later finds incomprehensible in his (mis-) interpretation of Meinong.

Russell, in these key passages, makes several significant mistakes. Meinong's object theory, unlike the early Brentano's distinction between mental and physical phenomena, is not committed to immanently intended objects. Like Höfler, in the writing of whose 1890 *Logik* Meinong collaborated, and Twardowski's 1894 *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellung*, Meinong distinguishes between the psychological act, psychologically immanent content, and typically psychologically transcendent object of any presentation (Höfler 1890; Twardowski 1894). The objects of Meinong's object theory are ordinarily supposed to be independent of thought. Meinong is prepared to deny that immanent or transcendent intended objects cannot be inferred to be part of the thoughts by which they are intended, on the grounds that such thoughts by hypothesis exist, but the objects intended by thoughts are not guaranteed to exist. Immanent objects are 'psychical', but intended objects in Meinong's theory are only exceptionally immanent, as in thinking about a thought's act or content.

Russell's conclusion in the last two sentences of his criticism reflects another misunderstanding of Meinong's *Außersein*. From the fact that the same object can be intended at different times or by different persons is insufficient to deduce, 'without more ado,' as Russell says, 'that objects and propositions must always have being'. The inference in Russell's reassertion of the being-predication thesis is that since intended objects are not subjective, they must have some kind of watery being. This is precisely the conclusion Meinong's theory of *Außersein* is designed to avoid. What Russell seems not to understand is that for Meinong the psychological transcendence of intended objects makes them nonsubjective, despite their ontological status, in the *Außersein* of the pure object.

It is one thing to recognize Russell's misinterpretation of Meinong's theory of *Außersein*, and another to articulate more precisely what Meinong means when he speaks of *Außersein*. The idea is certainly not very familiar, especially to philosophers schooled in mainstream extensionalist logic and semantics. It is possible to further clarify Meinong's concept of *Außersein*, both in its own terms and in comparison with Husserl's principle of *epoché* in phenomenology.

4.5 Toward an Analysis of *Außersein*

Among the many misunderstood aspects of this frequently misunderstood philosopher, Meinong's doctrine of the *Außersein* of the pure object, when it is not simply ignored, is undoubtedly one of the most widely misinterpreted. The extraontology Meinong postulates consists of objects considered indifferently with respect to their ontic status, merely as intended objects. After all, we are often unaware whether or not the intended objects to which we refer in thought and language exist, and logic knows nothing of the ontic status of referents in its referential semantic domain. Sometimes the point of intending an object is to be able to consider whether or not it exists, and in such cases it obviously will not do to suppose that every intended object exists solely by virtue of being intended.

Außersein is not a special subcategory of the ontology, and *Außersein* is not a special kind of *Sein*. It is an ontically neutral referential domain that falls entirely *outside* the ontology of existent or subsistent entities, as existent intended objects or intended objects with being. It is appropriate for this reason to translate Meinong's term '*Außersein*' as 'extraontology'. We can then reject as misleading and mistaken any attempted references to Meinong's semantic domain as an 'ontology', on the grounds that etymologically an ontology is a theory about or domain specifically of *ontos* or being, of existent entities. A characteristically Meinongian semantic domain, on the contrary, enfolds ontology within the extraontology, where any intended object can be understood as belonging to the extraontology insofar as the question of its ontic status is not considered, or, in the terminology of Husserl's later transcendental methodology, insofar as an intended object's ontic status along with other facts about the object is bracketed in the *epoché*.

The difference between *Außersein* and *Quasisein* is not limited only to the fact that *Außersein* is not a watered-down type of *Sein* minimally required for reference and true predication. *Außersein* is itself the semantic domain of all intended objects, regardless of their ontic status, which does not attribute a special ontic or quasi-ontic status to some as opposed to any other objects. An object does not have the property of being *außerseiend*, as opposed to being *seiend* or *nichtseiend*, as in Meinong's earlier conception of *Quasisein*. The idea of *Außersein* is semantically and metaphysically more radical. *Außersein* is the name Meinong later gives to what he speaks of also in this context as the pure object (*reiner Gegenstand*) considered independently of its ontic status. This means, among other things, that the *Außersein* of the pure object is the referential semantic domain of all objects understood only as objects, constituted in their *Soseine* exclusively by their distinguishing constitutive property clusters, without taking their ontic status into account.

It makes sense in Meinong's semantics to speak of an intended object as *außerseiend* only as a way of designating the pure intended object, any object considered only as distinguished by its constitutive nuclear properties, beyond being and non-being, without regard for its ontic status as existent or nonexistent. *Außersein*, as a meta-semantic category, can also be understood objectively as a domain of beingless objects, literally an extraontology, of equal importance for Meinong as the ontology, which it complements. The extraontology is not a special division of the ontology, but literally instead a semantic category to which every object belongs. As such, the extraontology stands entirely outside the framework of exclusionary ontic categories whereby every object has being, is existent or subsistent, or is in both senses beingless. Meinong's mature object theory permits reference and true predication of properties to objects in both the ontology and extraontology, indifferently. It is enough to be an object, which is to say something that can be thought about, regardless of whether the object belongs to the ontology as a spatiotemporal actual dynamic or abstract nonspatiotemporal subsistent entity, or only to the extraontology as a beingless nonexistent intended object or pure intended object of thought.

To be *außerseiend* is not to have a special kind of being. It is rather to have or be considered as having no kind of being. *Außersein* is *extra*-ontology, outside and in that sense independent of ontic determinations. By substituting the concept of *Außersein* for *Quasisein*, Meinong introduces an important innovation. *Außersein* is not a category of being, but the ontic and semantic antithesis of ontic subcategorization. Meinong does not require that an object at least have *Außersein* in order to be the subject of reference and true predication. That entire conception, beginning with Plato's arguments in the *Sophist*, that an object must have *being* in some sense, which is to say, in any sense at all, in order for it to be true even to say that the object does not exist, does not have being, is totally abandoned by Meinong at this stage of object theory development. When he finally divests himself of the idea that an object must have at least a watery sense of being in order to be the subject of reference and predication, Meinong needs another way to turn all potential objects of thought into the same object theory category. In the early theory of *Quasisein*, Meinong could accomplish this purpose by recognizing that all objects have some sort of being, whether in the ordinary sense as existent or subsistent, or quasi-being, *Sein* or *Quasisein*. In the later theory, where this concept has shown itself bankrupt and no longer has any place, Meinong democratizes all objects of thought by requiring that any object, whether existent or nonexistent, be considered a pure object of reference and predication of properties, beyond being and non-being, as the concept itself must finally be allowed as an intended object of the intentionality of free assumption, in the extraontology or *Außersein*.

The possibility of treating all objects alike as pure objects, without taking account of their ontic status, regardless of whether in fact they have being or are beingless, restores to full effect the guiding phenomenological inspiration of Meinong's object theory. As a development of Brentano's empirical psychology, Meinong is able thereafter from the standpoint of the *Außersein* of the pure object to treat all intended objects as semantically on a par, on an ontically neutralized even playing field, where, regardless of their ontic status, all objects of thought can be understood as equally subsumed by a transcendental version of Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis, that every psychological occurrence is directed toward an intended object. Meinong may have conceived of object theory with its ontic neutrality for true predications of constitutive properties as the perfect adjunct to Brentano's intentionality thesis, and as a solution to the difficulties otherwise encountered by Brentano's immanent intentionality thesis. All can be treated alike as empirical discoveries of a scientific phenomenology. The further question of their ontic status need not arise in *Gegenstandstheorie*, at no cost to intended reference or true predication in scientific and philosophical explanation, as in everyday thought and discourse. Brentano, as a consequence of his Aristotelianism, was nevertheless disappointed and even philosophically offended by Meinong's proposal for a theory of nonexistent intended objects, as he was later to be by Husserl's post-Kantian return to a transcendental phenomenology.

The first thing to understand about Meinong's *Außersein* of the pure object is that it is not a strange shadowy ontic realm of objects hovering between being and

non-being. If that were the proper conception of *Außersein*, then there would be no essential difference between *Außersein* and what we have seen as the hallmark of Meinong's earlier theory of *Quasisein*. Indeed, *Außersein* is as much outside of non-being as its name more immediately suggests its situation outside of being. The *Außersein* of the pure object is *jenseits von Sein und Nichtsein*, not *inzwischen Sein und Nichtsein*. It is a way of thinking about intended objects that is altogether beyond ontic status, as though the question of an object's being or beinglessness did not arise. The *Außersein* of the pure object is any intended object considered exclusively *as* an object, hence as a *pure* object, without concern for whether or not the object is in any sense existent or nonexistent, but regardless of its ontic status.

It is in this special sense that *Außersein* is *outside* of being (and non-being), as an *extra*ontology or semantic domain of intended objects whose only qualifications for reference and true predication of properties are their identity conditions as determined by their distinguishing *Sosein* or so-being. Meinong's *Sosein* plays a similar role to Frege's concept of 'sense' or *Sinn* of proper names, consisting of a uniquely individuating abstract set of associated constitutive properties, belonging to, in Frege's case, an existent intended object, and in Meinong's, an existent or nonexistent intended object. While Frege does not offer a systematic account of *Sinn*, and in particular does not take pains to exclude extraconstitutive relational properties like existence, subsistence, possibility, completeness, determinateness, and their complements, among others, it is noteworthy that his few examples, such as the *Sinn* of the proper name 'Aristotle', include only constitutive properties, like being 'the pupil of Plato', 'the teacher of Alexander the Great', 'born in Stagira', and do not mention any extraconstitutive properties like 'exists', 'has being', 'is possible', 'is a complete determinate entity', or the like (Frege 1892 [1970], 58).

Meinong's *Außersein* of the pure object thus sustains a very egalitarian membership. Objects belong to it as members of an ontically neutral semantic domain, irrespective of whether or not outside its pastures they happen to exist. They qualify by virtue of their defining or uniquely distinguishing constitutive properties. The round square in the *Außersein* of the pure object rubs elbows with the Eiffel Tower, and the golden mountain is extraontologically on a par with the number π, the golden burial mask of Agamemnon, and Mount Vesuvius. The golden mountain in the *Außersein* of the pure object, or, less misleadingly, considered as *außerseiender*, is just the object whose only constitutive properties are to be golden and a mountain. This is a different object than the Eiffel Tower, which, considered *außerseiendlich*, has indefinitely many constitutive properties, such as being made mostly of iron, located in Paris, standing so many meters high, weighing so many tons, having such and such a color, built at such a time, visited by a certain number of tourists up to a certain point in its history, and so on. The Eiffel Tower happens to exist, and the golden mountain happens not to exist. Such differences are not mentioned in polite company in the *Außersein* of the pure object, where both referents as pure intended objects leave their ontic credentials at the door.

4.6 Husserl's *Epoché* and Meinong's *Außersein*

The comparison between Meinong's concept of *Außersein* and Husserl's phenomenological *epoché* is now easy to see. Husserl in his 1931 *Ideen*, or *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* §32, explains the *epoché* in this way:

> *We put out of action the general thesis which belongs to the essence of the natural standpoint*, we place in brackets whatever it includes respecting the nature of Being: *this entire natural world therefore* which is continually 'there for us,' 'present to our hand,' and will ever remain there, in a 'fact-world' of which we continue to be conscious, even though it pleases us to put it in brackets. / If I do this, as I am fully free to do, I do *not* then *deny* this 'world,' as though I were a sophist, *I do not doubt that it is there* as though I were a sceptic; but I use the 'phenomenological' *epoché*, which *completely bars me from using any judgment that concerns spatio-temporal existence* (*Dasein*). (Husserl 1931, 99–100)

Later, in his 1931 lectures on *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, Husserl restates the concept of phenomenological *epoché*:

> This universal depriving of acceptance, this 'inhibiting' or 'putting out of play' of all positions taken toward the already-given Objective world and, in the first place, all existential positions (those concerning being, illusion, possible being, being likely, probable, etc.), — or, as it is also called, this 'phenomenological epoché' and 'parenthesizing' of the Objective world — therefore, does not leave us confronting nothing. (Husserl 1973, 20)

It is unhelpful to oversimplify Husserl's concept of phenomenological *epoché*, to confuse his distinctions between philosophical, phenomenological, and transcendental *epoché*, or to misrepresent its unique place in Husserl's phenomenology and transcendental phenomenology, by over-extending a superficial analogy with other philosophical concepts. We can now describe the most important similarities between Husserl's *epoché* and Meinong's *Außersein*, in these points of positive comparison:

(1) *Epoché* and *Außersein* consider intended objects in an ontically neutral way, without concern for their being or non-being, actuality or illusion, possibility or impossibility, etc.
(2) *Epoché* and *Außersein* consider intended objects exclusively in terms of the qualities they present to thought; for Husserl, the properties are given by phenomenological content; for Meinong, more objectively by the object's *Sosein* or so-being of constitutive properties.
(3) *Epoché* and *Außersein* represent a kind of ontic purity of intended objects and phenomenological purity of thought about or presentation of intended objects, a qualification that is repeatedly emphasized by Husserl and Meinong in their respective discussions of *epoché* and *Außersein*.

The differences between Husserl and Meinong should also be kept in view. Husserl's methodology, despite his frequent assertions of phenomenology as a scientific endeavor, is more idealist and subjectivistic than Meinong's object theory. Husserl understands the phenomenological method of transcendental *epoché* as uncovering the transcendence of the pure ego, which Husserl in

neo-Kantian idealist fashion, in his transcendental phase after 1913, takes to be a precondition for the existence of the natural world. Meinong, by contrast, as we have seen, regards the *Außersein* of the pure object more objectively as a domain of intended, or, better, ideally intended or potentially intendable objects, that are semantically available to but otherwise independent of thought.

This essential distinction between Meinong and Husserl, with all its ramifications, is reflected clearly in the difference between their terminologies. The phenomenological *epoché* as a suspension, bracketing, or disconnection of ontic commitment to or with respect to intended objects in Husserl, is evidently an *activity* of philosophical thought, something that the *thinker does*. Whereas Meinong's *Außersein* of the pure object is the *referential semantic domain* in which intended objects are considered in their ontic neutrality purely *as* objects, satisfying objective intensional or constitutive property-related identity conditions, determined as their association with unique choices of constitutive properties. It is agreeable to think of Husserl's *epoché* and Meinong's *Außersein* as complementing one another. Husserl might argue that Meinong's *Außersein* presupposes the *epoché* as a way of considering objects independently of their ontic status, bracketing our usual acceptance of their existence or nonexistence, as he proposes for the program of transcendental phenomenology. Meinong for his part might reasonably maintain in reply that *epoché* by itself is sufficient only to suggest a domain for the scientific exploration of intended objects in phenomenology, and that the activity of *epoché* by itself must result in the postulation of an extraontological category of objects, in order to provide the basis for objective philosophical explanations of meaning, knowledge, and value.

4.7 Meinong's *Außersein* and Quine's Critique of Beingless Objects

As a way of testing Meinong's theory of *Außersein*, it is worth examining its strengths and weaknesses in light of extensionalist criticisms of beingless objects. For this purpose, we need look no further than Quine's objections to possible nonexistents in his famous 1953 essay, 'On What There Is'.

Quine argues against the proliferation of merely possible objects in a language's ideally minimal referential semantic domain, and expresses an aesthetic preference for desert landscape ontologies. Although he does not refer by name to Meinongian semantics, it is obvious that he would regard object theory as an extreme case of ontological excess. Quine instead proposes intuitive paraphrases of apparent predications to nonexistent objects in order to avoid reference, ontic commitment, and true predications (including predications of nonexistence) to any merely possible objects (Quine 1953, 4). Quine's objections to the ontic and semantic slum of possible but nonexistent fat persons in the doorway should apply with full force

from his consistently extensionalist standpoint to any Meinongian domain. He argues:

> [An] overpopulated universe is in many ways unlovely. It offends against the aesthetic sense of us who have a taste for desert landscapes, but this is not the worst of it. [The] slum of possibles is a breeding ground for disorderly elements. Take, for instance, the possible fat man in that doorway; and, again, the possible bald man in that doorway. Are they the same possible man, or two possible men? How do we decide? How many possible men are there in that doorway? Are there more possible thin ones than fat ones? How many of them are alike? Or would their being alike make them one? Are no *two* possible things alike? Is this the same as saying that it is impossible for two things to be alike? Or, finally, is the concept of identity simply inapplicable to unactualized possibles? But what sense can be found in talking of entities which cannot meaningfully be said to be identical with themselves and distinct from one another? These elements are well-nigh incorrigible. By a Fregean therapy of individual concepts, some effort might be made at rehabilitation; but I feel we'd do better simply to clear [the] slum and be done with it (Quine 1953, 4).

If the argument is to be decided on aesthetic grounds, as Quine perhaps only playfully suggests, then I am obligated to report my disagreement with his blanket approval of metaphorical ontic desert landscapes. We need to know exactly what kinds of objects are proposed, and what exact purpose they are meant to fulfill. The desert is lovely to tourists by virtue of being arid and uncluttered, though it may not contain everything needed to sustain life, everything, by analogy, theoretically necessary for logic, semantics, and philosophy of mind, to conduct its theoretical explanations and support its practical applications.

A Meinongian 'jungle', combining an ontology with an extraontology of beingless objects, has a beauty, charm, and importance all its own. The jungle has colorful unexpected and unbelievable birds and reptiles, and other creatures to amaze the desert dweller, in a marvelously complex functioning ecology. That we still prefer the desert does not wish the jungle away for others. The exchange of aesthetic preference images of desert and jungle is pointless anyway, because where ontology is concerned, the Meinongian object theory ontology can be as sparse and austere as Quine's, provided only that it is supplemented by the intended objects in the *Außersein* of the pure object, an extraontology of beingless objects that are nominally related to characterizing clusters of constitutive properties. There are as many objects, intendable and otherwise, in the object theory referential semantic domain, as there are combinatorially distinct sets of constitutive characterizing properties in proper applications of Leibnizian intensional property-related, self-identity requirements. However, there are certainly not as many intended objects in the object theory's ontology of existent entities. A Meinongian *Ontologie*, not to say *Außersein*, can in principle again match Quine's ontology item-for-item, with no further overlap of *existent* intended objects. The question is how well Quine can manage without being able to refer to and predicate properties of the nonexistent intended objects with which Meinongian object theory supplements the same subordinate ontology.

We should take note of the extent to which even as sympathetic a commentator as Findlay agrees with Quine in regarding Meinong's *Außersein* as semantically and, so to speak, extraontologically, 'chaotic'. Findlay interprets *Außersein* as a

kind of primordial soup of pure objects, from which intended objects must be 'lifted up', in order to constitute objects of thought. *Außersein* on such a conception is the extreme ontic breeding ground, in Quine's phrase, of 'disorderly elements'. The possible fat men in the doorway are only the beginning of the chaos Findlay perceives in Meinong's concept of *Außersein*. He explains:

> We speak of the *world* of *Außersein*, but in reality the objects which have no being do not constitute a world. They are a chaos of incoherent fragments, and the only relations that subsist between them are those of similarity and diversity. . .Again if some non-existent objects are indeterminate, there are others which are impossible, such as the round square, and we can hardly hope to find in them a fruitful field for scientific investigation. From another point of view *Außersein* is incapable of scientific treatment because of its excessive richness. In the case of the actual world we can always ask whether a certain object is comprised in it or not; the question is interesting, because some things are excluded from it. The realm of *Außersein*, however, has no such exclusiveness; every possibility or impossibility is comprised in it, and this fact silences a multitude of questions. / *Außersein* is a strange sort of desert in which no mental progress is possible, but the desert has many oases, as no one who has read a fine novel, or a treatise on meta-geometry, can possibly doubt. . .*Außersein* comprises these articulated fragments, and our own universe, as a pure object, is one of them, but it remains, as a whole, too chaotic to be studied scientifically. (Findlay 1995, 57–8)

Quine's condemnation of mere *possibilia* is not based on considerations of theoretical economy, but on what he perceives as the lack or inadequacy of identity criteria for nonexistent objects, by which he evidently regards them as logically and metaphysically disorderly. Hence, Quine's objections about counting and distinguishing between possible fat and possible fat bald nonexistent men loitering in the doorway. The objections that Meinong's object theory is ontically inflationary, and that many of its occupants are logically or metaphysically disorderly by virtue of failing to satisfy appropriate identity criteria, are easily refuted from the standpoint of Meinong's concept of the *Außersein* of the pure object.

First, we should acknowledge that Meinong's object theory does not introduce any specifically ontological innovations. Object theory domain, again, combines with or subordinates ontology to an extraontology. The ontology can be as minimal as Quine would like. It is only the extraontology or *Außersein* of the pure object that distinguishes the expanded ontically neutral referential domain of a Meinongian logic and semantics. An extraontology is distinct from and does not add anything to the *existent* entities belonging to an *ontology*. This is as it should be, on the assumption that there is a mind-independent existent world for some thoughts to intend, and of the actual world as the greatest existent intended object, with respect to the mind-independent existent objects the mind-independent existent world also presumably contains.

We know that thought reaches beyond the existent, in all creative activities, in deciding on and planning future actions, in entertaining symbolic expression, religion, myth, and innocently or otherwise spreading falsehoods. Meinong's special contribution to semantic theory is to maintain that beingless objects can be referred to and have properties truly predicated of them regardless of their ontic status. If we can make sense of this claim, then nonexistent objects like Berkeley's

golden mountain and Quine's possible fat man in the doorway, together with even more exotic impossible objects like the round square, do not belong to Meinong's *ontology*, but at most to the object theory's *extraontology*. If such objects are problematic, at least they cannot be so for the reasons Quine gives. A Meinongian ontology does not multiply *entities* beyond necessity, but at most includes exactly those intended objects, irrespective of their ontic status, that the theory's phenomenological motivation requires. If they are not all actually intended, then they are anyway intendable, with a conceivable and constructible exception perhaps for Mally's unapprehendable or unintendable object as a limiting case.

Phenomenology in the evolution of Meinong's object theory is the inspiring but not the ultimate foundation for what is to become a mind-independent comprehension of objects available for actual intendings. This is the intensional foundation that considers all logically possible constitutive property combinations as nominally related to a distinct object of actual or potential, real or ideal intentional states. Every distinct combination of constitutive properties can be named as a distinct object, truly or falsely described in constitutive property predications, that either belong or fail to belong to their identity-conditional consitutive property complements, counted, quantified over, and in other ways treated logically and semantically exactly like actual or abstract existent entities.

Second, we must consider the Quinean criticism that Meinongian objects, regardless of their number in the ontology or extraontology, are logically disorderly. Quine is elsewhere paraphrased as holding that there can be 'No entity without identity'.[7] Meinong's object theory in effect expands on this slogan by requiring that there be 'No entity *or* nonentity without identity'. For an intended object to be considered as an *außerseiender reiner Gegenstand*, it must satisfy the same identity conditions as the existent physical and abstract mathematical objects that Quine finds philosophically unobjectionable. That is, a beingless object in Meinong's *Außersein* must be individuated by its *Sosein* or unique totality of constitutive properties. Meinong in this sense agrees with Quine that there must be adequate identity conditions even for possible incomplete and impossible beingless objects. The difference is that, whereas Quine thinks no such identity conditions are available, Meinong formulates what seem to be perfectly satisfactory general intensional Leibnizian property-based identity principles that apply alike to existent dynamic and abstract entities, and all subcategories of nonexistent intended objects. The identity conditions for membership in the object theory domain are determined by their constitutive properties in *Außersein*, where Meinong speaks of the *heimatloser* or homeless pure object that belongs to no traditional ontological category, neither existent nor subsistent, but to which thought and language can refer and think and say true or false things.

What, then, is the answer to Quine's questions about identity conditions for nonexistent possible fat and fat bald men in the doorway? What about the impossible round square fat bald man in the doorway? If we adopt Meinong's identity

[7] The thesis is ascribed to Quine by Parsons 1965, 182. See Quine 1960, 200–5; 1969, 32–4, 45–6.

criteria for beingless objects, then we can solve these problems satisfactorily for any objects in the Meinongian *Außersein*, within the framework of a Meinongian object theory. In one sense, there are unlimited numbers of distinct merely possible nonexistent fat and fat bald men in the doorway. On another interpretation, there is only one possible nonexistent fat man in the doorway, and only one possible nonexistent fat bald man in the doorway. There is, according to Meinong's object theory, exactly one possible nonexistent object with the identifying and individuating *Sosein* consisting of exactly the constitutive properties of being fat and lurking in the doorway, and there is exactly one possible nonexistent object with the identifying and individuating *Sosein* consisting of the constitutive properties of being fat, bald, and lurking in the doorway. There is similarly for the same reason exactly one possible fat bald man standing in the doorway, and exactly one possible fat bald man sitting in the doorway. The possible fat bald doorway men do not exist, because they do not have enough constitutive property consistency and especially completeness even when consistent to put in a physical appearance. The point is rather that by virtue of postulated differences in their constitutive properties, these nominalized objects supervening on distinct constitutive property choices can be named and truly described in different ways, just as any actual or abstract object, on the basis also of its identifying and distinguishing properties. We can refer to and truly predicate properties of nonexistent intended objects just as, in logically and semantically parallel fashion, we do in the referentially radically extensionalist semantics of predications involving exclusively existent intended objects.[8]

For any combination of constitutive properties, there will be, by Meinong's *Außersein* thesis, exactly one object corresponding to each distinct *Sosein* of constitutive properties.[9] Since the fat man in the doorway is transparently in the doorway, and the numerically distinct bald fat man is in the doorway, along with the standing fat man, sitting fat man, standing bald fat man, sitting bald fat man, and so on, there are, as previously observed, indefinitely many merely possible beingless fat men in the doorway. All of these intended objects have included within their identifying and individuating *Soseine* the constitutive properties of being fat, a man, and somehow disposed in the doorway, and are in that sense multiple fat men in the doorway. We can distinguish and count them, if we first agree on what is to be counted. Quine seems to think it must be an embarrassment for any semantic theory to allow so many obese and skinny men simultaneously to occupy the narrow confines of the doorway. Ontically homeless Meinongian intended objects

[8] A similar reply is made by Routley 1980, 411–26.

[9] One possible formalization of a Meinongian comprehension principle states: $\exists\delta\forall F\forall x[x \in \delta \leftrightarrow Fx]$. This says that there is a domain set δ that contains every (existent or nonexistent) object x to which any property F is truly predicable. The principle expresses the nonpsychologistic sense of Meinong's thesis of the unrestricted freedom of assumption (*unbeschränkten Annahmenfreiheit*) in intending mind-independent objects of thought. The set theoretical paradoxes associated with latitudinarian comprehension can be managed in several ways, by type-theory or existence restrictions on abstraction well-formedness, equivalence, or detachment, and the like, in effect controlling authorized substitution instances for 'F'.

nevertheless need semantic order. While this would be an intolerable metaphysical condition for existent objects, there is no comparable conceptual difficulty for merely possible nonexistent objects to crowd in upon each other in Quine's existent doorway, since as predicationally incomplete intended objects of reference and property predication subjects, they none of them belong to the ontology. Despite having the property of being obese or scrawny doorway loitering objects, beingless merely possible objects do not compete for occupancy of the same real space-time. Similarly for impossible Meinongian objects like the round square fat bald man skulking in the doorway.

The fact that totally beingless Meinongian objects have identifyfing and individuating properties provides reasonable answers to Quine's questions about the logical or metaphysical orderliness or disorderliness of possible nonexistent nonsubsistent objects. The answers have interesting implications for the problem of the identity and individuation of impossible nonexistent objects. We need not throw up our hands over the problem of providing identity conditions for these nonexistents, because we assume theoretically all along that the Meinongian domain comprehends all and only those nominalized objects supervening on distinct constitutive property clusters. The golden mountain $\neq$ the round square, because the golden mountain is golden and a mountain and not round or square, whereas the round square is round and square and not golden or a mountain. It is the same Leibnizian identity of indiscernibles that we apply when we conclude that Mark Twain $\neq$ Nathaniel Hawthorne. That Quine does not anticipate such a solution suggests that, like Russell, he may also subscribe, and may assume all other semantic theorists must subscribe, to a being-predication thesis. It is only if nonexistent objects like the fat man and fat bald man in the doorway cannot be distinguished by virtue of one's having and the other's lacking the property of being bald (a generalization of the same Leibnizian identity principles used in the case of existent actual and subsistent abstract entities), that Quine's claim that there are no identity criteria for mere *possibilia* can have any force. It must be assumed as beyond philosophical challenge that supposed nonexistent objects, because they do not exist, cannot have any properties. Otherwise, the answer is obvious, merely by pointing to differences in the stipulated constitutive property clusters implied as each kind of possible man in the doorway is named off or described. It is just the solution Meinong gives in offering his thesis of the ontic neutrality or indifference of pure objects in the *Außersein*, and of the ontic independence of *Sosein* from *Sein*.[10]

If nonexistent Meinongian objects belong to the extraontology rather than ontology of the Meinongian semantic domain, then, in the strict sense of the word, Meinong, in allowing beingless objects, cannot rightly be said to have inflated the *ontology* with explanatorily or otherwise theoretically unnecessary objects. We go astray also with Findlay if we consider *Außersein* as a 'realm', or,

[10] *AMG* II, 490–3. The independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis is formulated by Meinong's student Mally 1904, 127. See Findlay 1995, 44. Lambert 1982, 1983, 87–96, Griffin 1979, 23–34.

plying the same metaphor as Quine, but with opposite force, a 'desert' or 'jungle' landscape, containing objects in anything like the manner of an ontology or quasi-ontology. To drive Meinong's later object theory in this direction is to confuse Meinong's *Außersein* with his abandoned concept of *Quasisein*, and to try to make *Außersein* into *Quasisein*. It is the period in Meinong's thought that is probably responsible for most misapprehensions of his object theory, beginning, perhaps, with Russell's selective serial reading of Meinong, as encouraging the concept of a 'secondary' or 'shadowy kind' of *being* for *beingless* objects. That, counterfactually speaking, would be a whopping contradiction in Meinongian object theory, for which Meinong himself should not be held responsible. Nor is there anything especially 'chaotic' about Meinong's 'realm' of *Außersein*. True, there are unlimitedly many *außerseiende* pure objects, possessing and nominally associated with every logically possible combination of constitutive properties. That is many more objects than there are existent intended objects in the extensionalist existence-presuppositional referential semantic domain that Russell and Quine favor. If there are infinitely many classes in Quine's ontology, then we need not expect more than that cardinality of Meinong's ontology-absorbing extraontology. Each object is nevertheless unique and distinct from every other in a Meinong referential semantic domain, by virtue of its individuating identity conditions via its association with a distinguishing *Sosein* of constitutive properties.

Findlay mitigates his critique of *Außersein* somewhat, in his final 'Appraisal of Meinong'. In this concluding chapter of the second edition of *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values*, appended on Ryle's recommendation, Findlay acknowledges that: 'Meinong in his doctrine of *Außersein* has performed an act of incomparable merit: he has prevented the realistic, first-order interests dominant in science and extensional logic from misrepresenting the higher-order structures of experience, which their purposes tend to exclude, and whose residual properties they throw into queer, false relief' (Findlay 1995, 339). The objects Meinong postulates, moreover, appear strictly necessary in accounting for the intentionality or object-directedness of ordinary and scientific thought and discourse. Beingless objects do not add anything whatsoever to the ontology, because they belong only to *Außersein*. We can refer to them despite the fact that they do not exist. Meinong gratefully does not claim that beingless objects exist, which would be incoherent. By denying the being-predication thesis, Meinong's semantics makes it intelligible to refer to and truly predicate constitutive properties of intended objects, regardless of their ontic status. It is only if a critic like Russell or Quine is so deeply in the grip of a radical extensionalist way of thinking about reference and predication exclusively to existent intended objects that Meinong's object theory can seem ontically inflationary, overpopulating the ontology of logic and semantics with metaphysically objectionable entities. The *Außersein* of the pure object instead confines beingless Meinongian objects to ontically neutral consideration in an extraontology that includes more intended objects as referents than the ontology of existent, actual dynamic or abstract entities.

Chapter 5
Constitutive (Nuclear) and Extraconstitutive (Extranuclear) Properties

5.1 Fundamental Division

In his later object theory, as we have seen, Meinong draws a fundamental distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. Without the distinction, the theory is threatened with logical inconsistency, by permitting the definition of Meinongian objects that both exist and do not exist, that are possible and impossible, complete and incomplete. Constitutive or identity-determining and individuating properties of intended objects by recent tradition in Meinong object theory studies are also known as *nuclear*, and extraconstitutive properties as *extranuclear*.

The principles of free assumption and the independence of so-being from being in Meinong's theory are very powerful. They entail that the Meinongian semantic domain comprehends whatever objects are freely intended. The theory thereby includes all beingless objects, like the golden mountain and round square. The independence of so-being from being in turn entails that these objects have the properties of being golden and a mountain or round and square, in the same sense that existent or subsistent objects have uniquely distinguishing properties, in each object's respective distinguishing *Sosein*.

The golden mountain, although beingless, is supposed to be golden in the same sense as the golden burial mask of Agamemnon. Then is the existent golden mountain, or the existent round square, if they are intended objects at all, existent, golden, and a mountain, or existent, round, and square? There contingently exists no golden mountain, so presumably, even if we can think of an existent golden mountain, or consider that combination of properties, the existent golden mountain does not exist. The round square, moreover, is what Meinong calls an impossible object, since nothing can possibly be both round and square in the same place and at the same time, and so does not even possibly exist. Does Meinongian free assumption put thought in touch with an intended possible round square or existent round square? Or must the intentionality of assumption be restricted somehow after all?

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_5

There need be no logical inconsistency in the round square's being round and square. If being square implies being non-round, an object's being non-round need not imply that it is not the case that it is round. In that case, the inference to an outright contradiction, that the round square is round and it is not the case that the round square is round, does not go through. This is a logical division that is also sometimes invoked independently of Meinong's theory, between internal and external negation, or predicate complementation and propositional negation. The distinction can be formalized in a logical notation as that between the complement of property *F* predicated of an object *a*, read as '*a* is non-*F*', symbolized 'non-*Fa*', and the negation of a predication of property *F* to *a*, read as 'It is not the case that *a* is or has property *F*', symbolized '¬*Fa*'. The logical distinction between internal negation or predicate complementation, and external or propositional negation, must then be enforced by a nonequivalence principle, to the effect that, $\neg\forall x[non\text{-}Fx \leftrightarrow \neg Fx]$.[1]

The difference in Meinong's theory between the round square having the properties of being round and square, and the existent round square not being existent, round and square, suggests a distinction between the categories of property to which the property of being existent belongs, as contrasted with the properties of being round or square. Although Meinong later complicates the solution to the problem of the existent round square raised by Russell, he distinguishes between constitutive properties, like being golden, mountainous, round, square, and their complements, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, extraconstitutive properties, like being existent or nonexistent, possible or impossible, complete or incomplete.

Constitutive properties alone are freely assumable, and alone belong to the uniquely characterizing *Sosein*, or ontically independent so-being, of distinct Meinongian objects, considered independently of their ontic status. Extraconstitutive properties, by contrast, are not freely assumable, and do not enter into the ontically independent individuating *Sosein* or intensional property-related characterization of any Meinongian object, although their totalities have immediate ontic implications. The *Sosein* of the round square contains the constitutive properties of being round and square, and, by implication, the constitutive properties of being round and non-round, without internal contradiction. The *Sosein* of an existent round square, if ever there could be such a Meinongian intended object, would *not* contain the constitutive properties of being round and square, round and non-round, *and* the extraconstitutive property of being existent (*AMG* IV, 346–7; VI, 283). Rather, the *Sosein* function or relation already excludes every extraconstitutive property and applies Leibnizian identity principles only over distinct totalities of constitutive properties.

The problem of the existent golden mountain or the existent round square is solved by categorizing properties as *nuclear* or *Sosein*-constitutive and *extranuclear* or *Sosein*-extraconstitutive. Meinongian objects can then only be freely assumed as constituted by any combination of specifically constitutive properties,

[1] See Routley 1980, 89–92, 192–7, Jacquette 1996a, 77, 103–4, 114.

to the exclusion of any intended object thought to be constituted even in part by its supervenient extraconstitutive properties. There is no existent golden mountain or existent round square as a Meinongian intended object, even in the ontically neutral referential Meinongian semantic domain netherland of *Außersein*. There is no Meinongian object whose *Sosein* contains the properties of being existent, golden, and a mountain, or existent, round, and square. Despite the fact that we can think about such combinations of properties, there is no Meinongian object that violates the principle of internal and external logical consistency or noncontradiction by both existing and not existing, or of being such that it both exists and it is not the case that it exists.

5.2 Sources and Background of Meinong's Distinction

The distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive, nuclear and extranuclear, properties first appears in Meinong's arduous work, *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit: Beiträge zur Gegenstandstheorie und Erkenntnistheorie*. There Meinong explains:

> One sees from this that the property 'simple' evidently does not obey the rules which are decisive for the *constitutiva* and *consecutiva* of an object. E. Mally for this reason has distinguished properties of this special character as 'extra-formal' from the ordinary 'formal' properties; however, in view of the traditional denotation of the word 'formal', these designations hardly have the appropriate force. Therefore I propose for the whole of the constitutive and consecutive properties the appelation 'constitutive' ('nuclear') ['*konstitutorische*'], and for the remainder the appelation 'extraconstitutive property' ('extranuclear') ['*ausserkonstitutorische Bestimmungen*']. (my translation) (*AMG* VI, 176–7)

Meinong develops the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, as he indicates here, from a suggestion made by his student and later philosophical collaborator, Mally. The English terminology for the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction was first proposed by Findlay in 1995. Findlay's is an apt translation of Meinong's discussion, respectively, of constitutive and extraconstitutive properties (*konstitutorische* and *ausserkonstitutorische Bestimmungen*). The distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, as in Findlay's explicit phrase, involves a nucleus or core of properties that characterize an object, and determine its identity as the particular object it is, independently of its ontic status, via intensional Leibnizian property-based identity of indiscernibles and indiscernibility of identicals requirements. Extranuclear properties by contrast supervene on the totality of an object's nuclear properties, in the sense that the instantiation by the object of its extranuclear properties is ontically dependent on its instantiation of nuclear properties, although an object's extranuclear properties are external to and go beyond the object's identity-constituting core of nuclear constitutive properties (Findlay 1995, 176–80).

An object in Meinong's theory has an extraontological internal integrity and identity by virtue of its totality of nuclear properties, regardless of whether or not it exists, to which the extranuclear properties that ascribe a certain ontic status to an object can only be superadded. An object's extranuclear properties are determined by its totality of nuclear properties, but its extranuclear properties are external to and in no way part of the object as constituted internally by its nuclear properties. An intended object whose *Sosein* contains no metaphysically incompatible nuclear properties, no nuclear property and its negation, is possible. An object whose *Sosein* contains at least one nuclear property and its complement, like the round square, thereby has the supervenient extranuclear property of being impossible. An intended object whose *Sosein* contains every constitutive property or its complement is complete, even if impossible. An intended object whose *Sosein* lacks at least both some nuclear property and its complement is relevantly predicationally incomplete, and therefore beingless, nonexistent. And so on, for the supervenience of other extranuclear properties on an object's totality of constitutive nuclear properties.

The nuclear-extranuclear property distinction is intuitively justified, independently of its usefulness in preserving logical consistency in Meinong's object theory. The distinction has historical precedents that begin at least with Kant's 100 gold Thalers objection to the ontological argument for the existence of God, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, section on 'The Ideal of Pure Reason' (A568/B596-A642/B670). Kant's famous refutation turns on the claim that 'existence' is not a predicate, but only the context reveals precisely what Kant means by excluding existence from an object's 'predicates'. Kant delivers the following challenge to the ontological argument:

> A hundred real thalers do not contain the least coin more than a hundred possible thalers. For as the latter signify the concept, and the former the object, should the former contain more than the latter, my concept would not, in that case, express the whole object, and would not therefore be an adequate concept of it. My financial position is, however, affected very differently by a hundred real thalers than it is by the mere concept of them (that is, of their possibility). For the object, as it actually exists, is not analytically contained in my concept, but is added to my concept (which is a determination of my state) synthetically; and yet the conceived hundred thalers are not themselves in the least increased through thus acquiring existence outside my concept. By whatever and by however many predicates we may think a thing—even if we completely determine it—we do not make the least addition to the thing when we further declare that this thing *is*. Otherwise, it would not be exactly the same thing that exists, but something more than we had thought in the concept, and we could not, therefore, say that the exact object of my concept exists. (Kant 1965, A599/B627-A600/B628)

It has become fashionable for interpreters to misconstrue Kant's objection as denying that 'existence' can be any sort of predicate, or that existence can be any sort of property. The argument that Kant has shown that existence cannot be a property, on pain of being able to prove the existence of God via Descartes' and Leibniz's ontological proof, has sometimes been understood as refuting Meinong's object theory, in which existence is classified as an extranuclear property. A more careful reading shows that Kant does not claim that existence cannot be a property

of things, but only that it is not a *predicate* in the technical sense of an identity 'determining' property.

Existence does not enter into the determination of 100 gold Thalers *as* 100 gold Thalers. Further, 100 existent gold Thalers are in no way different in their determination as 100 gold Thalers from 100 gold Thalers *simpliciter*, or from 100 nonexistent gold Thalers. As Kant also remarks, one's financial circumstances are very different, depending on whether the coins in question exist or do not exist. The 100 gold Thalers must nevertheless be the very same, numerically identical set of coins, the very same numerically identical intended object, that either exists or fails to exist. For this to be possible, existence logically cannot enter into the object's determination as the particular object it is. If the 100 gold Thalers exist, and are determined thereby as 100 existent gold Thalers, then it is unintelligible to consider that the same 100 gold Thalers might not have existed. The obvious reason is that *if* existence and nonexistence enter into an object's determination, then 100 existent gold Thalers are not the same object as 100 nonexistent gold Thalers.

The application to Anselm's ontological proof is equally clear. Just as Kant's 100 gold Thalers cannot be determined as existent or nonexistent without begging the question of whether or not they exist, so the concept of God, in Descartes's and Leibniz's argument as possessing all perfections, hence also existence as a perfection, cannot be determined as implying God's existence, without first assuming that God exists. In that case, as with the 100 gold Thalers, it is unintelligible to consider the same God as either existing or not existing. This might be acceptable in one way to Descartes and Leibniz, whose rationalist demonstrations are supposed to prove that God necessarily exists, or cannot fail to exist as implied by the definition of the concept of God. Trouble is that Descartes's and Leibniz's proofs require that we consider a nonexistent God, as failing the definition. If Kant's objection is sound, then it shows that if we suppose God or any other object to be determined by the property of existing, then we are logically incapable of concluding that the same object could either exist or fail to exist. We are not thinking of the same thing, of the same God, then, as being or not being that which by definition possesses all perfections, if with Descartes and Leibniz we allow existence to enter in as an identity-determining property or 'predicate' of what we are supposed to be thinking of as the specifically intended object possessing all perfections.

In Meinong's terminology, the same point is made by stipulating that existence is not a constitutive nuclear property that qualifies the *Sosein* of any object. Kant's assertion might be rewritten in a more explicitly Meinongian idiom to read: 'By whatever and by however many (nuclear) properties we may assume an object to have—even if we completely determine it—we do not make the least addition to the nature or *Sosein* of the object (to the *Aussersein* of the pure object) when we further assume that the object *is*, *exists*, or has *Sein*.' God, as a contingently, or even as an impossibly, necessarily nonexistent, Meinongian object, can nevertheless be defined as that intended object possessing all perfections. An existent God may be metaphysically impossible if the problem of evil remains unsolved. To be at once omniscient, omnipotent, perfectly benevolent, and the author of an actual

world in which there is moral and natural evil, might be tantamount to being a round square. Meinongian logic implies that even if God exists, an existent God could not conceivably be greater or more perfect than a necessarily nonexistent impossible Meinongian object God.

If this reasoning is correct, then several consequences immediately follow. Far from a critic's being able to invoke Kant's objection to Descartes's and Leibniz's ontological argument as a refutation of Meinong, Kant's conclusion that 'existence' is not a predicate provides an authoritative historical precedent for Meinong's distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, and for the position that an object's identifying and individuating so-being consists exclusively of nuclear properties, to the exclusion of any extranuclear qualifications. By this account, we can see Kant and Meinong as arriving in different ways at a similar distinction of categories of properties that can versus those that cannot determine, constitute, or provide identity conditions for an intended object. The kinds of properties that Kant and Meinong include in each of the categories also seem to coincide. Kant allows being 100 in number, golden, and of the Thaler denomination, as identity-determining properties or 'predicates' of 100 gold Thalers, and, in the case of God, such properties perhaps as being omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and perfectly benevolent, as would Meinong, while agreeing fully on excluding such properties as existence (or nonexistence). Kant limits his consideration to existence as a nonpredicate, because of his specific interest in Descartes's and Leibniz's ontological proofs for the existence of God. However, it is not difficult on this interpretation to imagine Kant agreeing with Meinong that the category of genuine object identity-determining properties or predicates should also definitively exclude all other extranuclear properties, such as the properties of being subsistent or nonsubsistent, possible or impossible, complete or incomplete. As final corroboration, we need only remark that Meinong's distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, classifying existence as an extraconstitutive extranuclear property excluded from the so-being of any object, is equally effective as Kant's rejection of existence as a 'predicate' in forestalling Descartes's and Leibniz's ontological proofs for the existence of God.

5.3 Definitions

Despite its usefulness in Meinong's theory, the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties has been elusive to define more precisely. We recall examples of constitutive or nuclear and extraconstitutive or extranuclear properties, to see how the distinction might be clarified, as a basis for checking the adequacy of proposed definitions. Nuclear properties, as Meinong conceives of the distinction, include being red, round, 10 g in weight, and the like. While being existent, nonexistent, possible, impossible, determinate, indeterminate, complete, incomplete, and the like, are extranuclear properties. It is one thing to learn where the distinction cuts, and another to understand how and why it divides the field.

It is theoretically inadequate, as well as psychologically unsatisfying, to distinguish nuclear and extranuclear properties only by example. We know that Meinong regards run of the mill garden variety properties like being red and round as nuclear, and metaphysical categorical properties with immediate ontic implications like being existent or nonexistent, possible or impossible, among others, as extranuclear. An elaboration of cases provides some indication of the division among properties marked by the distinction, offering a feel for the distinction that is intended. There evidently cannot be a complete enumeration of all properties in the two categories, and there are, as we shall see, problematic instances in grey areas that cannot as readily be categorized for Meinong's purposes without appealing to an intuitively justified higher principle as definitively either nuclear or extranuclear. These recalcitrant cases threaten not only the borderlines of Meinong's distinction, but by their nature raise deeper difficulties about the soundness and systematic coherence of Meinong's object theory.

Additionally, it is philosophically preferable to have a materially correct formulation of any distinction as important to a system of thought as Meinong's division between nuclear and extranuclear properties. It brings a unity and cohesion to a theory to provide such a criterion, whenever it is possible to do so. Meinong in discussing the distinction is notoriously negligent in demarcating the difference between nuclear and extranuclear properties in any rigorous way. He is satisfied, without trying to develop the distinction more systematically, to adopt the distinction from Mally, applying it to a problem about the proper containment, Meinong eventually says *implection*, of incomplete or indeterminate objects in complete or determinate objects. The result is, on the one hand, an explanatory vacuum that Meinong's critics and apologists alike have struggled often in mutually incompatible ways to fill, and confusion about the proper classification of a family of properties that in Meinong's theory are not obviously nuclear or obviously extranuclear.

We can always say, if things look desperate, that an intended object's nuclear constitutive properties are those that are reasonably allowed in applications of self-identity determinations under Leibniz's Law of the identity of indiscernibles. By this criterion, converse intentional properties, like being loved by Tolstoy and being loathed by Dostoyevsky, turn out to be extranuclear, as several object theory commentators have accepted without argument or argued on independent grounds. There are nevertheless good reasons also for categorizing converse intentional properties as nuclear rather than extranuclear, constitutive rather than extraconstitutive. If a greatest prime number does not exist, then it is not the case that it exists, and we do not usually countenance the possibility that it may nevertheless have the complementary property of existing. A greatest prime number exists or it does not exist, and although the fact of its nonexistence in Meinongian object theory does not penalize the greatest prime number from being referred to, as we have been doing, or having various nuclear and extranuclear properties truly predicated of it in thought and language, including the extranuclear property, known already in Euclid's time, of necessary nonexistence.

To understand what is required in distinguishing between nuclear and extranuclear properties, it may be worthwhile to begin by critically reviewing some of the more widely known efforts to define the distinction among inheritors of Meinongian object theory that observe Meinong's historical division of an intended object's nuclear constitutive from its extranuclear extraconstitutive properties in his mature *Gegenstandstheorie*. Then it may be possible to consider a formal criterion whereby nuclear properties are unambiguously distinguished from extranuclear properties in an intuitively satisfying way. This exercise prepares the way for detailed consideration of some of the most important solutions to objections that have been raised against Meinong's object theory. By appealling to a rigorously reconceived distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, we can investigate some advanced philosophical topics that arise in Meinong's semantic philosophy by virtue of its commitment to a principle of restricted rather than unrestricted free assumption.

5.4 Findlay

The effort to explicate Meinong's distinction more thoroughly and perspicuously begins in the secondary philosophical literature with Findlay. He writes:

> Meinong takes over from Ernst Mally the view that there are two fundamentally different types of properties of objects, those which are nuclear (*konstitutorisch*) and those which are extra-nuclear (*ausserkonstitutorisch*). The property of simplicity is an interesting example of an extra-nuclear property. There are some objects, e.g. a certain specific shade of red, which it would be usual to regard as simple. If, however, we treat this simplicity as part of the nature of the shade we are involved in a contradiction; the nature of the shade involves two 'moments', being-red and being-simple, and is therefore complex. Again, if simplicity be an element in the shade of red, all objects that are characterized by the shade will be also characterized by simplicity, which is absurd. Meinong disposes of these Megarian subtleties by holding that the simplicity of the shade of red cannot be treated as a constitutive part of its nature, or even as something consecutive upon this constitutive part; it is a property of higher order which is 'founded on' the nature of the object. (Findlay 1995, 176)

Findlay's exposition paints a largely accurate picture of Meinong's use of the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction. It also goes beyond Meinong's explicit characterization of the distinction. This may be unavoidable if we are to understand the distinction in terms of general conditions, rather than by means of examples of nuclear and extranuclear properties. Findlay suggests a criterion whereby a property is excluded from the category of nuclear properties, and included instead in the category of extranuclear properties, if it would be 'contradictory' or 'absurd' to suppose that any choice of Meinongian objects could include the property as part of their 'nature' or *Sosein*.

Unfortunately, Findlay's effort to define the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction precisely, while intuitively well-motivated, is not entirely satisfactory. If we begin with a shade of red, as Findlay does, which it is merely 'usual' to regard as simple, and conclude that simplicity cannot be part of its nature on pain of absurdly

misrepresenting it as something complex, then we leave open the possibility that we may have been mistaken in the first place to regard the property as simple. Simplicity and complexity are relative and systematically ambiguous categories. Often what seems simple in some respect turns out on examination to be complex in another respect. Perhaps there are no objects whose nature is simple in the required sense, and this might even be presented as an interesting discovery of object theory, without providing a good reason for distinguishing properties like being simple from properties like being red or being a certain shade of red. Moreover, there appear to be contexts in which it is useful, even necessary, to include a property like simplicity in an object's *Sosein*.

Suppose I write a novel about two mathematicians competing with one another to prove Goldbach's conjecture. There is no such proof, of course. Even so, would it not make sense to distinguish between the beingless proofs of Goldbach's conjecture throughout an entire work of fiction by designating one proof simply as 'the simple proof', and the other as 'the complex proof'? If this is a legitimate way to characterize Meinongian objects, then we cannot accept without further qualification Findlay's blanket classification of simplicity as extranuclear. Or, if extranuclear, then we may be driven toward some version of Meinong's later desperate distinction between extranuclear properties and their watered-down nuclear surrogates supposedly lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality. Furthermore, by Findlay's criterion, since no logical contradiction results when we add a different kind of property like complexity to the *Sosein* of an object that is indeed complex, such as a digital computer, we can conclude that complexity, unlike simplicity, is nuclear rather than extranuclear. Complexity and simplicity alike, presumably, for Findlay, as complementary properties, are both nuclear or both extranuclear.

The second argument Findlay offers for classifying simplicity as extranuclear rather than nuclear appears even more confused. He seems to say that if simplicity is part of the nature of a shade of red, then any object possessing that shade of red must also be simple. This reasoning embodies an evident *non sequitur*. The qualities belonging even to the nature of a property do not generally transfer to objects that have the property. The principle to which Findlay appeals is that if a quality belongs to a property, and if the property belongs to an object, then the quality belongs to the object. The contrapositive of the principle, however, is evidently false. It is not the case that if a quality does not belong to an object, then either the quality does not belong to a property or the property does not belong to the object. Blood is not itself a color; yet red is a color and blood is red.

Findlay may be right to maintain that noncontradiction plays an essential role in distinguishing nuclear from extranuclear properties. What is not clear is that he has yet identified a correct criterion. Something more must be said about the concepts of contradiction and absurdity, if anything like Findlay's criterion is to succeed. If the point of distinguishing between nuclear and extranuclear properties is merely to avoid contradiction or absurdity, then we could just as easily do so in Findlay's example by classifying red as an extranuclear property and simplicity as a nuclear property. Why is there a presumption without further explanation that red or

redness is automatically nuclear, and that whatever produces inconsistency when added to the nature of a simply red object is necessarily extranuclear? Provision must also be made to distinguish outright logical contradiction and absurdity from metaphysical impossibility within the nature or *Sosein* of a Meinongian object, such as the round square. In lieu of more careful analysis and definition, it is easy to imagine a critic complaining that the round square already involves contradiction and absurdity, despite the fact that the properties of being round and square are both supposed to be paradigm nuclear properties. There is no presumption that either roundness or squareness is particularly responsible for the apparent inconsistency, or that the contradiction and absurdity of the round square, if that is what it is, could or should be avoided by relegating either roundness or squareness to the category of extranuclear properties.

5.5 Parsons

In *Nonexistent Objects*, Parsons accepts a version of Meinong's distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties in developing a highly reconstructed Meinongian object theory. Parsons distinguishes between nuclear and extranuclear properties in this way, when he explains:

> Our historical situation yields a very rough kind of decision procedure for telling whether a predicate is nuclear or extranuclear. It is this: if everyone agrees that the predicate stands for an ordinary property of individuals, then it is a nuclear predicate and it stands for a nuclear property. On the other hand, if everyone agrees that it doesn't stand for an ordinary property of individuals (for whatever reason), or if there is a history of controversy about whether it stands for a property of individuals, then it is an extranuclear predicate, and it does not stand for a nuclear property. (Parsons 1980, 24)

The main difficulty with Parsons's informal proposal is that it relies on intuitions about what counts or does not count as an 'ordinary' property. In the usual sense of the word, it is, if anything, more natural to treat the extranuclear property of existence as an ordinary property of individuals, since the ordinary things with which we are familiar in ordinary experience all exist, while some nuclear properties, like being a unicorn, having a third eye, and the like, for freely assumed nonexistent Meinongian objects, are anything but ordinary and often characterize only nonexistent intended objects. If there is another sense in which existence is not regarded as an ordinary property, or if 'ordinary' here is supposed to mean something extraordinary, Parsons does not say what it is. Parsons acknowledges some of the limitations of his criterion:

> Of course, this "decision procedure" is a very imperfect one. Probably its main virtue is to give us enough clear cases of nuclear and extranuclear predicates for us to develop an intuition for the distinction, so that we can readily classify new cases. I find that I have such an intuitive ability, and that other people pick it up quite readily; even those who are skeptical about the viability of the distinction seem to agree about which predicates are supposed to be which. . .. (Parsons 1980, 24)

Such a sociological criterion may be considerably more imperfect than Parsons suspects. The historical component of the criterion is particularly weak. It entails that whenever a philosophical dispute arises about whether a property is nuclear or extranuclear, the question is supposed to be decided in favor of those who hold that the property is extranuclear. Even if those persons are wrong, and later come to acknowledge their error, the existence of prior controversy alone means that, by the historical controversy criterion the property is supposed to be classified as extranuclear. For unproblematic properties like being red, round, or square, and existent, nonexistent, impossible, complete, and incomplete, the principle might work well enough to distinguish nuclear from extranuclear properties. As we shall soon see, if it is not obvious already, there are also properties that are more difficult to classify, about which philosophical controversies have arisen, even among proponents of Meinong's object theory. Why should these automatically be classified as extranuclear, solely because there has been a dispute about their status, without asking further how the dispute has been or should be resolved, and without trying to decide whether or not there are good arguments for classifying the properties in question instead as nuclear?

5.6 Routley

Routley (later Sylvan), in *Exploring Meinong's Jungle and Beyond*, begins with an intuitive distinction between what he calls 'characterizing' and 'noncharacterizing' properties. These, evidently, are meant to correspond respectively to constitutive or nuclear and extraconstitutive or extranuclear properties. Later, Routley remarks on the difficulty of giving a more precise definition of the distinction:

> Thus far the elaboration of the theory of items [Routley's version of object theory] has relied on an intuitive and rather natural distinction between "characterising" predicates such as 'is round' and 'is golden' and predicates which are "not characterising" such as 'exists', 'is possible' and 'is complete'. Problematic cases, such as those provided by relational predicates (as, for example, 'married Joan of Arc') have been avoided (as is an author's privilege). But since the Characterisation Postulates, which are central to the theory of items, depend upon the distinction of *one-place predicates*, into characterising and not, it is important, especially for philosophical applications, and for assessment and criticism of the theory, to elaborate the distinction and to try to make it good. (Routley 1980, 264)

After this promising beginning, Routley resists offering a hard and fast criterion for the distinction between characterizing and noncharacterizing properties. He warns us not to expect a rigorous basis for the distinction:

> That does not imply obtaining necessary and/or sufficient conditions, though such conditions are desirable, and can (within limits, as will be seen) be had. A rough nonexhaustive typology of predicates will suffice for present purposes. (Routley 1980, 264)

Then, like Meinong and most of his commentators, he proceeds by listing examples of properties that belong uncontroversially to the two categories. He

takes the curse off the distinction by comparing it to other similar fundamental distinctions in mainstream metaphysics that are also resistant to analysis in terms of individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, invoking Meinong's distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties as similar but not identical to the related distinction he wants to draw between characterizing and noncharacterizing properties. Routley continues:

> The distinction to be drawn is not exactly a new one but is similar to distinctions that run through the history of philosophy; for example, the traditional distinction between essence-specifying predicates and those that cannot be used in specifying the essence or nature of a thing; Frege's distinction of levels according to which 'exists', unlike 'is red', is a second-level predicate; Meinong's and Mally's distinction between *konstitutorisch* and *ausserkonstitutorisch* predicates which ties with Meinong's division of predicates (or rather properties) into orders; Russell's distinction of predicates. . .into elementary and not, and the modern distinction of predicates into those that yield properties and those that do not. All these divisions make the distinction, from which a start can be made, between such predicates as 'is round', 'heavy', 'dry', 'cold', 'wet', 'red', on the one side and 'exists' on the other. (Routley 1980, 265)

There follows a brief characterization of the distinction, in which Routley explains:

> Paradigmatic characterising predicates are simple descriptive predicates; paradigmatic noncharacterising predicates are ontic predicates. These classes can serve as base cases in an [*sic*.] quasi-inductive elaboration of the distinction to be drawn. (Routley 1980, 265)

While this seems correct as far as it goes, it involves some avoidably vague concepts, and does not constitute a criterion for distinguishing nuclear or characterizing from extranuclear or noncharacterizing properties. It is unclear exactly what is supposed to be meant by a 'simple descriptive predicate', or, for that matter, exactly what is supposed to be meant by an 'ontic predicate'. 'Exists' is evidently an ontic predicate, but why is it not also a simple descriptive predicate? The term itself is simple, and some ontologists believe that existence is a primitive or indefinable but nonetheless descriptive concept.

Moreover, even Meinong would agree that we describe an object by specifying its extranuclear properties in saying that it exists or does not exist, as when we say of the characters in a historical novel like Tolstoy's *War and Peace* that Napoléon Bonaparte exists, but Pierre Bezuhov does not. Extensionalists in philosophical semantics are likely to argue that what Routley intends as a simple descriptive predicate, such as 'is red', is also ontic, in the sense that, from the extensionalist perspective being considered, only existent entities can have properties, so that even to attribute the property 'is red' to an object implies that the object exists. For that matter, why should a nuclear or characterizing predicate be simple? The abstractive predicate, 'is red, round, and ten centimeters in diameter', is nuclear or characterizing, despite not being simple. Finally, trying to distinguish nuclear or characterizing predicates as descriptive is not much help, since, as Routley intends them, the terms 'characterizing' and 'descriptive' are synonymous. It would be just as useless, even though it is true, to try to define nuclear properties as those alone that can belong to an object's *Sosein*, and extranuclear properties as those that are

excluded from an object's *Sosein*. We still need to know which properties these are, and we need a more rigorous criterion by which the two categories can be rightly distinguished, especially in disputed cases.

Routley concludes his discussion of the distinction between characterizing and noncharacterizing predicates by listing and briefly discussing a detailed typology of 'leading classes' for the two categories of predicates. Under the title of characterizing or Ch-predicates, Routley includes only Descriptive predicates, Compounds of these, and Relational predicates; under the heading of noncharacterizing or non-Ch-predicates, Routley more expansively lists Ontic predicates, Evaluative predicates, Theoretical predicates, Logical predicates, and Intensional predicates. This is certainly a more complete enumeration than we find in other sources relevant to Meinong's distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties. What is lacking is a principle by which predicates in any of these subtypes can be understood as belonging to one category rather than another. In the background to all such efforts to explain the distinction by means of cases, especially in Parsons and Routley, one hears Socrates chiding Meno for offering a swarm of many kinds of bees when asked for a single definition of the general concept of bee.[2]

5.7 Logical Criteria for Nuclear and Extranuclear Properties

That previous attempts to define the nuclear-extranuclear distinction precisely are unsatisfactory is no cause for despair. If the underlying concept of the distinction is thought through, it may yet be possible to state an exact criterion that determines in principle of any property whether it is nuclear or extranuclear by an intuitively satisfying principle. Ideally, such a criterion should also support an adequate explanation of the difference between properties in each category, and classify controversial properties in a fruitful intuitively correct way.

The idea of Meinong's distinction is that only certain kinds of properties constitute an object as the particular object it is, independently of its ontic status. In this sense, Routley's characterization of the distinction is sound, as far as it goes, even if it does not provide a working criterion. Meinong's object theory comprehends all existent, actual and abstract, and beingless or nonexistent objects, including incomplete and impossible objects, corresponding to every combination of identity-constituting properties. It follows that, on Meinong's conception, the

[2] Plato, *Meno* 72a3-b5: 'I seem to be in great luck, Meno; while I am looking for one virtue, I have found you to have a whole swarm of them. But, Meno, to follow up the image of swarms, if I were asking you what is the nature of bees, and you said that they are many and of all kinds, what would you answer if I asked you: 'Do you mean that they are many and varied and different from one another in so far as they are bees? Or are they no different in that regard, but in some other respect, in their beauty, for example, or their size or in some other such way?' Tell me, what would you answer if thus questioned?'

properties that characterize an object as unique and distinct from other objects cannot include properties which, if truly predicated of the object, would undermine the object's ontic independence. Nuclear properties must be ontically neutral, taken individually, while extranuclear properties imply an intended object's supervenient ontic status, much as Routley maintains. If we are in search of more definite guidance about which properties are ontically neutral and which are ontically committal, we may do well to reconsider Findlay's proposal, and refine his suggestion that the distinction can somehow be made out in terms of logical contradiction and noncontradiction.

We have already mentioned that to avoid logical inconsistency, object theory must distinguish between external sentence negation and internal predicate complementation. The theory requires a formal demarcation of external and internal negation, and must impose appropriate inference restrictions in at least some cases to prevent property complement predications from entailing counterpart sentence negations. We must then try to decide which situations demand such restriction. Intuitively, nuclear properties require the distinction and the inference blockade, while extranuclear properties do not. It seems pre-analytically correct to deny that the round square, while non-round, is not for that reason such that it is not the case that it is round. For the round square, by Meinong's independence thesis, is indeed round, just as it is square or non-round. What Meinong is not obligated to conclude is that the round square is such that it is round and it is not the case that it is round. There is, on the contrary, no such pressure to prohibit the inference of external propositional negation from internal negation or predicate complementation in the case of paradigm extranuclear properties. The round square has the extranuclear property of being nonexistent, of having the complement of the extranuclear property of existence, from which there appears to be no logical hazard in concluding that therefore it is not the case that the round square exists, in an external negation of the necessarily false proposition that the round square exists.

The idea is that while the round square is both round and non-round, being both round and non-round, although metaphysically impossible, does not collapse into the outright logical inconsistency of both being round and not being round, or being such that the round square is round and it is not the case that the round square is round. Where extranuclear properties are concerned, there is no objection to permitting the logical interderivability of internal extranuclear property complement predications with the corresponding external propositional negations of extranuclear predications. To say that the round square is nonexistent is logically equivalent to saying that it is not the case that the round square exists. It is the same as to say that the round square does not exist. To say that the round square is impossible is logically equivalent to saying that the round square is not possible, or that it is not the case that the round square is possible. To say that the Statue of Liberty is not impossible is logically equivalent to saying that the Statue of Liberty is possible. To say that the Statue of Liberty is not nonexistent, is logically equivalent to saying that the Statue of Liberty is existent, or simply that the monument exists. Shortly put, the logic of predications of extraconstitutive, extranuclear, or Routley non-characterizing properties of intended objects in a

Meinongian semantic framework is classical, while the logic of constitutive, nuclear or Routley characterizing predications is nonclassical, and in particular three- or gap-valued.

A formal characterization of the distinction between predicate complementation and propositional negation can accordingly be used more sharply to define the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction. There are several materially equivalent ways to proceed. An extranuclear property can be defined in terms of logical operators and quantification over uninterpreted predicate symbols alone, while a nuclear or constitutive property is any property that is not categorical, or that requires for its definition the interpretation of at least some predicate symbols. Alternatively, but equivalently, a nuclear property can be distinguished from an extranuclear property by the fact that the internal negation or predicate complementation of an attribution of a nuclear property to a Meinongian object is not logically equivalent to the corresponding external negation of the proposition in which the property is attributed to the object. While, in the case of an extranuclear property, the counterpart internal and external negation formulations, respectively, in predicate complementation and propositional negation predications, are logically equivalent. That is what makes the nuclear predication part of object theory logic nonclassically three- or gap-valued, and the extranuclear predication part classically bivalent.

We permit quantification without ontic commitment over all objects in the Meinongian referential semantic domain, regardless of the objects' ontic status, and without ontic commitment, by means of the standard quantifiers. Then we can mark the distinction between nuclear or constitutive (C) and extranuclear or extraconstitutive (XC) properties by writing nuclear predicates as ordinary predicates without special syntactical distinction, simply as 'F', and writing extranuclear predicates with an exclamation (shriek) sign, '!', as in $E!$ The symbol says that the intended object with this property actually or abstractly *exists*. We distinguish between external or propositional negation and internal negation or predicate complementation as before, in order to advance formal criteria for Meinong's nuclear-extranuclear (constitutive-extraconstitutive, Routley characterizing-noncharacterizing) property distinction, in these terms:

$$(\mathrm{C})\ \neg\forall x_1 \ldots \forall x_n \forall F^n [\neg F^n x_1 \ldots x_n \leftrightarrow \text{non-}F^n x_1 \ldots x_n]$$
$$(\mathrm{XC})\ \forall x_1 \ldots \forall x_n \forall F^n ! [\neg F^n ! x_1 \ldots x_n \leftrightarrow \text{non-}F^n ! x_1 \ldots x_n]$$

(C) and (XC) together provide a *logical* criterion for distinguishing between nuclear and extranuclear, constitutive and extraconstitutive, Routley characterizing and noncharacterizing properties. The criterion reflects the fact that unlike nuclear properties, where both the property and its complement fails to hold of a given Meinongian intended object, there are only two truth valued possibilities for extranuclear predications. They are either true or false, so that their external negation forms are logically equivalent to their internal predicate complementation forms.

The (C)-(XC) distinction further helps to explain and not merely formally express the fact that particular properties belong to one category rather than the other. We can test candidate properties to see whether or not they are extranuclear!-properties. There is no apparent reason to think that the property of being red is such that it follows from an intended object's being non-red that it is therefore not the case that the intended object is red. It is not unthinkable to intend the red non-red object, as in color incompatible predications. There is rather good reason and compelling ontic and logical instinct behind the classification whereby it is totally unthinkable to intend an object that is red and such that it is not the case that it is red. The advantages of the analysis include its rigorous formulation, reliance on purely logical relations instead of synonyms for the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear, constitutive and nonconstitutive or extraconstitutive, or characterizing and noncharacterizing properties, and the fact that the criterion, if correct, by virtue of its logically exclusionary form, distinguishes every property as nuclear or extranuclear with no residual ambiguities or undecided gray area cases.

Any criterion among properties must be correctly applied in order to produce a correct categorization. There remains room for dispute about whether a predicate complementation ought to be understood as logically equivalent or nonequivalent to a propositional negation. The criterion nevertheless provides a clear structure for categorizing properties, and poses a more definite question about the logical properties of predications as a basis for the distinction, in place of vague mentions as to whether or not a predicate is simply descriptive or ontic, let alone controversial. The criterion is similar to Findlay's proposal for distinguishing between nuclear and extranuclear properties, on the grounds of preserving logical consistency. Whereas Findlay suggests that nuclear properties are those that can be added as they are to an object's *Sosein* without producing logical inconsistency in the case of at least some Meinongian objects, the above criterion distinguishes nuclear from extranuclear properties as those whose internally negated predicate complementations cannot be replaced by counterpart externally negated propositions without producing a logically inconsistent *Sosein* in the case of at least some Meinongian objects.

5.8 Existent Round Square, Watering-Down, and the Modal Moment

Russell, in his 1905a essay, 'On Denoting', and in his 1905b review of Meinong's anthology, *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie*, presents the problem of the existent round square. From the standpoint of Meinong's distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, it might appear that Meinong's reply to Russell's objection would be obvious. The *Sosein* of an object contains only the object's nuclear properties, and none of its freely unassumable extranuclear properties. Since existence is an extranuclear property, the existent round square, if we

can even speak of such a Meinongian object, does not have the property of being existent as part of its *Sosein*. The existent round square is, therefore, unlike the round square, not a Meinongian object at all. Alternatively, it might also be argued, on Meinong's behalf, that the existent round square, despite its misleading name, is not existent, and does not have the property of being existent (or nonexistent) in its *Sosein*. The important point for Meinong is that *Sosein* should be logically and ontically independent of *Sein*. To assume that there is an existent round square in any case is not to be directed in thought toward an existent object whose *Sosein* as such could not possibly be independent of its *Sein*, or rather *Nichtsein* (Russell 1904, 1905a, b, 1907).

The main thrust of Meinong's solution to Russell's problem is nevertheless to say that the existent round square is existent, even though it does not exist (*AMG* V, 16–7; VI, 278–82). Russell claimed he was unable to make sense of this reply, and others have since interpreted Meinong's retort as a hopeless reduction to absurdity of the object theory as a whole (similar objections are voiced by Carnap 1956, 65; Ryle 1973, 104–5). Meinong maintains that for every extranuclear property there corresponds a 'watered-down' (*depotenzierte*) nuclear counterpart, deprived of 'full-strength factuality', because it lacks the 'modal moment' (*das Modalmoment*).[3] When Meinong answers Russell's objection by stating that the existent round square is existent, even though it does not exist, he means that the *Sosein* of the existent round square includes a watered-down nuclear counterpart of the extranuclear property of existence, but that the existent round square does not exist because its surrogate watered-down nuclear existence property lacks the modal moment of full-strength factuality.

Meinong's reply is supposed to eliminate the contradiction in Russell's statement of the problem by calling out an equivocation in two senses of 'existence'. Findlay describes Meinong's doctrine of the modal moment in arithmetical terms:

> Meinong holds that there must be a factor, which he calls the *modal moment*, in which the difference between full-strength factuality and watered-down factuality consists. Full-strength factuality minus the modal moment yields watered-down factuality. Watered-down factuality plus the modal moment yields full-strength factuality. (Findlay 1995, 103–4)

Meinong permits a watered-down surrogate nuclear existence property to enter into the *Sosein* of the freely assumed existent round square. This is supposed to permit the existent round square to be weakly existent, in the sense that its *Sosein* includes an ontically diluted existence property. What this means is unclear. Insofar as the suggestion can be understood, it seems to violate the intuition that something either exists or it does not exist, with no middle ground or *Quasisein*. At this point in

[3] *AMG* VI, 266. Meinong's modal moment is also supposed to contribute full–strength factuality to the truth or subsistence of objectives, propositions, or states of affairs, as well as to extranuclear properties or determinations. For simplicity, I have confined discussion to the modal moment of properties. The proposal to eliminate the modal moment from revisionary Meinongian object theory applies equally with appropriate qualifications to the modal moment of subsistent objectives.

the evolution of object theory, Meinong has already given up on *Quasisein*, making it inexplicable how he can now consider a watered-down weakened or diluted nuclear counterpart of extranuclear *Sein*. We can speak of a Meinongian nonexistent intended object that is red and non-red, but we cannot meaningfully speak of an existent intended object that non-exists, or of an intended object that exists despite being nonexistent. Meinong supposes the distinction to entail that the existent round square does not actually exist, in the sense that the watered-down surrogate existence property in the existent round square's *Sosein* lacks the modal moment of full-strength factuality conferring actual existence on an intended object. Whatever that missing element is, whatever the modal moment is supposed to confer on an intended object to imply its existence rather than nonexistence, a variation of Russell's problem can easily be retailored to feature the key ingredient of full-strength factuality or actual existence. Russell can retrench against Meinong's countermeasures by simply emphasizing that he is not imagining a thought about a watered-down existent round square, but an existent round square, an intended object that is as existent as and in the same sense that it is round and square. Meinong does not escape the force of Russell's objection by substituting another ontically and semantically more manageable intended object for Russell's problematic construction.

Meinong's doctrine of the modal moment, for all its good intentions, is not very comforting. He turns to it out of more than a simple desire to solve or avoid Russell's problem of the existent round square. He can accomplish the same without resorting to any of the modal moment apparatus, simply by putting his foot down about the nuclear-extranuclear, constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction. The trouble is that there seems to be no guarantee that there are no strengthened reformulations of Russell's original problem of the existent round square, in which an indefinitely ascending hierarchy of orders of watering-down extranuclear to nuclear properties are required, and in which the modal moment itself may be subject to indefinitely descending watering-downs. We do not strictly need to produce the iterative case, but can argue by dilemma. If possession of the modal moment can be watered-down to an assumable nuclear surrogate, then Russell's problem of the existent round square is resuscitated without enforcement of the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction, as the problem of the existent-cum-modal-moment round square. If possession of the modal moment cannot be watered-down to an assumable nuclear surrogate, and if the line must be drawn somewhere in this watering-down regress, then why not do so prior to introducing watering-down, the modal moment, and full-strength factuality in the first place, by refusing to allow the watering-down of *any* extranuclear property into a counterpart assumable nuclear surrogate?

If the free assumption of an existent-cum-modal-moment round square is not to posit an actually existent impossible object, then the property of existence-cum-modal-moment, and therefore the modal moment itself, must admit of watering-down in a successive ordering of strengths or modalities of factuality. The existent round square might then lack the modal moment order $i + 1$, while the existent-cum-modal-moment round square possesses the watered-down modal moment i, in an

indefinite regress. Terms designating the modal moment of any particular order can be indexed with an appropriate superscript or like device to indicate their place in the hierarchy of ordered degrees of factuality. The problem of the existent-cum-modal-moment^{i} round square, for any factuality order i, would be superseded by the problem of the existent-cum-modal-moment^{i+1} round square. For every problem in the series, the existent-cum-modal-moment^{i} round square includes the watered-down modal moment^{i} in its *Sosein*, but lacks the higher-order extranuclear modal moment^{i+1}. The proposal for this reason ultimately affords no final characterization of factuality or real existence. The concept is always just out of reach, limited by the possibility of further watering-down under unrestricted free assumption. Perhaps, after all, this is just the simple truth of things. Findlay considers a similar objection, and refers to this succession of strengthened counterexamples as the second and third waves of Russellian objections to Meinong's theory (Findlay 1995, 106–8).

Meinong avoids the regress of orders of watering-down for possession of the modal moment, as at some point in the regress he must, by stipulating that the modal moment is exempt from watering-down. Findlay explains:

> Suppose I assume that the objective $2+2=5$ has factuality *plus* the modal moment, then it is clear that I am assuming something more than that $2+2=5$ has watered-down factuality. Shall we hold that the modal moment is itself capable of being watered down, that it too has a ghostly counterpart which requires a second modal moment to lend it full reality? It is clear that this path leads to the infinite regress; we should have an infinite series of strengthless modal moments, each appealing to another moment which was equally feeble. (Findlay 1995, 106–7)
>
> From this situation Meinong saves himself by holding that we *cannot*, by means of a judgment or assumption, attribute the modal moment to an objective which does not possess it. (Findlay 1995, 107)

Meinong's solution involves an inevitable if regrettable limitation of the freedom of assumption thesis. Any proposition can be entertained in thought or held before the mind for consideration, *except* the attribution of the modal moment to an object that does not have it (Findlay 1995, 106–7). The exception and its restriction on free assumption are insisted upon in order to prevent the watering-down regress. Meinong blocks the infinite orders of watered-down modal moments by limiting free assumption to properties other than possession of the modal moment. The modal moment is distinguished as unique in this regard, an absolutely extranuclear constant in a special category of its own. Despite its historical importance in Meinong's object theory, free assumption cannot be totally unrestricted, but appropriately qualified. The fact that Meinong must call a halt against watering-down at some point, concluding that the modal moment is uniquely outside the watering-down of extranuclear properties, suggests that the restriction might as well be applied without exception to the distinction between any nuclear and extranuclear properties, and in neo-Meinongian object theory do away entirely with watering-down, the modal moment, and full-strength factuality.

The concept of the modal moment can be eliminated from Meinong's object theory, as proposed, answering Russell's objection by enforcing the prior distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties. Such a revised account relies on

Meinong's more deeply entrenched and intuitively justified distinction between what is constitutive or identity-conditional among an intended object's properties, and what is in this sense extraconstitutive. Eliminating the modal moment is also more economical. It is not clear whether there is supposed to be only one modal moment, or whether each extranuclear property or watering-down of an extranuclear property requires its own distinct component modal moment. The elimination of the modal moment reduces the object theory domain by at least one element if there is only one modal moment, and by many more if each watering-down of an extranuclear property is supposed to have its own distinct modal moment. If the modal moment must be held constant anyway, if it represents a point beyond which free assumption and watering-down is not permitted, then it may be preferable to regard any extranuclear property as incapable of being watered-down, never truly predicated of an object with anything less than whatever Meinong means by the modal moment of full-strength faculty, and never belonging to the *Sosein* of any Meinongian object.

5.9 Converse Intentional Properties

We come now to a controversy about classifying certain properties as nuclear or extranuclear. The properties in question are sometimes known as *intensional* properties, and sometimes as *converse intentional* properties (Chisholm 1982b). These are properties an object is said to have by virtue of a psychological subject adopting a certain intentional attitude toward it. If I love Paris, then I have the intentional property of loving Paris, and Paris has the converse intentional property of being loved by me. Similarly with respect to other intentional states, such as belief, doubt, hope, fear, expectation, and the like. Converse intentional or psychological properties are difficult to classify as nuclear or extranuclear (Chisholm 1982b, 537).

Parsons and Routley categorize converse intentional properties (by another name) as extranuclear (Parsons 1975, 76, 1978; Routley 1980, 266). Although Parsons, as we have seen, does not attempt to give formal criteria for distinguishing nuclear from extranuclear properties, his list of examples includes the converse intentional properties 'is thought about by Meinong' and 'is worshipped by someone', as falling under the heading of intentional extranuclear properties (Parsons 1980, 23; see Ryle 1933, 18–43). Routley devotes an entire section of his typology for noncharacterizing or non-Ch-predicates to the subcategory of what he calls 'Intensional predicates'. There he writes:

> Non-Ch(5) *Intensional predicates*. Typical are predicates such as 'is much sought after', 'is often thought about', 'is observed (by d)', 'is believed in'. None of these predicates serve in genuinely characterising an object, e.g. d's observing the cheese is not part of the nature of the cheese and makes no difference to how it is. The restriction of characterising predicates to the extensional is important in allowing intensional attitudes to be freely taken up towards arbitrary objects delivered by the axioms. (Routley 1980, 266)

If we leave aside whatever subtle distinctions may yet obtain between Routley's characterizing-noncharacterizing properties and Mally and Meinong's nuclear-extranuclear properties, it is evident that Routley is applying a rather different standard in categorizing intensional or converse intentional predicates and properties as noncharacterizing. He seems to conclude that they are noncharacterizing because they are extrinsic rather than intrinsic. He appears also in this subcategory to equate characterizing properties with intrinsic, and noncharacterizing with extrinsic, properties. It is not obvious that these identifications can be so readily made. It is easy enough to imagine a Meinongian object that can only be distinguished from other Meinongian objects by virtue of the extrinsic properties in its *Sosein*, which is to say by having extrinsic as well as intrinsic nuclear properties. Consider, for example, a story about two fictional characters, each named 'Dane', one of whom is described in the story only as the friend of Tolstoy, and the other of whom is described only as the friend of Dostoyevsky. Being the friend of Tolstoy and being the friend of Dostoyevsky are not converse intentional properties, but they are clearly extrinsic rather than intrinsic properties, and they would appear by free assumption in this context to belong among the nuclear properties of the so-beings of these two presumably distinct Meinongian fictional intended objects.

If the argument is correct, then the mere fact that converse intentional properties are extrinsic is not enough to classify them as extranuclear or noncharacterizing. To appreciate this fact, we might similarly consider a story about two distinct fictional characters each named 'Dane', one of whom is loved only by Tolstoy, and the other of whom is loathed only by Dostoyevsky. How else can these putatively different Meinongian fictional characters Dane be distinguished, except by virtue of including in their respective so-beings the converse intentional nuclear properties of being loved by Tolstoy and not loathed by Dostoyevsky, or loathed by Dostoyevsky and not loved by Tolstoy?

The formal negation-complementation criterion for nuclear and extranuclear properties entails that if any Meinongian object lacks both a property and its complement, then the property is nuclear. By this principle, converse intentional or psychological properties should be classified as nuclear rather than extranuclear. Pegasus, for all that anyone may know from ancient mythology, as an incomplete Meinongian object, has neither the converse intentional property of being worshipped by Zeus, nor the complement of the converse intentional property of being worshipped by Zeus. The *Sosein* of Pegasus is indeterminate in this respect, just as it is indeterminate with respect to the question of whether Pegasus has blue eyes, or exactly 100 hairs on the tip of his tail. The incompleteness of Pegasus in turn qualifies the converse intentional property of being worshipped by someone as nuclear or extranuclear.[4]

[4] Chisholm 1972. Cited in Chisholm 1982a, 55: '(Whatever is unthinkable, after all, at least has the property of *being* unthinkable)'. Findlay suggests that Meinong may have thought converse intentional properties to be among the nuclear constitutive properties of objects. See Findlay 1995, 153: 'Is it part of the nature of my desk to be *possessed and cherished by me*, to stand in a certain part of my room, to have undergone certain accidents which involved a spilling of ink, to be

If converse intentional properties are correctly categorized as nuclear rather than extranuclear, then it is possible to answer a difficulty about the mind-dependence or mind-independence of Meinongian objects. Meinong maintains that the objects of his object theory are mind-independent, but offers no proof for his claim. If converse intentional properties are nuclear, then by free assumption we can simply postulate the unapprehendable mountain, in much the same way that we can freely assume the golden mountain. Since unapprehendability is a converse intentional property, the unapprehendable mountain must have the nuclear or uniquely identifying or characterizing constitutive properties or *Sosein* of being unapprehendable and a mountain. The unapprehendable mountain is unapprehendable, which means that the domain of Meinongian object theory contains unapprehendable, and hence mind-independent, and finally unintended Meinongian objects. The domain must incorporate at least as many unapprehendable as apprehendable objects, including the unapprehendable valley, the unapprehendable Taj Mahal, the unapprehendable golden mountain, and the unapprehendable round square.

Do we not apprehend the unapprehendable mountain when we freely assume it? If so, then it would seem to follow that the unapprehendable mountain is also apprehendable, and in the prescribed circumstances actually apprehended. In that case, the unapprehendable mountain has the explicit property of being unapprehendable and what Meinong would call the consecutive property of being apprehendable, and as such must be numbered among the impossible Meinongian objects. The fact that the unapprehendable mountain is also unapprehendable is sufficient to establish the Meinongian semantic domain as containing at least some mind-independent objects, and hence that Meinongian objects are not only or necessarily the intended objects of actual thoughts, but, like the abstract subsistent properties that enter into their so-beings, Meinongian objects inhabit a domain like mathematical entities, properties, propositions, and relations, on a realist metaphysics, that do not depend on the existence of or actual apprehension by minds. If not all Meinongian objects are intended, then the Meinongian referential semantic domain of objects is mind-independent, objective, combinatorial, nonpsychologistic, and in some sense ideal.

worth a certain sum of money, and so on? On this point Meinong's attitude is rather vacillating, but it is only possible to make sense out of a great deal of his theory by assuming that relational properties *do* enter into the nature of the objects that they characterize' (First emphasis added). Here to be cherished by Findlay, if not also to be possessed by him, is undoubtedly conversely intentional.

5.10 Nuclear and Extranuclear Predications in the Logic of Fiction

The qualified freedom of assumption in Meinong's object theory has a wide field of application in understanding the meaning of fiction. What happens when an author creates fictional characters that seem to be distinguished from existent intended objects only by differences in the extranuclear properties attributed to them? Do the objects thereby acquire such properties as part of their freely assumed so-beings?

Consider a work of fiction in which a character, Dane, visits his psychiatrist, Diane. Dane suffers from occasional hallucinations, and reports seeing snakes. Diane, as it turns out, according to the novel, has a pet snake in her office, and she reassures Dane that he is not hallucinating when he sees the snake, but that the snake really exists. This attribution is the only thing, we may suppose, that distinguishes the snake Dane experiences in Diane's office from an imaginary unreal snake he hallucinates later in the elevator. Perhaps the author does not elaborate on the two snakes' properties, or does so in such a way that there are no differences in any of their less controversially nuclear properties. Within the world of fiction the author describes, there are two different snakes. One exists, according to the fiction, and the other does not. How are these intended objects to be distinguished in Meinong's object theory, within the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, and without allowing extranuclear properties to enter into the so-being of a beingless Meinongian object, attributing actual existence to, like anything else in the story, Diane's actually fictional pet snake and Dane's actually fictional hallucinated snake?

Here, if anywhere, it may be tempting to restore a version of Meinong's doctrine of the modal moment, and the idea of watered-down extranuclear properties entering into the so-being of a Meinongian object. The concept makes it possible to allow that Diane's snake, unlike the snake of Dane's hallucinations, has the watered-down extranuclear property of existence, according to the story, lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality, even though it does not exist. It is probably with these types of examples in mind that Meinong first devised the theory of watering-down extranuclear properties to nuclear surrogates for inclusion in an object's *Sosein*. If we do not absolutely need watering-down or the modal moment in order to answer Russell's problem of the existent round square, then perhaps we also do not need it in order to distinguish Meinongian objects that are supposed to exist versus those that are supposed not to exist within a work of fiction.

The first thing to emphasize, which is obvious enough, is that neither Dane's hallucinated snake nor Diane's pet snake exist. They are equally fictional, and in that sense they are both incomplete beingless Meinongian objects in a Meinongian semantics of fiction. Diane's snake, unlike Dane's hallucinated snake, is described in the story as existing, as the only apparent distinction in their properties. One initially promising but finally disappointing solution to clear these references up is to introduce story-contexting. Story-contexting permits Diane's snake, unlike Dane's hallucinated snake, to be described as existing-in-or-according-to-the-

story, while Dane's hallucinated snake has the story-contexted property of not-existing-in-or-according-to-the-story. Story-contexting is a natural way to try to distinguish the objects that are said to exist in a story, and to distinguish them from objects that are not supposed to exist within or according to the story. The approach, unfortunately, is tantamount to Meinong's distinction between extranuclear and watered-down extranuclear properties, which we had hoped to avoid. There, both existing-in-or-according-to-the-story and not-existing-in-or-according-to-the-story are watered-down extranuclear properties, distinct from the extranuclear properties of (actually) existing or not existing, presumably by virtue of lacking the equivalent of the modal moment of full-strength factuality. If we hope to find an alternative to these complex semantic epicycles, then we must look beyond the story-contexting of extranuclear properties, even if story-contexting is useful for other applications in a Meinongian logic of fiction.

There is another way of distinguishing Dane's from Diane's fictional snakes. We can acknowledge that converse intentional properties are nuclear rather than extranuclear. This is bound to be a controversial choice, but one that deserves a hearing. If we allow converse intentional properties like being feared by Dane to be nuclear or constitutive properties of intended objects, then we can say that Dane's hallucinated snake has the so-being of being a snake and being hallucinated and feared by Dane, which is not true of Diane's pet snake. Diane's snake, by contrast, has the converse intentional properties of being owned by Diane and being a pet, which is not true and not among the nuclear properties of Dane's hallucinated snake. The same distinction works even if Dane were to hallucinate Diane's pet snake. If Diane also begins hallucinating snakes, there will remain the difference in or according to the story that one snake has the converse intentional nuclear property of being hallucinated by Diane, as distinct from what might otherwise be identical snakes, that have the converse intentional nuclear property of being hallucinated by Dane.

What, then, about a story in which one snake is simply said to exist, while another is simply said not to exist? These are also presumably different Meinongian fictional objects. If we do not want to include existence or watered-down existence as a nuclear property entering into an object's *Sosein*, then we cannot understand the two snakes as different by virtue of one's existing and the other's not existing, since neither snake exists. Here, too, the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties provides the necessary distinction, if converse intentional properties are classified as nuclear rather than extranuclear. We can distinguish between the two otherwise identical snakes by invoking the fact that one snake has the converse intentional nuclear property of being described in a work of fiction, or thought about or postulated by the author of the fiction as existing, while the other snake has the converse intentional nuclear property of being described in the same work of fiction, thought about or postulated by the author as not existing.

This way of distinguishing fictional objects is very different from Meinong's division between extranuclear and watered-down extranuclear properties, and, for the same reason, from story-contexting. There is a difference between an object's having the watered-down extranuclear property of existing-in-or-according-to-a-story, as opposed to its having the nuclear converse intentional property of being

believed or postulated by an author to exist in or according to a story. The proposal does not recognize watering-down or the modal moment of full-strength factuality, and instead enforces a hard and fast distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, with converse intentional properties, including consecutive converse intentional properties implicit in a story context, categorized as nuclear rather than extranuclear. The property of existing and its complement of not existing are extranuclear, with no watering-down, and as such they are altogether excluded from the *Sosein* of any Meinongian object. If converse intentional properties are nuclear, then it is a nuclear property of some Meinongian objects that they are believed by someone to exist, or believed by someone not to exist, or postulated by an author as existing or not existing, that can enter into the characterizing identity-constituting so-being of a Meinongian object, and distinguish it from other Meinongian objects, on the grounds of its total distinctive *Sosein* of constitutive nuclear properties.

5.11 Nuclear-Extranuclear Properties and Dual Modes of Predication

In addition to the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, Mally suggested another distinction between dual modes of predication for the properties of Meinongian objects.[5] The inspiration for the distinction is the sense that beingless objects should not be regarded as having whatever properties they have in the same ontically robust sense as existent or subsistent objects.[6] We can characterize the distinction between these modes of predication by indexing the copula in predications of properties to existent or subsistent versus beingless Meinongian objects, in this fashion:

(1) Existent or subsistent Meinongian object *a* is^{1} *F* (*a really is* or *really has* property *F*)
(2) Beingless Meinongian object *b* is^{2} *F* (*b* 'is' or 'has' *in some sense* but *is not really* and *does not really have* property *F*)

[5] Mally 1912, 71, 76. Mally refers to his lecture, 'Gegenstandstheorie und Mathematik', Verhandlungen des III. internationalen Kongresses für Philosophie, Heidelberg 1908. Mally 1909a, b. Findlay expresses sympathy with Mally's proposal in Findlay 1995, 110–2, 182–4, 340–2. See the translation and commentary on Mally's 1909a, b in the "Appendix" to the present volume.

[6] The attitude pervades Grossmann 1974a, and contributes to his main criticism of Meinong's theory. I am largely in agreement with Routley's countercriticism of Mally's heresy in Routley 1980, 457–70, and with Griffin's objections to Grossmann's analysis in Griffin 1979. Meinong's object theory is eviscerated and the independence thesis contradicted if Mally's plural modes of predication are superimposed.

The distinction between dual modes of predication provides the basis for an interesting alternative to Meinong's nuclear-extranuclear property distinction. Instead of saying that there are different categories of properties, nuclear and extranuclear, we might consider the possibility instead that there is only one category of properties, which objects, depending on their ontic status, possess or fail to possess in different ways. It may then be tempting to say, as partial motivation for the development of such an alternative distinction, that although the golden funeral mask of Agamemnon is really golden, Berkeley's and Hume's imaginary golden mountain is golden *in some sense*, but not *really* golden, not golden in the full-blooded sense in which an existent golden object is actually golden.

There is no justification from an historical perspective for attributing to Meinong the dual modes of predication theory. Meinong did not accept a dual modes of predication distinction, and his categorical formulation of the independence thesis suggests that he would have regarded any such distinction as contradicting the object theory thesis that intended objects simply have, in the same univocal sense, the constitutive properties predicated of them, regardless of their ontic status, in their *Soseine* of nuclear properties, independently of their extranuclear property status of having *Sein* or *Nichtsein*. It is intriguing to consider how the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction relates to the distinction between dual modes of predication, whether one is more fundamental than the other, or if they are equally useful in advancing a Meinongian object theory. Several Meinongian logics and intensional logics of abstract objects have been proposed incorporating dual modes of predication rather than Meinong's nuclear-extranuclear property distinction (Zalta 1983, 1988; Pasniczek 1987, 1998).

If there are two modes of predication, two senses of the copula, is^1 and is^2, and if there is a difference in the mode of predication by which existent or subsistent objects, as opposed to beingless Meinongian objects, can have any property of univocal categoricity, then it appears that the dual modes of predication distinction can be reduced to the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction, but not conversely. Suppose, for example, that only beingless Meinongian objects can have properties in the sense of is^2, while existent or subsistent objects can have properties only in the sense of is^1. Or, suppose that only beingless Meinongian objects can have properties either in the sense of is^1 or is^2, while existent or subsistent objects can have properties either in the sense of is^1 or is^2, or only in the sense of is^2. These are the only relevant cases to consider, because it would not be plausible to restrict the possession of properties in the sense of is^1. Alternative theories of Mallyan dual modes of predication have been advanced that apply the distinction in at least some of these ways.[7]

[7] Rapaport 1978; Pasniczek 1998. I do not mention in this category formal systems of abstract Platonic or Fregean entities that are non-Meinongian by virtue of explicitly excluding beingless Meinongian objects. The dispute between the constitutive (nuclear) and extraconstitutive (extranuclear) property distinction and dual modes of predication is discussed by Fine 1984; Perszyk 1993; Reicher 1998; also Jacquette 1989b, 1991c, 1996a, 12–35, 1997b.

If what has just been described is how dual modes of predication are supposed to function, then it is easy to see how the dual modes distinction follows directly as a special case of the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties. The reduction, informally, without restriction to any particular predication or articulation of object theory, has this form. Predication in the sense of is^1, for simplicity, is restricted to existent or subsistent Meinongian objects, and predication in the sense of is^2 is restricted to beingless Meinongian objects. Adjustments for the remaining possibilities are straightforward variations of the following reductions:

(R1) Existent or subsistent Meinongian object a is^1 F (*a really is* or *really has* property F) if and only if object a has the extranuclear property of existing or subsisting, and object a has nuclear property F in its *Sosein*, or has extranuclear property $F!$ by virtue of the totality of nuclear properties in its *Sosein*.

(R2) Beingless Meinongian object b is^2 F (b 'is' or 'has' *in some sense* but *is not really* and *does not really have* property F) if and only if object a has the extranuclear property of being beingless (or beinglessness, or fails to have the extranuclear property of existing or subsisting), and object a has nuclear property F in its *Sosein*, or has extranuclear property $F!$ by virtue of the totality of nuclear properties in its *Sosein*.

If an object theory is equipped with the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction, then it is possible to recover the dual modes of predication distinction. However, the opposite is not true. If a theory does not already contain the nuclear-extranuclear property distinction, then there is no way to define it by means of the dual modes of predication distinction. A dual modes of predication theory might be able to define existence, completeness, or possibility, and their complements, but they will not be definable *as* extranuclear properties, unless the theory subsumes from the outset a version of the nuclear-extranuclear distinction. The nuclear-extranuclear property distinction in consequence is not only historically more authentically Meinongian rather than Mallyan, but also conceptually more fundamental than the dual modes of predication distinction.

Chapter 6
Meditations on Meinong's Golden Mountain

6.1 Reference, Predication and Existence

When Russell published 'On Denoting' in 1905a, he crossed a denotational semantic Rubicon. He changed course dramatically in that year from his previously qualified sympathy for some parts of Meinong's object theory to undisguised hostility. In discovering Meinong's writings during the course of his research into the relation of logic to ontology, Russell seems to have felt a strong attraction for certain aspects of Meinong's semantics, and appreciated in particular what he praises as Meinong's scientific methodology. Meinong's willingness to treat imperceivable objects, such as those ostensibly designated in mathematics as nonexistents to which reference and true predications of properties would remain possible, at first struck a resonant chord with Russell in his quest for a way to attach the formalisms of his new mathematical logic to an ontically austere and in other ways scientifically respectable semantics and metaphysics. Russell's moderate admiration for certain aspects of Meinong's object theory was nevertheless short-lived. It came to an abrupt and irrevocable end with the analysis of definite descriptions in Russell's justly celebrated essay, having now entered its second century of philosophical admiration, critical discussion and dispute.

Meinong regards beingless objects as referents and predication subjects that are referentially and predicationally precisely on a par with spatiotemporally existent entities. To acknowledge that the round square is round and square, and that the golden mountain is golden and a mountain, despite the fact that no such things exist, makes these beingless objects the intended referents of our thoughts and speech acts, just as when we think of an existent object like Mount Everest or the Taj Mahal. Russell is intrigued but at no point fully convinced by Meinong's semantic largesse. It is a historically interesting question with important philosophical implications to understand why Russell did not further develop his interest in Meinong's work. Why did Russell not adopt and adapt his own form of Meinongian *Gegenstandstheorie*, as part of his system-building, and why did he turn instead

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more decidedly toward a referentially extensionalist theory of denoting, limited exclusively to existent objects. Part of the answer seems to be that Russell in his own thinking about the meaning of symbolic logical expressions and relatively well-behaved sentences in colloquial language was never able to separate the pure semantics of reference from the applied ontology of intended objects, as Meinong everywhere insists we must from the beginning of his published writings. Whether as a gut-level conflict of pretheoretical or preanalytic intuitions, a fundamental difference of philosophical temperament or worldview, the surprising and revealing fact is that Russell in all his commentary on Meinong and reviews of his writings never once correctly formulates Meinong's independence of *Sosein* (so-being, comparable to Fregean sense or *Sinn*) from *Sein* (being) thesis. He repeatedly attributes to Meinong a view that he evidently himself regards as incontestable, but that, as it happens, is precisely what Meinong emphatically denies. Meinong is adamant that not only spatiotemporally existent, but any intended object regardless of its ontic status, can be referred to in thought, denoted in language, and function semantically as a true constitutive property predicant.

The fact that Russell nowhere offers a recognizable exposition of the central thesis of Meinong's object theory supports the criticism that Russell never fully understood Meinong's doctrine of the independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* and *Nichtsein*. Russell seems never to have grasped Meinong's concept of an ontically neutral referential semantic domain of *Außersein* or extraontology of the pure intended object. For Meinong, the insight that we can think and talk about the golden mountain, even though no golden mountain actually exists, by virtue of its being a distinct identifiable intended object with a distinctive unique constitutive property cluster, is the heart and soul of object theory. It is implied in his estimation by the mind-independent thought-transcendent reformulation of Brentano's proposition that all thought is intentional, that is the foundation stone of all Meinong's reflections on meaning and metaphysics. In his 1874 *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, Brentano argues that characteristically every presentation (*Vorstellung*), judgment (*Urteil*), and emotion (*Gefühl*) is always *about* something or *intends* an object. To this list of three, Meinong later adds the fourth category of thought's intentionality, assumption (*Annahme*). Meinong takes Brentano's starting place and develops the implication that, when we think or express thoughts about such intended objects as the golden mountain and the round square, we actually refer to these nonexistent intended objects, and that the objects truly have the properties of being golden and a mountain, in the case of the golden mountain, and of being round and square, in the case of the round square, even though the golden mountain does not happen to exist and the round square cannot possibly exist. Meinong generalizes the lessons of free assumption when he concludes that the meanings of thoughts and their expressions in every instance should be explicated by a semantics that is ontically neutral. Whether or not an intended object of thought or language actually exists is thereby made a distinct, independent and secondary question; one, moreover, that cannot even intelligibly arise unless we have already established the meaning of such a thought or its expression in action, typically in the symbolic products of art or language.

Russell, in his early encounter with object theory, likes the idea that, if Meinong is right, then mathematical objects would not need to exist in order to be the genuine referents and true predication subjects of mathematical theorems. What he does not immediately realize is that for Meinong there are also intended objects included in the object theory referential semantic domain that are altogether beingless in the sense that they are neither spatiotemporally existent nor subsistent abstract Platonic entities. He casts about for some sense of the word 'being' by which to allow intended objects like the golden mountain and round square to 'be', even though they do not exist, so that we can say that the golden mountain *is* the object of a certain thought, and that the round square *is* round and *is* square. Meinong, although he never engaged Russell directly on this issue, is well-positioned to reply that he denies 'being' in *any* sense when referring to the golden mountain and round square. The use of cognates and conjugations of 'being' in saying that the golden mountain and round square *are* thought of and that they *are*, respectively, golden and a mountain and round and square, according to object theory, are *not* ontically loaded, in the sense of the 'is' of *being*. They are instead equivocal expressions of the 'is' of *predication*, where true predication in turn is logically independent of the intended object as predication subject's ontic status. This fundamental underlying principle of Meinong's theory of meaning and reference is never acknowledged or adequately expressed in Russell's critical appraisals of Meinong's philosophy. When we read Russell's reviews of Meinong's work through 1905b and 1907, alongside his correspondence with Meinong in the previous year of 1904, it is clear that Russell approves what he takes to be Meinong's empirical methodology. He is impressed also with what he interprets as the broad ontic sweep of Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* in the general theory of objects Meinong envisions. What Russell could never countenance, perhaps, as suggested, because he never entirely understood it, is Meinong's concept of an extraontology of semantic objects available for intentional acts, entirely independently of their ontic status. Instead, Russell returns again and again to the idea that anything we can think or talk about must have being (or 'Being') in some sense. He fails to see how Meinong can possibly satisfy the demand in the case of purportedly nonexistent objects.

Reading Russell as sympathetically as possible on these topics easily leaves us more confused than enlightened. It is worthwhile to document some of the major difficulties in understanding what Russell means by 'being' or 'Being' in his criticisms of Meinong, and his struggles to join semantics to ontology in a project to which Frege is preferred as ultimately contributing a significantly different approach. Whether or not Russell is right to raise these criticisms and draw the inferences he does in rejecting Meinong's *außerseiend* semantic domain takes us forward from intellectual history to philosophically more interesting questions. Russell, for a variety of reasons, despite other important logical and semantic differences from Frege, begins after 1905a to move increasingly toward a theory of meaning that has greater affinity with the existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist aspect of Frege's philosophy. It is possible to find presentiments of Russell's extensionalism from the start of his career. The very fact that Russell does not properly interpret Meinong's thesis of the independence of

so-being from being, but tries to attribute being in an attenuated sense to all intended objects, makes it an expected consequence that he will later despair of making sense of Meinong's object theory in its full generality. Under Wittgenstein's influence in the following decade, Russell is persuaded to adopt an even more radical referentially extensionalist semantics and ontology, reflected in the second edition of *Principia Mathematica*. Wittgenstein, in the early *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* period, hopes to comprehend all genuine meaningful propositions by means of an extensionality thesis in the general form of proposition, through which truth functional operations are applied to elementary space-time-color predications as completely analyzed elementary propositions that in their imperceivable symbolic rather than sign aspect picture logically isomorphic atomic states of affairs. Russell seems to have been influenced by the beauty of a general comprehensive recursion principle in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* 5.47–6.031 for all propositions of a logic. Russell after 1918 gravitates increasingly toward the radically referentially extensionalist outlook in philosophical logic that inspires Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* syntax-generating general form of proposition.

Qualifications are needed. There are several related aspects of semantic intensionality. Russell is a kind of intensionalist prior to 1903 in *Principles of Mathematics*, by virtue of accepting a version of Frege's concept of *sense* (*Sinn*), in the form of what Russell calls 'denoting concepts', applied only to definite descriptions. In 'On Denoting', 2 years later, Russell rejects the category of Fregean senses or denoting concepts even for definite descriptions. Russell remains an intensionalist in other respects as well, even after the 1905a publication of 'On Denoting', through the publication of the first edition of *Principia Mathematica* in 1910, 1912 and 1913, until the second edition in 1925. Russell's propositional functions in the first edition of *Principia Mathematica* are intensional in yet another sense of the word. The propositions that serve as values for coextensive functions can nevertheless be understood as distinct, for Russell, according to more fine-grained proposition identity conditions. Frege is an intensionalist in that his distinction between sense (*Sinn*) and reference (*Bedeutung*) admits *properties* as the senses of proper names, generously including any singular referring expression. The senses of names are then related semantically compositionally to the senses of sentences composed of proper names, and specifies that the reference of a proper name (or sentence) is *determined* by the name's (or sentence's) sense. Frege, unlike Meinong, is nevertheless not an intensionalist in his referential semantics, in that he permits reference only to existent intended objects in a referentially extensionalist semantic domain comprehending exclusively existent entities. We respond to these complications by distinguishing between intensional and extensional *referential* semantics, or, alternatively, *referentially* intensional and extensional semantics, using explicit terminology to keep separate other intensional aspects of semantics. Although Frege is an intensionalist in many aspects of his theory of meaning, and Russell increasingly less so from 1903 to 1905, and especially after 1925, both Frege generally and Russell after 1905, in contrast with Meinong, are radically extensionalist in the specifically referential components of their respective philosophical semantics, and in expecting a logic's referential semantic domain to comprehend exclusively existent entities, physical or abstract.

Russell, by nature or in spirit, after 1905, for all his rapid departure from Frege, is still more Fregean than he could ever be Meinongian in his referential semantics, even and especially if he were first to correctly grasp Meinong's independence and *Außersein* theses. The mainstream analytic tradition Russell spearheaded was bound to part ways radically with Meinong's object theory. The interesting historical question is exactly why the rift occurred. The important philosophical confrontation is over whether Russell was justified in rejecting Meinong's object theory approach to the problem of linking semantics to ontology in favor of some revisionary form of Frege's sense-reference theory of proper name and sentence meaning.

6.2 On the Lowland Geography of Denotation

The historical fact with which we begin is that Russell's attitude toward Meinong's philosophy, however lukewarm it might seem in retrospect, takes a sharp downturn in 1905a with the publication of 'On Denoting'. Later writings, such as *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, in 1919 (1973), cast further equally vague aspersions against Meinongian object theory.

Without having taken sides with either Russell or Meinong on substantive issues of logic, semantics and metaphysics, it is hard to read Meinong's work against the background of Russell's criticisms without concluding that Russell does not adequately understand, or, less likely, chooses deliberately to misrepresent what Meinong is saying. Russell's capacity for misunderstanding even those thinkers with whom he was most closely associated should come as no surprise when we consider the highly misleading content of Russell's 'Introduction' to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. With no disrespect to Russell's other accomplishments, it is fair at least to say that Russell does not always provide the most accurate expositions of other thinkers' ideas. What is clear is that whereas before 1905a Russell still had a kind ear turned toward Meinong, after this point, signposted in that year most conspicuously by the publication of 'On Denoting', Russell turns his back forever on the possibility of referring to or truly predicating constitutive properties of nonexistent intended objects in an ontically independent Meinongian domain. On the contrary, Russell insists even 2 years earlier in *Principles of Mathematics* that any object of reference or true predication must have whatever property he means by 'being' (sometimes 'Being'). Alas, difficulties surrounding exactly what Russell means by 'being' or 'Being' in the *Principles* are a major stumbling block to mapping his terminology onto Meinong's. It is challenging in consequence to decide whether or not Russell is hitting any of the ostensible targets in his logical critique of Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie*, or simply misdirecting fire at a strawman concept of reference and true predication that Meinong never accepted.

To proceed, we need to clarify terminology and draw essential conceptual distinctions. We shall speak of logics and other formal theories of semantic reference, in accord with the above distinction, as *referentially extensionalist* or

intensionalist. An extensionalist theory of predication assumes that only existent objects can be denoted or stand as true predication subjects. An intensionalist theory, in contrast, describes a semantic domain of objects, each of which is associated with a particular combination of constitutive properties. The objects in the intensionalist referential semantic domain, regardless of their ontic status, are potentially referents and true predication subjects of intentional thought and language. The great grandfather of analytic referential extensionalism is supposed to be Frege. With due qualifications, this attribution (or allegation) is true enough. Analytic philosophers are not always sufficiently patient with or interested in historical questions. They like the history even of their own subject to be simple and progressive, with clean-lined origins and passing down of intellectual mantles like the oversimplified cumulative histories of science that Thomas Kuhn decries in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

To whatever extent we may share a sense that the history of analytic philosophy overlooks important figures like Frege's own teacher Hermann Lotze, Bernard Bolzano, and others, it still makes sense to accord Frege an important place in the analytic turn in philosophy that looks back especially to Russell, Wittgenstein, and G.E. Moore, in the early part of the twentieth century. Frege's theory of reference, together with his account of truth conditions for thoughts or propositions (*Gedanken*), is purely extensional in the abstract. If Frege is right, then we can only refer to existent things in a semantic domain that is limited exclusively to existent entities, whether spatiotemporal or abstract. Frege's analysis of reference nevertheless has a foundational intensional element. Frege maintains that the sense (*Sinn*) of a proper name, by which latter term he stipulatively means any singular putatively referring expression, determines its reference (*Bedeutung*). A parallel analysis is given for the meanings of sentences, whose sense is a function compositionally of the meaningful expressions the sentence contains, and whose reference is a reified truth value, the True, in case the sentence is true, and otherwise the False. In his 1892 essay 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung', Frege gives an important place to intension by arguing that sense determines reference. In a crucial footnote to the essay, one of the few places where Frege comments even indirectly on the sense of a proper name, Frege indicates that the sense of a proper name is the complete abstract set of abstract properties that logically are true at most of one individual existent entity, *the* entity possessing all and only the properties in the property set that exhausts the proper name's sense. Frege comments briefly on the sense of the proper name 'Aristotle' and on the possibility that different thinkers might have different opinions about the sense of the name. As he suggests, we can consider the sense of the proper name 'Aristotle' to include among indefinitely many other properties, the property of being the student of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great. The reference of the name 'Aristotle' is then that existent entity, if there is one, that happens to have the properties collected together as the sense of the relevant proper name. If there is no such existent entity, as in the case of the Fregean proper name, 'Pegasus' or 'The golden mountain', that possesses the properties of being a flying horse, or of being golden and a mountain, then, contrary to Meinong's intensionalism, the names do not actually refer, although we are welcome to pretend

that they do. This is Fregean intensionalism, and intensionalists should try to make the most of it. It must nevertheless be said that Frege himself does not seem to be particularly interested in the senses of terms or sentences as much as he is in their references. He is much more generally concerned with the reference and the truth values of propositions, especially in mathematics, and more especially in the laws of elementary arithmetic, both of which in his semantic philosophy are otherwise treated purely extensionally. There is an important disanalogy also in Frege's parallel sense-reference semantics for proper names and sentences. Whereas the Fregean sense of a proper name is supposed to completely determine its reference, or alternatively its reference-failure, the Fregean sense of a sentence, as a function of the senses of its component meaningful terms, does not by itself completely determine the sentence's reference as the True or the False or truth value reference-failure in Frege's semantics of reified truth values. The reference of a sentence as the True or the False can depend in many applications on the contingent external state of the world that a sentence proposes to describe. An obvious parallelism, then, is that not every sentence has truth value reference to the True or the False in Frege's semantics, just as not every Fregean proper name makes reference to an existent entity.

Meinong, on the contrary, is much more characteristically intensionalist in the signature 'Meinongian' part of his referential semantics. He also has an extensionalist referential component in his work, in the sense that he recognizes that some intended objects have being as existent dynamic or abstract entities, and that in such cases ordinary extensionalist predication and truth conditions apply, just as they are supposed more universally to do in Frege and Russell. Where Meinong breaks away from extensionalism is in that aspect of his object theory, according to which any and every combination of constitutive properties in what Frege would call an expression's *Sinn* determines indifferently an existent or nonexistent object of reference as its *Bedeutung*, whose predication and truth conditions are precisely the same as those of existent objects, independently of the object's ontic status. Frege's intensionalism, like Meinong's extensionalism, is so limited and qualified in this regard that it becomes appropriate as a matter of emphasis, as many commentators have habitually done, to speak of Frege's theory of referential meaning without further qualification as (primarily) *extensionalist* in contrast with Meinong's (primarily) *intensionalist* semantics. The situation is much the same when we speak for convenience with due caveats of Descartes's philosophy as rationalist, although he eventually finds an important place in his system for reliance on the deliverances of empirical science, once he has proved rationally that God exists and is no deceiver. We do much the same in characterizing Hume's philosophy as empiricist, although, like Leibniz, Hume also distinguishes between rational relations of ideas and empirical matters of fact, and relates ideas conceptually after the manner of a rationalist, provided he is satisfied that the ideas themselves originate in immediate sense impressions. With due consideration to these nuances, we follow the same practice here, setting forth an admittedly oversimplified scheme of categories by which to plot the main lines of Russell's semantic-metaphysical inquiry, one particularly important culminating moment of which in dialectical interaction with Meinong's object theory is represented by his landmark essay, 'On Denoting'.

We know that Russell, while never in any meaningful sense a Meinongian, rather precipitously repudiated any form of intensionalist referential Meinongian object theory, in favor of a more purely Fregean theory of reference and predication, that distances itself from Frege's philosophy of language in other ways. However, we do not know exactly why Russell makes the shift. There are tantalizing suggestions, but, more than a century after publication, we lack a compelling rationale for Russell's change of heart. The answer, as we shall see, is not to be found in 'On Denoting'. Nor does it unequivocally appear in the preceding 1903 edition of *The Principles of Mathematics*, nor in subsequent discussions of definite descriptions in the two editions of *Principia Mathematica*. These writings do not provide a background explanation, but only express Russell's mounting disaffection for Meinong's apparent ontic munificence in philosophical semantics. Russell's later work, *An Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, so seriously misunderstands Meinong that the best we can conclude is that Russell, working from memory in prison at the time, had not restudied Meinong's theory recently enough or with sufficient care to have before him a better grasp of the ideas he was rejecting. We know from Russell's own list of books read while serving a sentence for protesting Great Britain's involvement in World War I that he did not consult any of Meinong's works (Russell 1986, Appendix III, 'Philosophical Books Read in Prison' [1918], 326–8). The only conjecture concerning Russell's disaffection for Meinongian object theory that these writings support is that, given what Russell took Meinong to be saying, he found it absurd to agree that it is possible for such intended objects as the golden mountain and round square to have even so much as an attenuated sense of 'logical being' merely because we can ostensibly think and communicate about them. The theory of definite descriptions Russell presents in 'On Denoting' codifies, but goes no distance in trying to justify, his realization that the theory of meaning and the logic of denotation requires an extensionalist commitment to the existence of whatever entities can be referred to in order to stand as the subjects of true constitutive property predications.[1]

[1] See Smith 1985. Griffin 1977, tries to defend Russell on his interpretation of Meinong, and in particular with respect to whether or not Russell falsely attributes the being-predication thesis to Meinong. Griffin makes some valuable points, but overall I find his effort to rehabilitate the accuracy of Russell's Meinong scholarship inconclusive. Griffin thereby shows, what need not be denied, that Russell sometimes interprets Meinong correctly on the relation of existence and subsistence to being, and on Meinong's postulation of a realm of objects that are neither existent nor subsistent. The difficulty is rather in the damage done by other passages in which Russell flagrantly misrepresents Meinong's ontic categories. In some places, Russell asserts that all Meinongian objects must have being in other places, he equates Meinong's notion of subsistence with being ('Being'). He confuses Meinong's ontic neutrality in reference and predication theory, as in the phenomenology of presentation, judgment, emotion, and assumption, with the thesis that intended objects must after all subsist or have being in order to stand as reference and true predication subjects. Close examination of some of the passages Griffin quotes in Russell's defense reveal further mistakes in his reading of Meinong. The fact that Russell sometimes gets Meinong right does not adequately mitigate the problems created by the overall inconsistencies in his exposition of Meinong's object theory. Griffin acknowledges that there are also passages in which Russell misinterprets Meinong on these issues, recognizing that these unfortunately have been disproportionately influential in shaping later philosophical opinion about the merits of Meinong's object theory.

6.3 Russell's (Mis-) Interpretation of Meinong

Let us imagine that Russell at first had only an imperfect understanding of Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie*, that he was attracted to certain features of it that resonated positively with some of his own ideas, while other parts were at least somewhat out of focus. Russell must have understood and appreciated enough of what he thought Meinong was about that in 1904, unless he was simply being polite, he was able to write to Meinong: 'I have read [your "Über Gegenstandstheorie"]. . .with great interest. I find myself in almost complete agreement with the general viewpoint and the problems dealt with seem to me very important. I myself have been accustomed to use the name "Logic" for that which you call "Theory of Objects". . .'.[2] In Part I of his three-part expository essay, Russell was similarly moved to write, cautiously, but overall approvingly:

> That every presentation and every belief must have an object other than itself and, except in certain cases where mental existents happen to be concerned, extra-mental. . .and that the object of a thought, even when this object does not exist, has a Being which is in no way dependent upon its being an object of thought: all these are theses which, though generally rejected, can nevertheless be supported by arguments which deserve at least a refutation. Except Frege, I know of no writer on the theory of knowledge who comes as near to this position as Meinong. In what follows, I shall have the double purpose of expounding his opinions and of advocating my own; the points of agreement are so numerous and important that the two aims can be easily combined. (Russell 1904, 204)[3]

True, Russell in the passage also foists the confusing being-predication thesis onto Meinong. He misinterprets Meinong as attributing 'Being' even to objects that Meinong expressly says neither exist nor subsist, that are beingless and lack being (*Sein*) in any sense of the word. Nor should we downplay the fact that in this passage Russell only says that no one *except* Frege *comes as close as* Meinong to the view that every object of thought has a 'Being'. One can come very close to a philosophical position without actually embracing it. It is strange in that case to regard Meinong as coming anywhere within howitzer shot of a view he repeatedly

[2] Russell, Letter to Alexius Meinong of 15 December 1904; translation in Smith 1985, 347. Russell's cordial words in this first letter are somewhat mitigated by his formulaic repetition of similar remarks in later letters. Thus, in his later letters to Meinong, after the 1905a publication of 'On Denoting', such as Russell's letter of 5 June 1906, Russell includes the statement, 348: 'I am also of the opinion that the differences between us are entirely unimportant. In general I find myself to have almost exactly the same viewpoint as you'. The letter of 5 February 1907 offers the same gesture on a different topic, 349: 'I have carefully read what you have written on the concept of necessity and I believe the difference of opinion between us is not so great as it appears at first sight'.

[3] Russell 1904, 205: 'Before entering upon details, I wish to emphasise the admirable method of Meinong's researches, which, in a brief epitome, it is quite impossible to preserve. Although empiricism as a philosophy does not appear to be tenable, there is an empirical manner of investigating, which should be applied in every subject-matter. This is possessed in a very perfect form by the works we are considering. . .Whatever may ultimately prove to be the value of Meinong's particular contentions, the value of his method is undoubtedly very great; and on this account if on no other, he deserves careful study.'

and emphatically denies. All this is indisputable. We let it pass for the moment, in order to relish Russell's declaration in 1904 that he has much in common with Meinong, and that Frege barely grazes the assertions that Russell claims can be supported by arguments minimally deserving an effort at refutation and replacement by a preferred alternative. Frege and Meinong are at least momentarily considered as on a par, spaced apart as they are on Russell's balance beam, as he contemplates whether and how to tip the scales. While he is no doubt keenly aware of the differences between Frege and Meinong, Russell is prepared to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each, and to appreciate their commonalities on their own terms, as revealing something useful to his own purposes in understanding the relations between logic, semantics and ontology. One year later, in reviewing Meinong's edited collection of papers from the Graz school, the *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie*, Russell writes even more appreciatively:

> The philosophy set forth in [the first three and eighth essays] is a development of that contained in Meinong's [*Über*] *Annahmen*, and its value appears to me to be very great. Its originality consists mainly in the banishment of the psychologism which has been universal in English philosophy from the beginning and in German philosophy since Kant, and in the recognition that philosophy cannot concern itself exclusively with things that exist. (Russell 1905b, 530)[4]

The significance of Russell's limited endorsement of Meinong's object theory is that it appears in the very same volume 14 of *Mind*, 1905a, as 'On Denoting'. Allowing for the time lag that frequently occurs for book reviews versus essays along with the usual publishing contingencies, we still have the basis for an historical enigma. We are left wondering how, why, and exactly when, in or around 1905, Russell could have so suddenly and radically changed his once qualifiedly good opinion of Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie*, finding it necessary instead to distance himself permanently from Meinong's theory of reference and predication.

Suppose that, as Russell became more familiar with what he took to be the ontology of Meinong's semantics, he began to see deeper issues dividing himself from Meinong more clearly, and proceeded in response to discount Meinong's intensionalist concept of meaning. Russell, with his model of philosophy as the

[4] See also Russell 1905b, 530–1: 'Presentations, judgments and assumptions, Meinong points out, always have *objects*; and these objects are independent of the states of mind in which they are apprehended. This independence has been obscured hitherto by the 'prejudice in favour of the existent' (*des Wirklichen*), which has led people to suppose that, when a thought has a non-existent object, there is really no object distinct from the thought. But this is an error: existents are only an infinitesimal part of the objects of knowledge. This is illustrated by mathematics, which never deals with anything to which existence is essential, and deals in the main with objects which cannot exist, such as numbers. Now we do not need first to study the knowledge of objects before we study the objects themselves; hence the study of objects is essentially independent of both psychology and theory of knowledge. It may be objected that the study of objects must be coextensive with all knowledge; but we may consider separately the more general properties and kinds of objects, and this is an essential part of philosophy. It is this that Meinong calls *Gegenstandstheorie*.'

continuation of natural science by other means, was never averse to discharging a hypothesis and revisiting his assumptions, if he thought they had led him astray. If this is what happens in the reversal of opinion Russell undergoes with respect to Meinong's object theory, as in some sense seems likely, perhaps even obvious, then we may at last have the makings for a plausible story concerning Russell's estrangement from what had first been his cautious admiration for Meinong's object theory. The awakening to the limitations of Meinong's theory of nonexistent objects as Russell began to turn toward a more radically extensionalist referential semantics and ontology, to recognize and develop the extensionalist side of his philosophical persona, eventually to be mirrored even in his reconceptions of mathematical logic, can be dated to the publication of 'On Denoting', where he finally and for the first time unequivocally renounces Meinong's object theory.

What is needed in order to understand Russell's rejection of Meinong in 'On Denoting' are three things. First, a critical examination of Russell's ostensible reason for replacing Meinong's intensionalist object theory of reference and predication with a Fregean and Wittgensteinian extensionalist existence-presuppositional theory of reference. Russell over a period of years successively purges a more purely extensional reference theory of Frege's concept of sense, taking the final step in this particular direction in 1905. Second, a general critique of the alternative extensionalist referential theory that Russell proposes to substitute for Meinong's, including an examination of Russell's concept of being (Being) and the distinction between being (Being) and existence. Finally, third, a fully developed counter-Russellian Meinongian object theory of definite descriptions to stand against Russell's, to demonstrate its advantages over Russell's analysis, and to satisfy ourselves that Russell's theory of definite descriptions does not by itself constitute a conclusive refutation of Meinongianism, in lieu of an adequate counterpart Meinongian logic of definite descriptions. What follows is a criticism of Russell and exposition of nonstandard intensionalist Meinongian analysis of definite descriptions. It is in effect a Meinongian reply to 'On Denoting' that Meinong himself never ventured. The purpose is to undermine and reverse the dialectical opposition between Russell and Meinong, as it has most often been understood by logicians in the extensionalist analytic tradition. Russell's theory of definite descriptions in 'On Denoting', not least because of confusions over the Grey's Elegy passages, after its first years of obscurity and neglect, deservedly became required reading for the emerging analytic turn in philosophy. Analytic philosophers, speaking as a member of that tribe, are often only too grateful if they can spare themselves the burden of mastering yet another semantic theory or ontology, or, for that matter, epistemology. What they choose to study they pursue with such intensity that if they believe there are good knockdown reasons for discounting an entire way of thinking, they will cheerfully take advantage of the freedom, perhaps, in many instances, the excuse, not to study Meinong.

Why, moreover, should they not discount the lifework of Alexius Meinong? Meinong was a student of Brentano, who in turn was branded psychologistic by his own student Husserl, after Husserl was branded psychologistic by Frege in a caustic review of Husserl's 1891 *Philosophie der Arithmetik: Psychologische und logische*

Untersuchungen (1970). Did Russell not prove that Meinong's theory was entangled in contradictions? That there was supposed to 'be' (in what sense?) an existent Present King of France, even though no Present King of France exists? Is it not absurd from the outset to suggest that we can refer to the golden mountain, when in fact there is no such thing? Or to suppose that we can truly predicate the property of being golden or a mountain to the golden mountain, when no golden mountain exists to sustain these predications? Meinong should always remain an important figure for mainstream extensionalist analytic philosophy, precisely because he challenges just these basic assumptions. No, he proclaims, if we are to begin with the empirical data of thought and its meaningful expression, then we must acknowledge that we frequently think about and predicate properties of things that do not actually or even possibly exist. These are the intended objects of at least some of our thoughts, which we can also express in language, in myth, fiction, hypothetical assumption, intentional direction toward a state of affairs as the projected outcome of an action or sequence of actions, in literature and the plastic arts, and in recreational flights of fantasy.

The sections concerning Meinong in 'On Denoting' suggest that Russell thought of Meinong's approach even then as a potentially viable alternative to what turns out to be his preferred (purified) Fregean solution, lacking Frege's category of sense or Russell's prior and narrowly limited commitment to denoting concepts as intermediaries between denoting expressions and their denotations, to the philosophical problems of understanding reference. Russell describes Meinongian object theory merely as disadvantageous when compared with Frege's distinction between sense and reference, in view of its extensionalist commitment to the existence of all denoted entities. He believes that Meinong's theory entails a problem for which he cannot see any satisfactory solution. This single consideration, of great significance in Russell's eyes, is enough to turn the tide away from Meinong, and permanently, thereafter, toward an extreme form of referential extensionalism that finally outdoes Frege, let alone Meinong. It is an extraordinary historical moment at precisely this juncture in 1905 that was indefinitely to influence the course of analytic philosophy. What remains an unsettled mystery on such an interpretation is how in the first place Russell could ever have taken Meinong's theory as seriously as at one time he seems to have done.

Russell stakes his rejection of Meinong's object theory on the belief that it implies contradictions, that it violates the law of (non-) contradiction. We can readily imagine that only a problem of this logical magnitude could conceivably have driven Russell away from a theory to which he had otherwise been attracted, and which he describes in 'On Denoting' as one among a range of choices for thinking about the problems of meaning and reference that in other ways stands as a competitor to Frege's. Here is Russell's first mention of and first formulation of his objection to Meinong in the essay:

> The evidence for the above theory is derived from the difficulties which seem unavoidable if we regard denoting phrases as standing for genuine constituents of the propositions in whose verbal expressions they occur. Of the possible theories which admit such constituents the simplest is that of Meinong. This theory regards any grammatically correct

> denoting phrase as standing for an *object*. Thus "the present King of France," "the round square," etc., are supposed to be genuine objects. It is admitted that such objects do not *subsist*, but nevertheless they are supposed to be objects. This is in itself a difficult view; but the chief objection is that such objects, admittedly, are apt to infringe the law of contradiction. (Russell 1905a, 482–3)

On the face of things, if it could be substantiated, this seems to be such a damaging complaint that it is hard to see how Russell could have devoted the least thoughtful attention to Meinong's object theory, let alone to describe it as 'possible'. Perhaps all that Russell means is that it is possible for Meinong to have put forward a theory that, in content, by virtue of its contradictory implications, is logically impossible. He continues:

> It is contended, for example, that the existent present King of France exists, and also that he does not exist; that the round square is round, and also not round; etc. But this is intolerable; and if any theory can be found to avoid this result, it is surely to be preferred. / The above breach of the law of contradiction is avoided by Frege's theory. He distinguishes, in a denoting phrase, two elements, which we may call the *meaning* and the *denotation*. (Russell 1905a, 483)

In this single second paragraph, Frege's stock skyrockets, while Meinong's tanks. Logical contradiction is generally to be avoided, unless Russell is to be faulted for not anticipating paraconsistency or dialethism. For that reason, Russell surprisingly seems to minimize the importance of having discovered such a glaring logical inconsistency in Meinong's object theory. Now he adds:

> Thus we must either provide a denotation in cases in which it is at first sight absent, or we must abandon the view that the denotation is what is concerned in propositions which contain denoting phrases. The latter is the course that I advocate. The former course may be taken, as by Meinong, by admitting objects which do not subsist, and denying that they obey the law of contradiction; this, however, is to be avoided if possible. Another way of taking the same course (so far as our present alternative is concerned) is adopted by Frege, who provides by definition some purely conventional denotation for cases in which otherwise there would be none. (Russell 1905a, 484)

Again, Russell contrasts the virtues of Frege with the vices of Meinong. He appears to understate the difficulties to which Meinongian object theory is heir, when he says merely that failure to obey the law of contradiction is to be avoided 'if possible'. It will not do to say that Russell is unwilling to let go of Meinong entirely, until he has substituted his own reductive analysis of definite descriptions in terms of quantification theory and identity. At least we cannot rightly so conclude, unless we are willing to interpret Russell as being much more of a Meinongian prior to the discovery of these 'contradictions' than most supporters or critics of Russell or Meinong are generally prepared to grant. If in fact Meinong's theory runs into contradictions, then Meinong himself as a good empiricist in theory construction would join in the chorus chanting that we have no choice but to abandon object theory and cast about for yet another more expedient alternative. We can turn to Frege's or some other theory, but we cannot in that case continue seriously to consider Meinong's.

Russell almost makes it seem as though, other things being equal, we ought to prefer a theory that preserves logical consistency, perhaps on aesthetic grounds. Whereas, surely, especially in the days before paraconsistent logic, the problem should be considered as damning. This, remarkably, is not what Russell says. Possibly the most charitable reconstruction of Russell's remarks on Meinong in 'On Denoting' signal Russell's admission of the possibility that there may yet be a way of saving object theory from logical inconsistency. Russell is sufficiently enamored of the analysis of definite descriptions in the emerging new predicate calculus that he is about to reveal in the essay that he is prepared to leapfrog over Meinong's object theory in almost any way he can, even if it means embracing Platonism in an extensionalist referential framework, as he ultimately follows Frege in doing. As I understand Russell's project in 'On Denoting', he addresses three specific semantic-ontological puzzles, introducing a formal logical solution in the reduction of all Fregean proper names to definite descriptions, cashing out their meaning in terms of logical constants such as the existential quantifier and identity sign. He does so in part, as the puzzles he chooses to address make clear, in order to rescue semantic theory and metaphysics from the contradictions of Meinong's object theory. In the process, he hopes to secure the referential semantic and ontological foundations of mathematical logic in a Fregean domain of exclusively existent entities. It is in his 1912 defense of an abstract order of Platonic entities, 'The World of Universals' in *The Problems of Philosophy*, and in his essay of the same year, 'On the Relations of Universals and Particulars,' in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, that Russell commits his ontology to existent abstract universals as the ultimate atomic foundations of meaningful expression. When this component of Russell's program is fit into place, he believes that all proper names can be reduced in equivalent meaning to definite descriptions, and the predications of all definite descriptions to universals as objects of knowledge by acquaintance rather than description. The distinction between knowledge by description versus knowledge by acquaintance blocks an infinite regress of descriptive meanings in the analysis of any complex meaningful expression. Universals are designated, as Russell had already proposed in his 1910 essay, 'Knowledge by Description and Knowledge by Acquaintance', in the linguistically simplest terms as 'this' and 'that' given sense datum, within a thinker's ephemeral conscious experience (Russell 1910, 1912a, b). Why this development of Russell's theory of meaning should not be branded as so objectionably psychologistic as to occasion even Frege despite his Platonism to take the greatest exception is yet another mystery in Russell's analysis of definite descriptions as a defining moment in the early textbook history of analytic philosophy.

Meinong has long been criticized for mishandling Russell's criticism, according to which object theory is supposed to entail that the existent present King of France (in other versions, the existent golden mountain or existent round square), both exists and does not exist. Routley (Sylvan) and others have argued that Meinong should instead have enforced his distinction between two very different types of constitutive and extraconstitutive

properties.[5] By appealing to the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, it would have been possible and preferable for Meinong to have argued in response to Russell's objection that the existent present King of France does not exist, because no extraconstitutive property or its complement like existence or nonexistence is freely assumable in characterizing or offering identity conditions for any intended object. The right answer would then be that object theory is perfectly logically consistent, that there is no threat to the requirement of noncontradiction, and hence no basis in Russell's criticism for giving up entirely on Meinong's semantics and choosing Frege's instead. Contrary to Russell's unsupported assertion, Meinong nowhere allows that the present King of France (golden mountain, round square) exists and also does not exist. He simply holds, as any reasonable and sufficiently knowledgeable person would, that the present King of France (golden mountain, round square) does not exist. If Frege's *Begriffsschrift*, combined with his later sense-reference distinction, is accepted, restricting denotation exclusively to existent objects, then a different kind of argument would need to be made, offering other reasons than the fact that Meinong was so thoroughly confused as to have advanced a theory according to which the same intended objects are supposed both to exist and not exist.[6]

What Meinong actually proposes as a solution to Russell's problem, as opposed to what he could and probably should have said, still does not land him in the sort of contradiction that would warrant fleeing from his version of referential intensionalism to a more purely extensionalist existence-presuppositional referential domain and theory of meaning. If we had any reason for being attracted to Meinong's intensionalism in the first place, as Russell within limits purports to agree, then the problem of the existent golden mountain, existent round square, or

[5] See Routley 1980, 496. Jacquette 1985–1986; 1996a, 80–91. Meinong's concept of the modal moment and watering-down extraconstitutive properties to constitutive versions lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality is presented in *AMG* VI, 266. Also Findlay 1995, 103–4. I once thought that the constitutive versus extraconstitutive property distinction was sufficient to forestall Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain and its variants, but as the argument of Chap. 7 makes clear, I no longer believe that object theory can be adequately defended without combining the constitutive and extraconstitutive property distinction with Meinong's watering-down of extraconstitutive properties lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality. What if we begin by speaking of a presumed contradictory proposition in mathematics as 'Contradictory *m*', and it later proves not to be contradictory? There are several ways to explain this usage without breaking faith with Meinong's distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. We cannot attach too much weight to conventional linguistic practice, where inexactitudes are rife. Calling a certain mathematical result 'Contradictory *m*' does not logically imply that *m* is contradictory, any more than calling a horse 'Courageous *h*' makes *h* courageous. It is never suggested in Meinong that an object's characterizing *Sosein* can be read off from the object's referential designation. The relation is more complex and interesting, exploration-worthy in its own right, but for a number of reasons such examples do not show that we cannot live without watered-down extraconstitutive properties. If the latter is true, which I continue increasingly to think, it must be for other reasons and in light of very different challenges.

[6] Meinong's solution to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain is presented in *AMG* V, 278–82.

present King of France, do not topple object theory by exposing anything more than a superficial inconsistency for which a defensible solution exists, rather than a genuine deep and intractable contradiction. Meinong's distinction between diluted or watered-down (*depotenzierte*) constitutive sense of existence, lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality, has already been examined under the microscope. If there is a sense to be made out between what actually exists and what is merely said as a characterizing property of an object that is falsely supposed to exist, as Meinong seems to assume, then there is no call to regard Meinong's object theory as logically inconsistent. Such an application might be found in the distinction between Macbeth's two daggers in Shakespeare's play, the one with which he and Lady Macbeth slay King Duncan, according to the plot, and the one that Macbeth later hallucinates as floating accusingly before him after his conscience torments him over committing the bloody deed. Neither of the daggers actually exists, but one of them within the play is supposed to exist, and has the property of existence attributed to it, while the other, even within the play and as far as the play is concerned, is supposed not to exist.[7]

The existent present King of France, as Meinong replies to Russell, is supposed to be existent, even though he does not exist. The distinction is not nonsensical, even if it is not the best answer to Russell's objection. Nevertheless, it has at least some intuitive basis, and there is no explicit contradiction in the conjunction, if a syntactical distinction is observed in concluding that the existent King of France is existent-sans-modal-moment, even if he does not exist, or is not existent-cum-modal-moment. Russell seems to throw up his hands in frustration or disgust at Meinong's reply. There is, after all, despite the formula's apparent infelicities, something to be said for distinguishing between the ontic status of London as opposed to Dr. Watson in the Sherlock Holmes stories, between Bonaparte and Bezuhov in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, and in general between things that actually exist and those that are merely said to exist, in characterizing an intended object by free assumption. Suppose that a 12-karat golden mountain actually does exist. Then we would still want to be able to distinguish it from a fictional 18-karat golden mountain by speaking alternatively of the existent golden mountain and the nonexistent golden mountain. Meinong nowhere says nor is he anywhere committed to the proposition that the existent present King of France both exists and does not exist, univocally in the same extraconstitutive sense of the word. If Russell rejects Meinong's object theory of denotation on grounds of logical inconsistency, it can only be because he does not properly understand or appreciate the force of Meinong's distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties (Findlay 1995, 106–10).

The fact that Russell relies, albeit with some hesitation and qualification, on the inconsistency objection to Meinong's object theory, encourages the impression that there might be some further implicit reason for his defection from Meinongian

[7] I consider a version of this problem in Jacquette 1989a. See also Jacquette 1996a, 256–64.

intensionalism to Fregean referential extensionalism. If these indications are symptomatic of something deeper at work in Russell's reversal of interest, then the original problem persists concerning Russell's turn from Meinong increasingly to some parts of Frege's semantics. We can formulate the issue in this way. Did Russell really believe that Meinong's theory was hopelessly embroiled in outright logical contradiction to the extent that there was no choice but to adopt a version of Frege's extensionalist thesis limiting reference to existent objects? Or did he have more fundamental reasons for preferring a purified Fregean approach, as a result of which he was satisfied to dismiss Meinong's theory by insinuating that it might be logically inconsistent? The enigma of Russell's dramatic rejection of Meinong is perpetuated by his proliferation of mixed signals. He does not really seem to believe that there are knockdown grounds for regarding Meinong's object theory as contradictory. To the extent that he attributes contradictions to Meinong, he does not seem to believe that they are necessarily decisive in refuting object theory. Russell merely states that it might be better to choose another theory, in light of the apparent inconsistencies in Meinong's theory. Moreover, Meinong's reply to Russell's problem of the existent present King of France and existent golden mountain or existent round square, by which he claims to have identified contradictory implications in Meinong's object theory, is by no means absurd. It answers a need for a useful distinction in intensionalist semantic analysis. Meinong has an even stronger, intuitively more acceptable solution in reserve, holding firm on the categorical difference between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, by means of which Russell's problem can be avoided intuitively without logical inconsistency.[8]

6.4 Russell's Concept of Being

We should take note of apparent conflicts in Russell's understanding of the concept of being or Being. We find Russell, for example, again in his 1904 letter to Meinong, saying: 'I have always believed until now that every object must be in some sense, and I find it difficult to recognize nonexistent objects. In a case such as the golden mountain or round square one must distinguish between sense and reference (in accordance with Frege's distinction). The sense is an object and has being, whereas the reference on the other hand is not an object' (Russell, Letter to Meinong of 15 December 1904; in Smith 1985, 348).

Russell does not mention, as Frege does, that the (conventional) sense of a nondenoting term is only an indirect object, and that the term has no proper

[8] See Routley 1980, 496: '. . .logically important though the modal moment is, the [constitutive-extraconstitutive] property distinction alone, properly applied, is enough to meet all objections to theories of objects based on illegitimate appeals to the Characterisation Postulate [Routley's version of Meinong's thesis of the Independence of *Sosein* (so-being) from *Sein* (being)]. The Meinong whose theory includes an unrestricted Characterisation Postulate is accordingly, like Meinong the super-platonist, a mythological Meinong.'

denotation as such. The position is at least ostensibly at odds with what Russell maintains in *The Principles of Mathematics*, where he states that even nonexistent objects must have being ('Being'). It is complicated to sort out these terminological differences, but the task is unavoidable in trying to understand Russell's reasons for rejecting Meinong's object theory in 'On Denoting' and *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. In the *Principles*, Russell writes:

> It should be observed that *A* and *B* need not exist, but must, like anything that can be mentioned, have Being. The distinction of Being and existence is important, and is well illustrated by the process of counting. What can be counted must be something, and must certainly *be*, though it need by no means be possessed of the further privilege of existence. Thus what we demand of the terms of our collection is merely that each should be an entity. (Russell 1903, 71)

Here it is interesting that Russell should maintain that whatever can be mentioned or counted, regardless of whether or not it exists, must be an *entity*. The Oxford English Dictionary uncompromisingly defines 'entity' as: 'noun (pl. entities) a thing with distinct and independent existence. — ORIGIN French entité, from Latin ens "being" '. This is yet another example of the way in which Russell's evolving technical terminology is out of sync with ordinary language. Russell is clear in distinguishing between Being and existence, and seems to be saying something remotely Meinongian by allowing that anything that we can think of, mention, or count, even if it does not exist, must nevertheless have some kind of appropriate semantic status, which he chooses, however misleadingly, to speak of as Being, and that may even have some remote connection to Meinong's early quasi-ontic category of *Quasisein*.

Later in the text, Russell adds (mildly) to the confusion when he refrains from capitalizing 'Being', and writes it instead simply as 'being':

> *Being* is that which belongs to every conceivable term, to every possible object of thought—in short to everything that can possibly occur in any proposition, true or false, and to all such propositions themselves. Being belongs to whatever can be counted. If *A* be any term that can be counted as one, it is plain that *A* is something, and therefore that *A* is. . .Numbers, the homeric [*sic*.] gods, relations, chimeras, and four-dimensional spaces all have being [*sic*.], for if they were not entities of a kind, we could make no propositions about them. Thus being [*sic*.] is a general attribute of everything, and to mention anything is to show that it is. (Russell 1903, 449)

Continuing, Russell again contrasts Being (being) with existence, while persisting in speaking of ostensible objects with Being (being), but lacking existence as *entities*:

> *Existence*, on the contrary, is the prerogative of some only amongst beings. To exist is to have a specific relation to existence—a relation, by the way, which existence itself does not have. This shows, incidentally, the weakness of the existential theory of judgment—the theory, that is, that every proposition is concerned with something that exists. For if this theory were true, it would still be true that existence itself is an entity, and it must be admitted that existence does not exist. Thus the consideration of existence itself leads to non-existential propositions, and so contradicts the theory. The theory seems, in fact, to have arisen from neglect of the distinction between existence and being. Yet this distinction

> is essential, if we are ever to deny the existence of anything. For what does not exist must be something, or it would be meaningless to deny its existence; and hence we need the concept of being, as that which belongs even to the non-existent. (Russell 1903, 449–50)[9]

Aside from the inconsistent capitalization of 'Being' ('being') in these passages, taken collectively, and the strange use of both the words 'Being' ('being') and 'entity', Russell's motivation for distinguishing between Being (being) and existence is explicable as a variation of the problem that Socrates raises in Plato's dialogues the *Sophist* and *Parmenides*.[10] Where an apparent contradiction threatens, in the judgment that something must, in some sense, *be*, in order to have any properties, including the property of not existing, there a logical distinction of one sort or another must be drawn. Russell and Meinong recognize the problem, but their solutions rely on markedly different distinctions, with markedly different semantic and metaphysical presuppositions and implications.

The question of the extent to which Russell properly understands Meinong can be approached in one way by asking whether and if so to what degree or in what way Russell's use of similar terminology maps onto Meinong's. In making the attempt we soon discover that we cannot directly correlate Russell's distinction between being (Being) and existence with Meinong's distinction between *Sein* and *Existenz*, *Bestand* and *Existenz*, or *Außersein* and *Existenz*. The category of being (Being) for Russell includes existence, but not conversely. This is also true of Meinong's distinction between *Sein* and its proper subsumption of *Existenz*. Meinong would staunchly deny that chimeras and the Homeric gods have anything that might be considered Being in the sense of *Sein*. *Bestand* and *Existenz* for Meinong, on the other hand, are mutually exclusive. There is an interpretation of Meinong's concept of the *Außersein* (extra-being or extraontology) that matches up somewhat indirectly with Russell's distinction between being (Being) and existence. Meinong wants to say that every object, which Russell further constrains as every *conceivable* object, belongs to a domain, membership in which does not depend on its ontic status. This sounds much like what Russell must mean by attributing being (Being) even to chimeras and the Homeric gods, which Meinong and Russell would presumably agree do not exist. Russell's choice of terminology is not particularly conventional, and Meinong's usage seems more in accord with ordinary linguistic practice in regarding existence as a mode of being, translating directly from the German. It must strike even philosophically sophisticated readers accustomed to stipulative specialized philosophical jargon as flatly false to say that chimeras and the Homeric gods have being or Being, or, for that matter, to insist on a distinction between being (Being) and existence. If Russell can swallow the

[9] In 'On Denoting', Russell seems to assimilate Meinong's *Außersein* with his own concept of being; he writes 1905a, 485: 'Hence, it would appear, it must always be self-contradictory to deny the being of anything; but we have seen, in connexion with Meinong, that to admit being also sometimes leads to contradictions.' Russell's argument here and in the *Principles of Mathematics* recalls Socrates discussion with the Eleatic Stranger in Plato's dialogue, the *Sophist*.

[10] Plato, *Sophist*, 236d–264b; *Parmenides* 160b–e. Parmenides' fragments are collected in Freeman 1957, 41–51. See Pelletier 1990.

conclusion that chimeras or the Homeric gods have being (Being), or that they *are*, why then does he audibly choke on Meinong's later assertion that the existent golden mountain is existent even though it does not exist?

The contrast Russell seems to have in mind also does not obviously recapitulate Meinong's distinction, undoubtedly imbibed through his study with Brentano, of the distinction between existence and subsistence. If we imagine that by 'existence' Russell refers to existence in Meinong's sense, but by 'Being' or 'being' he means subsistence in Meinong's adoption and transformation of a terminology for an abstract aspatiotemporal mode of being in the sense of obtaining, then we might try to say that the *term* 'Homeric gods' has being, even in the ordinary sense, and that it is a term that *would* denote, if only the Homeric gods happened to exist. We could quibble in that case about the appropriateness of the term 'being' or 'Being' as anything that can be counted, on the grounds that we will be speaking of the being or Being of intended objects that are neither spatiotemporal nor abstract entities. If the Homeric gods do not exist, then we must wonder what exactly we are supposed to be counting when we go through the roster of Zeus, Apollo, Hera, and so on, as 1, 2, 3, etc.? At most, it would seem that in that case we are counting nothing more than our *concepts* or *ideas* of gods, which no Meinongian or radical referential extensionalist need deny exist, but for the sake of which no Meinongian need regard concepts or ideas as having being or Being, even in the ordinary sense. How, on the other hand, can we possibly be counting *gods* in that case, on the assumption that there are no Homeric gods to be counted? Do the gods have being or Being, in the sense that counterfactually they would be denoted if only they existed? That suggestion too does not seem to be fully thought through. For then we should be able to say the same about the round square, the elliptical triangle, and the like, all of which can be counted as concepts or ideas, as Russell seems to allow, but are not even the possibly existent denotations of possibly denoting Fregean or Russellian terms or phrases.

Exactly how Russell's distinction is supposed to fit together with his rejection of Frege's distinction between sense and reference or denotation, and the existence requirement in the analysis of definite descriptions in 'On Denoting', raises further interpretational problems. Russell holds that in 'The F is G', an F exists, which for Russell implies that in the sentence, the singleton existent intended object with property F is *denoted*. Where an F does not exist, Frege claims that 'the F' has sense but no reference or denotation. Russell denies this, but maintains that the F must have being (Being), without which we would not even be able intelligibly to think or say of it that it does not exist. The Gray's Elegy section of the essay is further intended to argue away the need for Fregean senses from an adequate theory of denotation. None of this should come as any surprise to readers of Russell's 1905 essay. What is not often noticed is that Russell's theory implies that being and existence alike cannot be among the constitutive properties of things. If they were, then it would follow immediately that the (nonexistent) present King of France would have at least the property of nonexistence. Russell's notation does not attribute existence to things as a property represented by a predicate, but reductively by means of the existential quantifier. Nonexistence is equally not a property by

these conditions, but represented instead by the propositional negation of an existential quantification. That is fine for existence and nonexistence, but what about Russell's concept of being (Being)? Can it be a property of things? Clearly it cannot, because Russell in the *Principles*, prior to rejecting that part of Frege's distinction, acknowledges that chimeras and the Homeric gods have being (Being), whereas the corresponding terms, 'chimeras', 'Homeric gods', or names putatively designating individual chimeras or Homeric gods, 'Zeus', say, possess sense, but lack any direct reference or semantic denotation. Following Frege, as he indicates in his 1904 letter to Meinong, the most that Russell can allow is that such terms have only *indirect* reference, which is their conventional sense. If no such objects are denoted by these terms, then there are no such objects to stand as the bearers of any properties.

The extent to which Russell's categories might be confused comes into sharper focus when we ask what it could possibly mean to say that nonexistent objects *have* being or Being. How can nonexistents in Russell's logic and semantic theory *have* anything at all? How can they even be said to *be*, if nonexistents generally cannot be the objects of any true predications? If, on the other hand, nonexistent objects for Russell can at least have, and perhaps only have, the property of being or Being, then what is the logical basis for distinguishing between this one and only exceptional kind of property, where ordinary properties like being in 1905 a present King of France are such that nonexistent objects logically cannot possess them? Unlike existence, Russell makes no provision for being or Being as a special kind of quantifier, which would exempt attributions of being or Being from standard predicate-object constructions within his symbolic logic. Perhaps he would say that there is no need to do so, since no object fails to 'have' being (Being). In that event, we are left with even more unsettled questions about how Russell understands the logic of being or Being. If we introduce a new quantifier, B, we can try to say on Russell's behalf, for example, that $\mathrm{B}xKx \wedge \neg\exists xKx$. This will plainly not do, because the distinct nonoverlapping quantifier scopes do not guarantee that we are even ostensibly talking about the same object (or conventional sense associated with the corresponding term) in the two conjuncts. We can try instead to write $\mathrm{B}x[Kx \wedge \neg\exists yKy \wedge x = y]$, or simply but more distantly from our original construction, $\mathrm{B}x[Kx \wedge \neg\exists \mathrm{y}[\mathrm{x} = y]]$. In this case, it seems that we are attributing a further relational property, that of being identical to something (not an object) with being (Being), to an ostensibly nonexistent object. Nonexistent objects in Russell's logic are not supposed to *have any* properties, because, to speak intuitively from within this extensionalist ontic and semantic perspective, they are not *there* to possess them. The contrary Meinongian thesis in the notation proposed can then be written as, $\exists \mathrm{yB}x[\mathrm{x} \neq y]$.

The same problem does not arise for Russell's analysis of definite descriptions, because in $G\imath xFx \leftrightarrow \exists x(Fx \wedge \forall yFy \leftrightarrow x = y \wedge Gx)$, we never need to consider the individuating $x = y$ clause when the entire proposition is rendered false by the fact that $\neg\exists xFx$. Whether or not Russell's being (Being) is interpreted as a predicate or quantifier, there seems to be no way for him to avoid the true predication of some kind of property to some nonexistent objects. Since Russell does not provide philosophical justification for special logical principles governing the

discriminatory true attribution of the property of being or Being, or of having being or Being, as opposed to the property of being in 1905 a present King of France, we are left with the problem of reconciling his conclusion that even nonexistent objects 'have' being or Being, and that nonexistent objects cannot *have* any other kinds of properties. What is lacking is a solid basis in logic and metaphysics for allowing such a glaring exception for Russell's concept of being (Being). Meinong arguably handles these issues more naturally by allowing only that all thoughts are directed toward or upon intended objects, not all of which have being (*Sein*), or actual dynamic or abstract existence in *Außersein*.

We are left as a result wondering exactly what Russell means by 'being' ('Being'), in saying that the golden mountain 'has' being (Being). It clearly does *not* mean that the golden mountain exists, or even subsists in the manner of abstract entities, according to the distinction Meinong inherits from Brentano. Nor can it mean that the golden mountain is a nonexistent object, as Meinong holds, in the sense of something capable of being denoted that can stand as the subject of true predications of properties. What, however, is it supposed to mean in more positive terms, especially in view of the fact that its logic cannot involve predication or special quantification? We assume that it cannot mean being an object of thought or language, because Russell denies that terms ostensibly referring to nonexistent objects have any reference or denotation, but under Frege's influence at this time, only an indirect intended reference that is the corresponding denotationless term's conventional sense.

If there is no denoted object, not even a Meinongian nonexistent one, ostensibly referred to by a pseudo-name such as 'Zeus', or the pseudo-definite-description 'the golden mountain' or 'the present (1905) King of France', then why does Russell insist that the ostensible objects in these cases nevertheless have being (Being)? *What* in that case is supposed to *have* being (Being), and what is it for something that can bear no (other) properties nonetheless to *have* being (Being)? If Russell hopes to avoid Meinongian object theory by substituting a synthesis of the being-existence thesis, and Fregean extensional reference-or-denotation distinction, and if the concept of being (Being) on which Russell relies cannot be adequately clarified and reconciled with meaningful predications of properties ostensibly to nonexistent intended objects, then Russell's theory of meaning is beset by so many inadequacies pointing to unanswered questions that its purely extensionalist referential semantics can hardly be considered an unqualified success.

6.5 Base Camp on the Slopes of Meinong's Golden Mountain

What, then, of the choices presented by Russell's synthesis of the being-existence distinction, and Frege's sense-reference or denotation distinction? Let us return to the problem of understanding ostensible references to the golden mountain.

Meinong is certainly not the first philosopher to speak of a golden mountain, although, along with the round square, he certainly seems to have made it his brand. The idea that we can refer to a nonexistent golden mountain and truly predicate constitutive properties of the intended fictional object can also not have originated with him. He merely formulates the semantic principles by which thoughts about and ostensible references in language to a golden mountain can be seen as part of a larger intentionalist theory, inspired by Brentano's psychognosy or descriptive empirical phenomenological psychology. If Meinong does not pick up the idea of a golden mountain from the ambient literary culture of his time, he may have learned of it from his *Habilitationsschrift* studies of Hume's nominalism under Brentano's supervision at the University of Vienna. Hume, in turn, may have adopted the concept from Berkeley, who speaks of a golden mountain in connection with the modal distinction possible and actual existence. In *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous* 1734 [3rd ed.], Second Dialogue, Berkeley writes:

Hyl. Upon the whole, I am content to own the existence of matter is highly improbable; but the direct and absolute impossibility of it does not appear to me.

Phil. But granting Matter to be possible, yet, upon that account merely, it can have no more claim to existence than a golden mountain, or a centaur.

Hyl. I acknowledge it; but still you do not deny it is possible; and that which is possible, for aught you know, may actually exist (Berkeley 1949–1958b, II, Second Dialogue, 224).

Hume, in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, describes a cut-and-paste method by which the imagination constructs such composite ideas as that of a golden mountain. He does so in terms reminiscent of those similarly applied by Descartes in *Meditations on First Philosophy*, when discussing the crucial principle in his first *Meditations* proof for the existence of God, that, on pain of violating *ex nihilo nihil fit*, that nothing comes from nothing, the source of any of our ideas must have at least as much formal reality as the idea has objective reality (Descartes 1985 [1641], Vol. I, Meditation III). Hume argues in the first *Enquiry*, Section II, 'Of the Origin of Ideas':

> But though our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find, upon a nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses and experience. When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two consistent ideas, gold, and mountain, with which we were formerly acquainted. A virtuous horse we can conceive because, from our own feeling, we can conceive virtue; and this we may unite to the figure and shape of a horse, which is an animal familiar to us. In short, all the materials of thinking are derived either from our outward or inward sentiment: the mixture and composition of these belongs alone to the mind and will. Or, to express myself in philosophical language, all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impressions or more lively ones. (Hume 1975, Section II, 'Origin of Ideas', §13, 19)

What could be a more attractive focus of desire and motivation for action by the fictional characters in a myth or fantasy, than the idea of an enormous chunk of gold? If

a massive chunk, moreover, then why not one with the dimensions of an entire mountain, a pure mineral deposit of the malleable substance of sufficient size that you can hike and ski and build a chateau on its sides? The fable of the golden mountain has become a stock fiction of many cultures. Grimm's fairy tales, for example, contain a typical such yarn about 'The King of the Golden Mountain' (1812). In the story, a merchant promises his son to a under-average size adult (the story says dwarf) in exchange for great wealth. The son, to cut to the chase, through ingenuity and luck, escapes this shameful barter and travels to an enchanted castle where he rescues a maiden and becomes king of the Golden Mountain (Grimm and Grimm 2004).

Despite the differences between Russell and Meinong that emerged especially in 1905a, after the publication of 'On Denoting', there are remarkable affinities that a cautious criticism should not overlook. Russell, like Frege before him, is committed to a principle of logic that is also very much at the heart of Meinong's object theory. The principle in Frege and Russell is that there exists a function or function output set for every logically consistent description of the putative membership in the function's range or extension by reference to any specification of qualities or relations. Effectively, a powerful descriptively efficacious comprehension of fully formulated functions with permitted arguments or equivalently of sets, as authorized by Frege's 1893 *Grundgesetze I*, Axiom V, and challenged by Russell's 1902 paradox, can be tamed in only two ways. The functions themselves can be appropriately curtailed, or the input of arguments from a permitted domain or subdomain to any descriptively coherent functions can be appropriately restricted.

It is only by means of an unrestricted comprehension principle for fully formatted functions + arguments = sets of objects, that Russell's paradox can arise. Nor is the principle easily dispensed with for those sharing Frege's basic insights, stationed at the foundations of Frege's thesis that intension determines extension, or, equivalently, that sense determines reference. The question is how to control the extensionalist principle of function and set. Functions individually set limits to the subdomains of objects to serve as a function's argument. +1(Julius Caesar) is undefined, because the domain for the +1(__) function does not include Roman emperors. Another way to conceive of the construction is to say that adding 1 to anything other than a number does not change the numerical value of 1, so that +1(Julius Caesar) = 1. The point is not that such an arithmetic needs to be developed, but that it is always an option to forestall unwanted completions of an unsaturated function by a particular choice of arguments. It is necessary only for problem input to be unequivocally identified by rigorous definition and practical criteria, and the function's domain correspondingly restricted. The same unrestricted comprehension principle, effectively Frege's *Grundgesetze I*, Axiom V, has interestingly different ontic consequences in an intensionalist as opposed to extensionalist framework. It offers a common basis for insight into extensionalist criticisms of intensionalism, in generic terms, between Fregeanism and Meinongianism, and into intensionalist complaints against extensionalism, that also reveal the limitations of possible extensionalist objections to Meinong's object theory.

The Russell versus Meinong debate is a specific application of a more general dispute between referential extensionalism (Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Quine, etc.) and intensionalism (among others, Meinong). What is the distinction, and how should it be characterized? An extensionalist theory of meaning typically assumes three things: (1) The existent objects that constitute a semantic domain are predetermined, available for empirical science and philosophical reasoning to discover. (2) All genuinely designating or denoting terms refer only to these objects in the semantic domain of existent entities. (3) The truth of propositions or declarative sentences in which properties are predicated of objects can be interpreted as the inclusion of an existent entity in the extension of the predicate. The extension of a predicate in turn consists of all and only the existent entities possessing the property represented by the predicate, and is otherwise interpreted as false. Intensionalism, by contrast, as in the semantics underwriting Meinong's object theory, begins with combinations of properties (an object's *Sosein*) and defines existent or nonexistent objects as corresponding to and supervening on the totalities of their unique property combinations, regardless of their ontic status (independent of and indifferent to *Sein*). A proposition or categorical declarative sentence in intensionalist semantics is interpreted as true when the property predicated of an intended object is included in the object's property combination, and is otherwise false.

The essential differences between extensionalist and intensionalist semantics are summarized in the following table:

Extensionalism:

Predetermined semantic starting place:

Domain consisting of all and only existent objects

Names and other designating terms refer only to existent objects in the domain

Truth of propositions (declarative sentences):

Object included in extension of all existent objects possessing the property represented by the predicate—proposition is TRUE; otherwise, proposition is FALSE

Intensionalism:

Predetermined semantic starting place:

Individually logically possible properties

Names and other designating terms refer to any object regardless of its ontic status associated with any combination of logically possible properties

Truth of propositions (declarative sentences):

Object included in semantic domain of all (existent or nonexistent) objects possessing the property represented by the predicate—proposition is TRUE; otherwise, proposition is FALSE

The golden mountain, an incomplete nonexistent object in Meinongian object theory semantics, is truly golden and a mountain, according to Meinong, even though no such object happens to exist. The round square, an impossible object, is both round and square, even though no such object can possibly exist (*AMG* II, 481–530). The propositions in question are true in a Meinongian intensionalist

semantics because the nonexistent objects in question are included in the (ontically neutral) semantic domains, respectively, of all existent or nonexistent golden things, of all existent or nonexistent mountains, of all existent or nonexistent round objects, and of all existent or nonexistent square objects. Russell's commitment after 1905 to an extensionalist referential Fregean semantics, purged of Frege's concept of sense or Russell's own prior acceptance of denoting concepts, obliges him on the contrary to conclude that the proposition that the golden mountain is golden, despite sporting the superficial appearance of tautology, is false, on the grounds that no golden mountain exists. The purified Fregean extensionalist understanding of the referential semantics of names and definite descriptions appearing within sentential contexts is explained in 'On Denoting' (Russell 1905a, 483–5).[11]

[11] Reicher has recently tried to breathe new life into Russell's objection by arguing that Russell's problem needs to be seriously addressed by defenders of a Meinongian object theory. Reicher 2005 concludes, 191: 'If one likes pointed formulations, perhaps one might wish to put it this way: Russell might not have succeeded in defeating object theory *tout court*, but he succeeded in defeating *Meinongian* object theory.' A key assumption in Reicher's effort to resuscitate Russell's existent present King of France problem nevertheless seems false, and to my knowledge falsely attributed to Meinong in any of his formulations of object theory. Reicher maintains that Meinong is committed to what she calls '*The description principle*', 2005, 171: 'If we use a particular description in order to 'pick out' a nonexistent object, the object has all those properties that are mentioned in the description.' On the strength of this principle, she offers a four-step argument to show that the same reasoning involving the 'description principle' (together with other principles in my opinion less controversially attributed to Meinong), that supports the inclusion of a present King of France in a Meinongian extraontological semantic domain must also be extended to an existent present King of France that we can agree does not exist. My objection to Reicher's interpretation is that the description principle as she characterizes it is too strong, subject to counterexamples that depend on considerations that in other ways are independent of Meinong's object theory, and that Meinong himself, for good reasons, I would say, nowhere explicitly accepts Reicher's 'description principle' as she formulates it, although he does accept a similar principle. The version of the principle that I prefer in this context states, adapting Reicher's formulation: 'If we use a particular description in order to 'pick out' a nonexistent object, then the object has all the properties that are essential to picking it out (distinguishing it from all other objects).' Is the mention of 'existent' in the 'existent present King of France' essential to picking out the Meinongian object of reference? The answer rather depends on exactly what object we believe ourselves to be picking out. We should avoid unnecessarily opening the door to all properties that are merely 'mentioned' in a description that picks out a nonexistent object, although that assumption is obviously required for Russell's objection and Reicher's discussion. Here is an analogy borrowed from Kripke's 1980 and 2013 discussions of reference in non-Meinongian terms. Suppose that I speak of the man with the martini across the room who in fact has Perrier and no alcohol in his glass. In this case, I think it is most natural to say that I *refer* to the man across the room and I *falsely attribute* to *him* the property of holding a martini. I would *not* be inclined to say, as Reicher and Russell apparently believe Meinong is obligated, that I am referring in that situation to another (nonexistent) object that truly has the properties of being a man, being across from me in the room I occupy, and is holding a martini. The same is true of a thought described as being ostensibly about the existent present King of France. If I use this definite description, then I refer to the present King of France, and I *falsely attribute* to *that* (nonexistent) object (in 1905a, the then or still present King of France) the property of being existent.

6.6 Meinongian Intensionalist Logic of Definite Descriptions

In Meinongian object theory, the interpretation of definite descriptions is more complex than in Russell's extensionalist referential account. The sentence 'The present King of France is bald' is neither true nor false, simply because there is no adequate source of information about the nonexistent present King of France in fable, myth, allegory, or the like, to determine whether or not the object in question has or does not have the property of being bald.

In explaining his theory of definite descriptions, Russell takes as his most important and memorable example the proposition, 'The present King of France is bald'.[12] The choice is significant, because there is no present King of France, or, as Meinongians are wont to say, the present King of France is a nonexistent object. Russell's well-known three-part decomposition of definite descriptions involves in each case: (i) an existence assertion; (ii) a uniqueness assertion; (iii) the predication of a property to the unique existent as identified in (i) and (ii) (Russell 1905a, 481–4). If the proposition that the present King of France (K) is bald (B) is symbolized as $B\imath xKx$, where the inverted iota ($\imath$) represents the definite descriptor 'the', within the usual extensional quantificational apparatus and extensional interpretation of identity, then Russell's analysis states:

$$B\imath xKx \leftrightarrow \exists x[Kx \wedge \forall y[Ky \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge Bx]$$

The intended interpretation of the logical formula requires an extensional quantificational semantics. Among other things, the 'existential' quantifier '$\exists$' is assumed to have real ontic or existential import, implying in this application that 'there *exists* an x such that. . .'. The first clause of the Russellian analysis entails that a unique object must exist in order to have properties truly predicated of it in a definite description context. Since Russell regards names as incomplete symbols to be replaced upon reductive analysis by definite descriptions, the account has the effect of doing away entirely with reference to and true predication of properties to all but existent entities.

On such an analysis, the above sentence turns out to be false. The existence condition is unsatisfied where there exists no present King of France, rendering the entire existentially quantified conjunction false. It must do so for any appropriate choice of predicate representing a property ostensibly predicated of a nonexistent object. The same treatment automatically interprets as false predications like, 'The golden mountain is golden' and 'The round square is round and square', that, in

[12] Russell 1905a, 483–4: 'But now consider 'the King of France is bald.' By parity of form [with 'the King of England is bald'], this also ought to be about the denotation of the phrase 'the King of France'. But this phrase, though it has a *meaning*, provided 'the King of England' has a meaning, has certainly no denotation, at least in no obvious sense. Hence one would suppose that 'the King of France is bald: ought to be nonsense; but it is not nonsense, since it is plainly false.'

Meinongian semantics by contrast, is true, and that many persons innocent of and untutored in extensionalist logic and referential semantics, relying only on their pretheoretical linguistic intuitions, would understand as true.[13] For this reason, classical definite description theory cannot be incorporated into an object theory logic without revision. If Russell's theory of definite descriptions is correct, then there is no prospect for a Meinongian semantics of reference and true predication of constitutive properties to named or definitely described nonexistent objects. If, however, Russell's theory is not correct, and if Meinongian logic is to be developed as an alternative to Russellian extensional logic, Meinongian systems must also be fitted with formalisms for analyzing definite descriptions in ordinary language. The need for a non-Russellian nonextensionalist theory of definite descriptions in a complete formalization of Meinong's intensionalist object theory is obvious from the fact that so many of the intended objects that belong to the Meinongian semantic domain, the ontology and extraontology of existent and nonexistent objects, are designated by definite descriptors. These notably include, among indeterminately many others, *the* golden mountain and *the* round square.

Meinong's independence thesis can now be more precisely defined by means of a *Sosein* function, which takes any object as argument into the complete set of the object's constitutive (C) properties:

$$(\mathrm{S}) \quad \forall x \forall F_1 \ldots \forall F_n \ldots [S(x) = \{F_1, \ldots, F_n, \ldots\} \leftrightarrow [F_1 x \wedge \ldots \wedge F_n x \ldots]]$$

When instantiating the golden mountain as an intended object in the object theory domain, the *Sosein* function equivalence implies:

$$S(\iota_m x(\textit{golden-mountain}(x))) = \{\textit{goldenness}, \textit{mountainhood}\} \leftrightarrow (\textit{Golden}(\textit{golden-mountain}) \,\&\, \textit{Mountainous}(\textit{golden-mountain}))$$

Assuming that the antecedent of the conditional, that $S(\iota_m x(\textit{golden-mountain}(x))) = \{\textit{goldenness}, \textit{mountainhood}\}$, is analytically true, it follows, as we should expect in Meinongian semantics, that the golden mountain is golden and a mountain (mountainous).

The case can be compared with the similar but relevantly different situation, in which a Meinongian semantics might be used to interpret the definite description, 'The father of Zeus is the god of time', or, 'The son of Chronos is the god of time'. Here we happen to have sufficient knowledge, from the background of an explicit mythological tradition, to determine that in Meinongian semantics, the nonexistent object in question in the first instance truly has, and in the second instance truly does not have, the property predicated of it. With respect to the case of the present King of France, without further explanation, we have no such basis for evaluation.

[13] Findlay 1995, 43: 'Meinong also holds that there are many true statements that we can make about [nonexistent objects]. Though it is not a fact that the golden mountain or the round square exists, he thinks it is unquestionably a fact that the golden mountain is golden and mountainous, and that the round square is both round and square.'

Meinong classifies nonexistent objects that are indeterminate for certain kinds of predications as incomplete objects (*unvollständige Gegenstände*). It is natural to suppose that the truth value of those predications by which such objects are indeterminate or incomplete, is most naturally represented in a three- or gap-valued semantics as neither true nor false, but undetermined in truth value.[14]

Whereas Russell's theory of definite descriptions regards all predications of definitely described nonexistent objects as false, by virtue of failing to satisfy the first, existence, condition, a Meinongian theory by contrast more discriminately evaluates some definite description predications of properties to nonexistent objects as true, others as false, and others arguably as neither true nor false. 'The present King of France is a king' is true. 'The present King of France is a commoner' is false, although 'The present commoner King of France is a commoner', like 'The round square is round and square', is true. 'The present King of France is bald' is not just epistemically, but, more fundamentally, ontically and semantically, undetermined in truth value, reflecting the fact that the present King of France is a relevantly predicationally incomplete object. From a Meinongian object theory perspective, Russell's analysis may therefore be said to have formulated only a specialized extensional theory of definite description or extensional fragment of the complete theory of definite description, with limited application to descriptors for existent entities. An object theory logic should provide an unambiguous way of expressing the limitations of Russell's theory, and of supplementing a radically referentially extensionalist account of definite description with descriptors for nonexistent Meinongian objects.

To characterize the choices between Russellian and Meinongian definite description theories from the perspective of a semantically more encompassing Meinongian framework, it is best to begin by reinterpreting the 'existential' quantifier. This quantifier is standardly extensionally understood as implying real existence, so that to write '$\exists xFx$' is to say that there exists an object with property F, not only in the logic's referential semantic domain, but more significantly and selectively in its ontology. For Meinongian purposes, the quantifier is most properly understood as ontically neutral, indicating only that a logic's referential semantic domain consisting of existent and nonexistent intended objects in an ontology-swallowing extraontology contains an existent or nonexistent object with the property truly predicated of it. The use of the quantifier '$\exists$' in a predicate expression on this account does not entail that an object falling within its range actually exists, but only that an existent or nonexistent object with the specified property has the property or properties truly predicated of it.[15]

The analysis of definite description is made fully general with respect to the entire Meinongian semantic domain or ontology and extraontology of existent and

[14] An argument to this effect is given by Parsons 1974, 571.

[15] That the $\exists$ 'existential' quantifier has no existential or ontic import in Meinongian semantics is also affirmed by Parsons 1980, 69–70, and Routley 1980, 174. A useful discussion of related topics appears in Fine 1982, 97–140. See also Fine 1984.

nonexistent objects in this ontically nonclassical framework, by rejecting Russell's existence condition. In its place, the 'existential' quantifier, non-ontically reinterpreted continues to serve the purpose of indicating an object's domain membership. Although domain membership is no longer restricted to the range of existent objects only, but includes potential reference to existent and nonexistent Meinongian objects alike, in an ontology-subsuming Meinongian extraontology. This makes it possible to include Russell's theory as a proper part of the complete object theory analysis. The existence condition in Russell's analysis is no longer effected simply by the existential quantifier, but is now expressed instead as before by the existence '$E!$' predicate.

The analyses are generalized to allow for multiple predications to definitely described objects. Russell's theory for definite descriptor 'ι_r', with application to existent objects only, in this notation states ($1 \leq i \leq n$):

$$\text{(DDR)}\ \ \forall F_1 ... \forall F_n [F_1(\iota_r x(F_i x \wedge ... \wedge F_n x)) \leftrightarrow \exists x[[E!x \wedge F_i x \wedge ... \wedge F_n x] \wedge \forall y[[F_i y \wedge ... \wedge F_n y] \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge F_1 x]]$$

This is evidently a special case of the broader, semantically more comprehensive, version of definite description required for Meinongian object theory logic, interpreting the Meinongian definite descriptor, 'ι_m', in this way:

$$\text{(DDM)}\ \forall F_1 ... \forall F_n [F_1(\iota_m x(F_i x \wedge ... \wedge F_n x)) \leftrightarrow \exists x[F_i x \wedge ... \wedge F_n x] \wedge \forall y[[F_i y \wedge ... \wedge F_n y] \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge F_1 x]]$$

In (DDM), commitment to the real existence of definitely described objects for true predications of properties in (DDR) drops out. The existential quantifier remains, but now has the effect only of indicating referential domain membership in a combined ontology and extraontology of existent and nonexistent objects, any of which can potentially have properties truly predicated of them. The existence predicate '$E!$' used to express the Russellian existence requirement disappears from the parallel Meinongian counterpart definition, although an ontically neutral domain membership condition expressed by the ontically neutral quantifier '$\exists$' remains in its place, and the uniqueness and predication conditions are preserved, as in Russell's three-part analysis.

Meinongian (DDM) is thus more general than Russellian (DDR). The true predication of a property to a Russellian definitely described existent object implies the true predication of that same property to the same Meinongian definitely described existent object, since all Russellian definitely described existent objects are also Meinongian objects, although naturally not conversely. The Meinongian theory additionally allows true predications of properties to definitely described nonexistent objects, which Russell's theory does not countenance, than which it is broader in scope. To see informally that the inclusion holds, let $G\iota_m x[Gx \wedge Mx]$ represent the sentence, 'The$_m$ golden mountain is golden'. This is obviously true in Meinongian logic, though 'The$_r$ golden mountain is golden' in Russellian or Fregean extensionalist logic is false. The relation between (DDR) and (DDM) is established in this way as inclusion or

enclosure. Every consequence available in Russellian definite description theory with limited application to existent objects only is also a consequence of Meinongian definite description theory, but not the other way around. There are true predications of properties to definitely described nonexistent objects that hold in Meinongian but not in Russellian definite description theory.

6.7 At the Summit: Meinongian Critique of Russellian Definite Description

Russell's theory of descriptions has been so influential in the widespread analytic disapprobation of Meinong's object theory that it may be worthwhile to conclude by considering an argument against Russell in support of Meinongian description theory. Consider the proposition, 'The golden mountain is mythological'. Intuitively, the proposition is true. On Russell's analysis in the previously introduced notation, abbreviating the abstract of being golden and a mountain for simplicity here as *G-M*, the proposition reads:

$$M!(\iota_r x(G\text{-}Mx)) \leftrightarrow \exists x[[E!x \wedge G\text{-}Mx] \wedge \forall y[G\text{-}My \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge M!x] \tag{6.1}$$

The interpretation is unsound, because it converts a true into a false proposition. The biconditional fails and the equivalence is rendered false, because the existence conjunct does not hold.

Defenders of Russell's theory will not hesitate to point out that there is something special about the predicate 'mythological' on which the counterexample turns. For the golden mountain to be mythological is for it to be nonexistent, and described in a myth or to have the words 'the golden mountain' or their equivalents inscribed in the writings or handed down in the oral traditions of storytellers. If, for convenience, we ignore the second component concerning linguistic ascent or inscriptional reference, then, contrary to our prior more general objection to extensionalism, partnered with Quinean semantic ascent, to say that the golden mountain is mythological is just to say that the golden mountain does not exist. The first step toward a correct analysis of the proposition in the above context might then be:

$$M!(\iota_r x(G\text{-}Mx)) \leftrightarrow \neg E!(\iota_r x(G\text{-}Mx)) \tag{6.2}$$

The equivalence is true, since both constituent propositions are true, assuming that the golden mountain does not exist, and that nonexistence exhausts the extranuclear property of being mythological. When Russellian analysis is applied to the definite description in the right-hand side of the biconditional, the equivalence is counterintuitively made false, and with it the original proposition that the golden mountain is mythological. Thus, we have:

$$E!(\iota_r x(G\text{-}Mx)) \leftrightarrow \exists x[[E!x \wedge G\text{-}Mx] \wedge \forall y[G\text{-}My \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge E!x] \tag{6.3}$$

$$M!(\iota_r x(G\text{-}Mx)) \leftrightarrow \exists x[[E!x \wedge G\text{-}Mx] \wedge \forall y[G\text{-}My \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge \neg E!x] \tag{6.4}$$

Russell's analysis suffers from the fatal defect of requiring that an intuitively true proposition about the mythology of the golden mountain be reduced in meaning to the false proposition that a mythological golden mountain exists. It further converts the contingent truth that the golden mountain is mythological, an empirical question to be settled by explorers, scientists, historians, and literary scholars, to the logical inconsistency or necessary falsehood that a golden mountain both exists and does not exist. Armed with Russell's theory of descriptions, an investigator need only logically analyze sentences about the nonexistent creatures of myth, ostensibly designated by definite descriptions, in order to determine *a priori* that all such objects are *logically* impossible. This is too strong a conclusion, and indicates that something in Russell's analysis is fundamentally amiss.[16]

What is worse, if suitable precautions against standard inference rules are not taken, the reduction permits, by detachment from the truth that the golden mountain is mythological, a valid deduction of the logical inconsistency that there is something that exists and does not exist, $\exists x[E!x \wedge \neg E!x]$. This introduces semantic chaos of a much greater magnitude than anything envisioned in Meinong's position that there are in a general logic's referential semantic domain nonexistent, metaphysically impossible objects, like the round square, whose *Soseine* contain both a constitutive property and its complement. Meinong's theory, despite Russell's unsubstantiated allegations in 'On Denoting', does not generate formal contradiction, provided that the independence thesis is restricted to constitutive predications, and a correspondingly rigid distinction between sentence negation and predicate complementation is observed. Russell's reduction on the imagined interpretation involves the contradictory extraconstitutive proposition that, if the golden mountain is mythological, then a golden mountain exists and it is not the case that a golden mountain exists. The problem arises absurdly and gratuitously, not only as Russell imagines for the existent golden mountain, but even for Hume's and Berkeley's and the Brothers Grimm's golden mountain, considered only as such, without the ill-advised superaddition of an extraconstitutive existence predicate to an ontically neutral 'existential' quantifier $\exists$.

[16] This is obviously true if Russell's *Principia Mathematica* proposition (*14.02) is invoked in this connection to analyze being mythological (transposed in the present notation) as: $\exists x[Fx \wedge \forall y[Fy \leftrightarrow y \neq x]]$. Logically contingent statements of this or that object being mythological will then all turn out to be logically impossible by virtue of entailing the outright contradiction of existing, while at the same time failing to be identical to any existent entity. Note that we cannot simply apply *14.02 to the right-hand side of (6.3), which admittedly is not even well-formed in *Principia Mathematica*, because of differences in Russell's interpretation of both the existence $E!$ property and the existential quantifier. The right-hand side of (6.3) is an appropriately modified version of the kind of analysis Russell himself would be prepared to give. It is 'Russellian' only in the sense that it conforms to the main lines of Russell's analysis of definite descriptions in its commitment to referential extensionalism, in sharp contrast with Meinong's referential intensionalism. A similar criticism of Russell's theory of definite descriptions is sketched in Jacquette 1991a, 1994b.

Russell's description theory runs up against the dilemma that it must either interpret intuitively true propositions like 'The golden mountain is mythological' as false, or else misconstrue certain contingently true or false propositions as logically necessarily false. The problem lies in the extensionalist demand that definite description entails existence, reflected in the first conjunct of Russell's analysis. The difficulty is avoided in ontically neutral Meinongian definite description theory, in which no existence requirement is made. Meinongian intentionalist description theory is preferable in this regard to the Russellian extensionalist account, wherewith Russell's historically important analysis is rendered inconclusive as a philosophical criticism of Meinong's object theory.

Chapter 7
Domain Comprehension in Meinongian Object Theory

7.1 Intended Objects in a Referential Domain

The heart of Meinongian object theory is its intensional identity conditions for existent and nonexistent objects alike. An object independently of its ontic status is supposed to be identified by its constitutive nuclear properties, and possesses those properties, consequently, independently of its ontic status. Since not all properties are constitutive, the division between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties is vital to a properly metaphysically grounded Meinongian object theory. If there are grey area properties that do not clearly belong to either the constitutive nor extraconstitutive category, then from the outset the complete ideally well-demarcated Meinongian reference domain cannot be formally comprehended. The same distinctions must also be made under a theory of multiple modes of predication, where the same ontically loaded property such as existence is predicated of objects in different ways or in different senses. One enters only into the identity conditions for a specific intended object, and another in which an object actually exemplifies the property. To categorize such properties, object theory must advance a sympathetic synthesis of both previously competing solutions. Meinong's modal moment proposal should be integrated with his exclusion of extraconstitutive properties from intensional identity conditions for intended objects. The two approaches are by no means mutually exclusionary, and their coordination avoids potentially ruinous consequences for the objective mind-independent comprehension of a Meinongian object theory domain.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_7

7.2 *Grundideen* of Meinongian Object Theory

Meinong takes *Gegenstandstheorie* in a direction that Brentano did not approve. He reasons that if all psychological occurrences are intentional, intending some object or other, then some thoughts must be about objects that do not happen to exist, or that even in some sense cannot possibly exist. If I entertain the proposition that Sherlock Holmes is a detective, then, true or false, my thought seems ostensibly to be about Sherlock Holmes, despite the fact that Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character.

Intention alone is generally not powerful enough to create or imply existence. The question is only what we should say concerning the logic, semantics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind surrounding the intending especially of nonexistent objects. If we are thorough-going extensionalists, as the dominant tradition in analytic philosophy has often unreflectively encouraged, then we may staunchly deny that the meaning of thought, language, art and other artifacts, can ever require a reference domain consisting of anything other than actually or abstractly existing objects. These existents, and none others, can then be intended as among the existent entities in a referentially extensionalist existence-presuppositional semantic domain. Brentano seems to have adopted several different versions of this view, possibly as a reflection of his deep-reaching Aristotelianism and commitment to primary substances as the only ultimately existent individuals, as we also find reflected in his later metaphysical doctrine of reism. Reism is Brentano's ontic Aristotelianism in another guise, the position that only individual physical entities can be the subjects of true or false predications (concerning Brentano's later reism, see his 1966a, 33–92; also 1966a, Letter from Brentano to Anton Marty, April 20, 1910, 225–8).

Brentano's method and metaphysical commitments require ingenious and not always natural paraphrases of ontically inconvenient discourse that appears to be as much if not more about nonexistent as it is about existent objects. Meinong proceeds ontically indiscriminately, and in that sense more naturally and democratically, where the ontic status of ostensible intended objects of thought is concerned. Meinong does not need to know whether an object of thought exists or not, in order to know that it is a particular object of a particular thought and potentially to be shared by indefinitely many thoughts. Existent or nonexistent, they are alike among the intended objects of thought, and they must satisfy adequate distinguishing individuating self-identity conditions. Meinong generalizes Leibniz's Law of the identity of indiscernibles and indiscernibility of identicals to all intended objects, with the result that every object, regardless of its ontic status, is individualized by virtue of its possession of and correspondence with the particular choice of properties in its *Sosein*.

Property-based intensional identity conditions are available for all ostensible intended objects, without consideration of their ontic status. After all, how do we really know what exists? The reliability of sensation and perception is questioned by rationalist and generally *a priori* oriented philosophers. The existence of an

abstract order of *a priori* accessible entities is scrutinized by empiricist and generally *a posteriori* oriented philosophers. The advantage of a Meinongian object theory is seen in the logical possibility that our clearest and most distinct perceptions do not actually correspond to anything existent in an external world outside the contents of thought. Even so, in that extreme case, the point is that we would still understand our thoughts about what by hypothesis would then in fact be nonexistent objects. The advantage of Meinong's ontically agnostic approach to the meaning of thought and its expression is that, by agreeing with Brentano that thoughts generally intend objects, thoughts that appear to be about nonexistent objects, possible and even constitutively impossible, have a presumption also of intending nonexistent objects. These include, for starts, the notorious golden mountain and round square. Meinong held, as a consequence of these assumptions, that a reference domain must include not only existent objects, spatiotemporal and abstract, if such there be, but also 'homeless' objects that neither exist nor subsist, but that in their logical role as purely intended objects, are ontically neutral, beyond being and non-being in the extraontology.

7.3 Meinongian Intensional versus Fregean Extensional Reference Domains

The advantages of a Meinongian object theory are evident in comparison with the poverty of a purely extensionalist semantics, and complementary physically reductivist or eliminativist philosophy of mind. Meinong opens the door to a wide range of intensionalist possibilities in logic and language that were suggested but never systematically pursued by more local historical development of Brentano's intentionalism. With a Meinongian object theory at the foundation of logic, in place of a Fregean *Begriffsschrift* reference domain of exclusively existent entities, we can do parallel semantic justice to scientific theories that falsely posit the existence of actually nonexistent intended objects, whether as idealizations or as presumed entities in false explanatory hypotheses. Familiar examples of the latter include vortices, phlogiston, the planet Vulcan, the Philosopher's Stone, the æther, teleologies in nature.

There are also in science an extraordinary number of apparently indispensable nonexistent ideal objects. Idealizations of many kinds are encountered even in the most rigorously demonstrated and powerfully verified contemporary physical science. They are found already in Newtonian kinematics and dynamics, in the physics of moving projectiles unimpeded by impressed forces. No such entities actually exist, because all bodies in motion are in fact impeded by such impressed forces as universal gravity. This law of physics Newton better understands and appreciates than previous natural philosophers. Applied mathematical laws would scarcely be discernible in observed actual phenomena, if scientists did not smooth the edges off their acquired data of actual phenomena on grounds of practical measurement

discrepancies or compromising instrument or background factors. A simplifying continuous curve represented by an elegant function is superimposed on varia of actual measurements seen as revealing an essential underlying lawlike commonality.

The practice itself is not criticized, but admired as underscoring the fact that nonexistent entities including false hypotheses and idealizations in the formulation of applied mathematical natural laws are rife in scientific discourse. We cannot understand the language of science without a correct semantics, and a purely extensionalist semantics with a Fregean existence-presuppositional reference domain for reasons just given does not seem adequate. Whereas, an intensionalist semantics, defining objects as any logically possible combination of properties, comprehends and accommodates phlogiston as one nonexistent thing distinct from the Philosopher's Stone, or the planet Vulcan, among all other ostensibly distinct nonexistent things that have come up for mention in the history of self-improving scientific theory and practice. We cannot otherwise hope to understand the record of a science's successes and mistakes, except as a history of successive distinct true and false ideas, hypotheses and idealizations, that were accepted at one time or another in prevailing scientific judgment.

Meinongian logic and semantics, in comparison again with a Fregean extensionalist reference domain, additionally holds out the prospect of offering a more natural and satisfying explanation of the distinct meanings of imaginative works of fiction. Hume valiantly writes that there need be no discernible textual differences between some works of history and novels: '[Imagination expressed in works of fiction] can feign a train of events with all the appearance of reality, ascribe to them a particular time and place, conceive them as existent, and paint them out to itself with every circumstance, that belongs to any historical fact. . .' (Hume 1975, Sect. V, Part II, §39, 47). The difference is only that histories in principle are supposed to contain only truths concerning existent objects, whereas novels collectively represent at least some events and objects that never existed or occurred. A reader, without proper cues or background information, relying entirely on the internal content of a book, might never know whether she has a novel or a work of history in her hands. Fictions, unlike histories, are the products of a freely imaginative combination of properties in creating the characters, settings, events and plots in which they participate. The writer of a history as much as a novel has a narrative voice. History, however, means to speak only of actually existent things, persons and occurrences, except when the intentional states of persons in history toward nonexistent objects, a rain god, let us say, must be taken into account in explaining the history of related events. Unless seriously deluded, the author of a fiction may purport to represent reality, but rightly understands that, despite possible mention of some external existent things, the references in the story imparted are to distinct nonexistent objects that are not part of the actual or abstract world.

A Fregean semantic reference domain for interpreting the sentences of a work of fiction, like that invoked in understanding the meaning of false and ideal scientific conceptualizations, cannot extensionally distinguish one nonexistent intended object from another. If there is to be any discriminating determination of such sentences' meaning, then it is an intensional Meinongian logic rather than

extensional Fregean logic that is needed for the proper interpretation of the false sentences of a work of fiction (Cartwright 1954; Chomsky and Scheffler 1958; Jubien 1972). An intensional logic can, whereas a purely extensional logic cannot, explain the apparent fact that Sherlock Holmes $\neq$ Anna Karenina, except by admitting nonexistent intended objects, one of which, for starters, is an English man, and the other is a Russian woman. Even if we qualify these differences by saying 'Sherlock Holmes is said to be an English man' and 'Anna Karenina is said to be a Russian woman', or the reverse, we are still attributing the property of being said to be this or that *to* Sherlock Holmes or *to* Anna Karenina. There seems to be no dignified escape from including distinct nonexistent objects in an ontically neutral Meinongian referential semantic domain or extraontology, on the basis of differences in their unique totalities of constitutive properties. The Leibnizian intensional identity conditions that existent entities are expected to satisfy apply without qualification as well to nonexistent objects whose so-beings are relevantly predicationally inconsistent or incomplete.

Nor should we lose sight of the fact that histories, like scientific discourse, not only often incorporate, but are themselves nonexistent idealizations. It is a naive idealization in the first place to suppose that histories can be interpreted by means of a Fregean extensionalist semantics, because, unlike works of fiction, they contain only true propositions concerning existent objects. There are frequent disputes in historical research as to whether a certain person or event existed, whether Troy or King Arthur of Great Britain, actually existed, and, if so, whether there was truly a court at Camelot with the participants known to legend, whether Moses of the Old Testament was a real person or later literary composite of historical leaders, and countless other things about which there can be disagreement as to the facts of their ontic status. There are ostensible references aplenty to nonexistent objects on both sides of such disputes, regardless of who turns out to be right in an interesting dispute, or whether any of these elusive matters is ever definitively settled. We expect both parties to such disagreement to be making meaningful pronouncements, which must be the case in order for one of them to be defending a true proposition, and for opponents to be advancing a false but still equally meaningful contrary proposition. Any such historical dispute as to the existence of conceivable historical objects, persons, things or events must then sometimes involve meaningful reference to what might turn out to be a nonexistent intended object.

The same considerations apply potentially to religious discourse that refers to nonexistent objects. Here, too, Meinong rather than Frege offers the more general and natural colloquially and scientifically applicable logic and semantics. The Meinongian reference domain of existent, actual and abstract, and nonexistent, alike, metaphysically possible and impossible objects, incorporates everything that can be said in an extensionalist existence presuppositional reference domain, and everything more besides. The advantage of Meinong's intensionalist semantics is that it incorporates the more restricted Fregean extensionalist semantics as a proper part. We can intend nonexistent as well as existent objects in Meinongian logic, to speak roughly and in general terms. We can say that Zeus is king of the ancient Greek gods, and that Ares is the ancient Greek god of war and son of Zeus and Hera.

These are different gods, despite none of them existing, that are worshipped at cult sites in their day as distinct divine personages. We cannot understand someone worshipping Hera and shunning Ares unless these nonexistent gods are available as nonexistent intended objects of worship and avoidance. Any semantics charged with explaining the meaning conditions of large parts of putatively meaningful discourse outside of the logical foundations of mathematics or the true or false scientific description of logically contingent existent states of affairs must go beyond the limitations of the purely extensional existence-presuppositional referential and predicational semantics available in a Fregean reference domain.[1] But how far and in what way?

The battle is hard fought. Philosophers continue to propose ingenious but ultimately implausible paraphrases of discourse purportedly about nonexistent objects, in order to deny direct reference to nonexistents in any actual intendings. These extensionalist efforts have not met with impressive success, and usually end up offering informal words of consolation about the need to limit meaning and live without the literal meaningfulness of large parts of discourse. The usage in question functions linguistically and pragmatically as though it is as meaningful as discourse about the properties instantiated by existent entities. If Hume's insight is correct, then it is more reasonable to suppose that there should be an exactly parallel semantics for expressions that purport to make true or false assertions both about existent and nonexistent objects.

Frege's purely extensionalist existence-presuppositional reference domain will not do, because it cannot distinguish, and hence cannot adequately comprehend, the nonexistent objects assumed by false science, false history, fiction, myth and religion, and fabrications in any exercise of thought or its expression. The terms for these nonexistents have different Fregean senses, but since the respective intended objects do not exist, their names have no reference. The implausibility of the Fregean commitment to a referential semantic domain that coincides only with the ontology is evident when we consider that if Frege is right, then we cannot think about or speak of Zeus, except in thinking or speaking about a certain set of properties. The default realist metaphysics of sets and properties makes these existent intended objects, whereas Zeus is supposed to be nonexistent. The properties in question are supposed to be none other than the constitutive properties of Zeus or said to belong to or be associated with Zeus, and not, say, with Ares or Hera. If these nonexistent gods are distinct in the ways that the myths imply, then there must be recognized distinct nonexistent intended objects alongside existent physical and abstract intended objects included in a logic's referential semantic domain, beyond the reach of any theory's ontology.

If we do not want to be driven into admitting that it is false or meaningless to say that Sherlock Holmes is a detective, or that a flying horse is a horse, that nonexistent objects cannot truly have any constitutive properties, then we must graduate from

[1] For criticisms of Fregean extensionalist existence presuppositional reference domains, see Jacquette 2010a, 22–140, 2011b.

an existence-restricted and -presuppositional Fregean reference domain to an intensional Meinongian reference domain that includes an existent *or* nonexistent object for *every* logically, if not ontically or metaphysically, possible combination of constitutive properties. Some combinations of constitutive properties constitute the existent objects already included in a Fregean reference domain, to be engulfed by the Meinongian, leaving all other combinations as identity conditions for all nonexistent objects excluded from a general ontology that is also the Fregean reference domain. There is nothing we can do in philosophical logic and semantics with a Fregean reference domain that we cannot also and equally do by means of a more comprehensive Meinongian reference domain. There are, on the other hand, many valuable logical and semantic services provided by a Meinongian reference domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects that cannot be satisfied by a Fregean extensionalist existence-presuppositional reference domain. Meinong does not need to reject or refute any part of Frege's logic or semantics, provided it is not generalized as Frege would have it, but relativized to only the ontology and extensional thought and discourse about exclusively existent intended objects, while being absorbed into the greater ontically neutral referential semantic extraontology.

7.4 Comprehension Principle for Meinongian Object Theory

The development of a Meinongian logic and semantics of existence and nonexistence requires a *comprehension principle* by which all and only existent and nonexistent intendable objects are included in the logic's referential semantic domain. This is more challenging than it may at first appear. There are hidden difficulties and hazards in trying to specify precisely what objects are to be included in the Meinongian domain, and on what basis other candidate objects may need to be excluded.

In the counterpart Fregean reference domain we have described, as a foil to the Meinongian, the division is straightforward. We include all and only the existent objects, actual and abstract, excluding all others, and the work is done. The Meinongian domain, on the contrary, is in one sense easily described at a high level of generality and informality, but poses difficulties when specific applications are considered. We can say without fear of contradiction that the Meinongian domain contains every ideally or logically possible intended object, everything we can think about, existent or nonexistent. True as far as it goes, although the formula leaves open an assortment of recalcitrant cases. We must ask in the first place, What are the objects we can think about, what things and kinds of things are to be included among the intended objects of logically possible intentions?

An adequate comprehension principle for Meinongian object theory must include all and only the existent and nonexistent objects that are distinguishable

from one another by virtue of differences in their constitutive properties. This is to say, as a consequence of their intensional property-related Leibnizian identity conditions. Satisfying the requirement, an existent or nonexistent intended object can be named, support true or false predications of properties, beginning with the constitutive properties belonging to the object's identifying so-being or their complements, counted, quantified over, and in other ways treated like the semantic although obviously not ontic equal of any existent entities in extraontology. In his mature formulation of object theory, Meinong seems to think it almost a tautology that object theory objects can only be distinguished by their specifically constitutive properties. He understands by then, working in a contrary rather than complementary non-Brentanian direction from a Brentanian starting place, that all that reference and true and false predication of properties requires of intended objects is that they satisfy the same Leibnizian identity conditions for their differently constituted so-beings as do existent intended objects of reference and true and false predication in thought and language.

7.5 Russell's Problem of the Existent Golden Mountain

An intensional semantics is based on properties. It defines objects in terms of particular choices of combinations from among the totality of all logically possible constitutive properties. Whereas an extensional semantics begins with the existent objects and prescribes truth conditions for propositions concerning existent objects as included in or excluded from the extensions of all existent objects possessing a certain property, an intensional semantics comprehends all combinations of constitutive properties, some of which will then turn out to belong to existent objects, like Napoleon and the Taj Mahal, while others will turn out to correspond to metaphysically contingently or necessarily nonexistent objects, like Sherlock Holmes, the golden mountain, and round square.

The suggestion is that a Meinongian reference domain comprehends existent and nonexistent objects alike, corresponding to any and every combination of properties. Unfortunately, things are not this simple. We cannot include an intended object in a Meinongian reference domain for any and every combination of properties, for then we should need to include such combinations of unfiltered properties as [existent, golden, mountain] and [metaphysically possible, round, square].

Russell (1905a, b) first called attention to this problem in Meinong's object theory. As we work toward increasingly discriminating refinements of the Meinongian comprehension principle to shore it up against counterexamples like Russell's, as it is possible to do, we regrettably stray further and further from the theory's intuitive intentionalist basis. We can think of any object we like by putting together a collection of properties, but not any and all kinds of properties, and not in combination with certain other kinds of properties. There are appropriate and inappropriate kinds of properties for such collections. Meinong's solution has often been criticized as an abject effort to patch up an account that is too general

and comprehensive for its own good. The desired fit with naive phenomenological expectations and the meaning of false and idealized science, history and fiction, myth and religious discourse, is made increasingly elusive as we put pressure on what presumably intended objects that can, as opposed to those that should not, be included in an ontically neutral *außerseiend* Meinongian referential semantic domain of intended objects.

7.6 Converse Intentional Properties as Intensional Identity Conditions

Suppose someone writes a novel in which a detective alerts a criminal by posting two messages, one of which was intended and the other of which was unintended. This looks to be a difference in a Meinongian object's converse intentional properties.[2] In understanding the events of the novel, we may want to make reference to the fictional detective's unintended as opposed to his intended message. For this purpose, we have no better provision than to distinguish between the two nonexistent objects: [intended, message, posted by the detective] and [unintended, message, posted by the detective]. Such examples argue for including the property of being unintended in at least some property combinations, applied in an intensional Meinongian reference domain comprehension principle.[3]

[2] I adopt Chisholm's terminology from his 1982b. If I love Paris, then I have the intentional property of loving Paris, and Paris has the converse intentional property of being loved by me. One persistent question about Meinongian domain comprehension has been whether converse intentional properties under any name are constitutive or extraconstitutive, and if one or the other what we should think of their contribution to their exemplification by intended objects that seem to be individuated by reference to what may be their unexemplified extraconstitutive converse intentional properties. The [unintended, golden, mountain] of Mally's argument combines in its intensional Leibnizian self-identity conditions the constitutive properties of being golden and a mountain, and the extraconstitutive property of being unintended. If we hope like Mally to establish the mind-independent objectivity of the Meinongian object theory reference domain by virtue of the unintendedness of the freely assumed unintended golden mountain, then we may agree with Mally that converse intentional properties, or perhaps only some of them, are constitutive rather than extraconstitutive.

[3] I previously proposed classifying converse intentional properties as constitutive or nuclear in order to save Mally's 1914 argument for the mind-independent objectivity of the Meinongian object theory domain. See Jacquette 1996a, 73–8. A stronger reason is an increased appreciation for the fact that converse intentional properties sometimes need to be included among an intended object's intensional identity conditions. In this chapter, I consider Meinong's original answer to Russell's problem of the existent round square more sympathetically in application to the constitutive-extraconstitutive property status of converse intentional properties. That *Sosein* is independent of *Sein* for Meinong is a two-way street. Meinong's solution to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain is presented in *AMG* V, 278–82; VI, 266. See Routley 1980, 496. Jacquette 1985–1986, 423–38. Jacquette 1996a, 80–91. Also Findlay 1995, 103–4. Mally 1914. Meinong refers to Mally's constructions like the unintended golden mountain as '*defekte Gegenstände*'. See Jacquette 1982.

All that seems fair enough. There are nevertheless other applications, in which it seems more natural and even essential in understanding the meaning of discourse to classify the property of being unintended, un-thought-of, or even unapprehended or uncomprehended, as extraconstitutive rather than constitutive. An example is to speak of an unintended round square. Is the unintended round square unintended? One might say that it cannot be unintended, for then paradoxically it is intended in the very consideration of the question. If we are not availing ourselves of Meinong's other solution involving a distinction between egalitarian properties with or without the modal moment, then we need to exclude at least some unintended objects from the Meinongian referential semantic domain. Under the present proposal, there is no way to accomplish this discrimination except by classifying the property of being unintended as extraconstitutive rather than constitutive. We have already seen that there are some applications like the detective posting two messages, in which, on the contrary, it seems more correct to classify the property of being unintendable as a constitutive rather than extraconstitutive property.

Nor is the property of being unintended the only difficult case. What are we to say of the unexemplified color? Colors are sometimes invented that previously did not exist in nature, but that result only from previously untried chemical processes or combinations of pre-existent colors.[4] Prior to their invention, these colors are unexemplified. So, we should be able intelligibly to speak of an unexemplified color. While we are laboring to create the new color, we identify it for referential purposes intensionally as the property of having certain constitutive chromatic values C and of being unexemplified, [unexemplified, chromatic values C]. What's good for the goose is good for the gander. If being unexemplified is constitutive, then so must be the complementary property of being exemplified. This means just as in the [existent, golden, mountain] case, we should be able to postulate the comprehension of an object in the Meinongian reference domain defined as [exemplified, property of choice], whereby we stipulatively conjure into existence any property we choose. If it works, then by intending alone we can all exemplify the property of being millionaires. Since the attempt does not succeed, we must reconsider the proposal of treating the property of being unexemplified in the case of a specific color as constitutive rather than extra-constitutive. If the color is created at a certain time, then we may nevertheless want to distinguish constitutively between the previously unexemplified and later exemplified color, with its specific set of chromatic values C.

When we investigate the scope and limits of the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, we meet with an unexpected and somewhat unsystematic mixture of properties that do not readily lend themselves to classification exclusively as either constitutive or extraconstitutive. Some applications

[4] There is a fascinating history of the invention of what were then new colors. It does not happen often, and it requires work to find something not already present in nature, but it is possible *a fortiori*, because it has happened historically in the development of synthetic chemistry, in the case of Prussian blue and other colors. See such classics as Scheele 1966, 176–7; Coleby 1939.

seem constitutive, and others extraconstitutive. The applications themselves can be relativized readily and reasonably enough. The trouble is that the basis for relativizing some of these dual aspect properties is the effect of their association with other properties. As such, they cannot freely and independently enter into combination with other exclusively constitutive properties in establishing intensional identity conditions for objects in a Meinongian reference domain. Each logically possible combination would need to be considered individually in order to determine in that case whether the dual aspect property were behaving constitutively or extraconstitutively in that combination. The requirement is evidently incompatible, not only in practical application, but with the very theoretical concept of a comprehension principle for a Meinongian object theory.

These distinctions cannot be subjectively nuanced or negotiated in a theory like Meinong's, but must stand on well-founded objective principles. Meinong's is not a theory of how or what people think, but of what they *can* think. They can think descriptively or under nominalizations of any object associated with any combination of constitutive properties as its distinguishing intensional identity conditions. The theory at one level or another after a series of retreats from its initial intuitive appeal and apparent generality, leaves a trail of further qualifications and distinctions, that finally do not belong univocally either to the category of constitutive or extraconstitutive properties. One seemingly *ad hoc* provision is added to shore up object theory against inconsistencies arising primarily from Meinong's assumption that thought is free to intend any object distinctly constituted by any choice of constitutive properties. The qualified but ideally unlimited freedom of assumption (*unbeschränkte Annahmefreiheit*), together with the object theory's intensional identity presuppositions, pairing combinations of constitutive properties with objects in a semantic reference domain regardless of their ontic status, are supposed to comprehend all of the existent and nonexistent intended objects, actual, abstract and beingless, metaphysically possible and impossible. The Meinongian reference domain consequently cannot be properly comprehended without a prior correct division of all and only constitutive from all and only extraconstitutive properties (Meinong 1910, 346–7; *AMG* VI, 283).

7.7 Synthesis of Alternative Complementary Solutions to Russell's Problem

What about such null intensional property combinations as the object lacking any constitutive properties? It seems to be something we can think about, so it should be included by the application of any adequate comprehension principle for a Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain. As such, it must have its own distinguishing intensional identity conditions, which, in the nature of the case, cannot include any constitutive properties. It must be different as an intended object from any objects possessing at least one constitutive property, unless implausibly it

is not ranked as an intendable object at all, excluded altogether from any Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain.

The dilemma is that either we must conclude that we cannot think about such an object, or we must do so by means of unexemplified extraconstitutive properties by which the object is nevertheless intensionally identified. From any direction, the first option seems unjustifiably restrictive. Why, in thinking about the object lacking all constitutive properties, should intensional identity conditions break down? We cannot distinguish the object lacking all constitutive properties from other objects about which we might also think, and which we might also intend. Otherwise, we can distinguish such objects only by including extraconstitutive properties among their intensional Leibnizian identity conditions. In the latter case, we step away from the Meinongian principle that the objects are comprehended by identity conditions, associating a distinct object with every unique combination exclusively of constitutive properties. Meinong's own distinction between properties possessing or lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality can be understood as making precisely this latter compromise.

To challenge the Meinong-inspired picture, we might consider existence as a supposedly clearcut case of extraconstitutive property. Since distinct Meinongian objects in Meinong's historical development of object theory can only be individuated and differentiated by means of differences in their respective constitutive properties, existence is excluded. The awkward alternative seems to be that Russell's existent golden mountain is existent, and hence that a golden mountain exists. We do not expect the paradigmatically extraconstitutive property of existence to enter into any Meinongian object's identifying and individuating *Sosein* or so-being.

Imagine that someone freely creates a fiction in which a detective describes two villains, one of whom within the story is said to exist, and the other of whom within the same story again is said not to exist. Such a distinction might even be crucial to understanding the meaning of the story as a whole, including key elements of plot. How are we to distinguish between the references made in the fiction to the existent and nonexistent villains, without including some sort of extraconstitutive existence and nonexistence properties, as among the intensional identity conditions for these fictional intended objects? If knowledge of the two villains is as limited as this, then it can happen that only [existent, villain] $\neq$ [nonexistent, villain]; otherwise, if existence and nonexistence are precluded from application of the intensional identity conditions for comprehension of objects in an object theory reference domain, then we are paradoxically driven to denying, if only equivocally, the reflexivity of identity, [villain] $\neq$ [villain].

There appears no better alternative than to adopt some version of Meinong's original solution to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain. We should consider the distinction between extraconstitutive properties with or without the modal moment. We can mark the difference symbolically by making an exception for extraconstitutive (XC) properties imported into the bracketed intensional identity conditions for a special range of nonexistent Meinongian objects. Whereas, ordinarily, for constitutive (C) properties, we can write that the object identified by

the so-being of constitutive properties P_1, P_2 has in truth both of those properties, indicated by the brackets and $\Rightarrow$ double arrow. $[P_1,P_2] \Rightarrow P_1[P_1,P_2]$ says that if there is an object in the object theory domain with intensional identity conditions P_1, P_2, then that object truly possesses property P_1. Similarly:

$$[P_1, P_2] \Rightarrow P_2[P_1, P_2] \quad \text{AUTHORIZED}$$

Alternatively, where extraconstitutive (XC) properties $P!_1$, $P!_2$, etc., are recruited as intensional identity conditions, no such inference is authorized. Thus, we have:

$$[P_1, P!_1] \Rightarrow P_1[P_1, P!_1] \quad \text{AUTHORIZED}$$

But not:

$$[P_1, P!_1] \Rightarrow P!_1[P_1, P!_1] \quad \text{UNAUTHORIZED}$$

An extraconstitutive property enclosed within the brackets lacks what Meinong speaks of as the modal moment of full-strength factuality, but is on the contrary a modally watered-down counterpart of an extraconstitutive property.

With respect to Russell's original problem of the existent golden mountain, we can then say intuitively, without distinguishing !-properties from non-!-properties, that:

$$[\text{existent, golden, mountain}] \Rightarrow \text{golden}[\text{existent, golden, mountain}]$$

And:

$$[\text{existent, golden, mountain}] \Rightarrow \text{mountain}[\text{existent, golden, mountain}]$$

Although not:

$$[\text{existent, golden, mountain}] \Rightarrow \text{existent}[\text{existent, golden, mountain}]$$

We cannot deduce that the existent golden mountain exists from the object's uniquely individuating intensional identity conditions. We are free to maintain on independent object theory grounds that the existent golden mountain does not exist, if it is a fact that:

$$\text{nonexistent}[\text{existent, golden, mountain}]$$

Meinong's answer to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain that it is existent even though it does not exist, therefore, need not be rejected out of hand. It can be provided with not only an intelligible but independently justifiable background interpretation.

There is no inconsistency in the proposition that the existent golden mountain is non-modally-momentous existent, even though it does not modally-momentously exist. It is only a matter of keeping the intensional identity conditions rich enough to

distinguish any phenomenologically distinct intended objects on the basis of differences in their individuating properties. The distinctions must be upheld, even if these should turn out to include extraconstitutive properties, like existence or possibility and their complements, from which their actual exemplification cannot be deductively inferred.

Converse intentional properties, like being intended or unintended, comprehended or uncomprehended, are also classified without exception as extraconstitutive. The unintended or uncomprehended golden mountain is a distinct object on intensional identity conditions than the golden mountain and even than the existent golden mountain, but for that reason alone need not be unintended or uncomprehended. By application of the same distinction as that appealed to further above, it does not follow that:

$$[\text{unintended, golden, mountain}] \Rightarrow \text{unintended}[\text{unintended, golden, mountain}]$$

Although:

$$[\text{unintended, golden, mountain}] \neq [\text{golden, mountain}]$$

And:

$$[\text{unintended, golden, mountain}] \neq [\text{intended, golden, mountain}]$$

Moreover, for the same reason, there is no *contradictio in adjecto* in the predication:

$$\text{intended}[\text{unintended, golden, mountain}]$$

Leaving it equally open as a logical possibility, depending on the logically contingent state of the world and the existence and direction of thought:

$$\text{unintended}[\text{unintended, golden, mountain}]$$

Similarly, for the [uncomprehended, golden, mountain]. There is no true predication of the form, uncomprehended[uncomprehended, golden, mountain], following merely from the free intention of the [uncomprehended, golden, mountain], in the way that the golden[uncomprehended, golden, mountain] and mountain[uncomprehended, golden, mountain], follow from intending the [uncomprehended, golden, mountain]. The important difference between the present proposal and multiple modes of predication solutions to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain and its variants is that the distinction here depends essentially on, rather than offering to supplant, Meinong's distinction between the categories of constitutive and extraconstitutive properties.

If converse intentional properties like being intended or being unintended are extraconstitutive, then an object comprehended in the Meinongian object theory

reference domain need not possess these properties by virtue of including them among its intensional identity conditions. For Meinong, this is the intended object's distinguishing *Sosein*. The application undermines Mally's 1914 argument for the mind-independent objectivity of the Meinongian object theory domain. Mally maintains that there are at least some unintended mind-independent objects implied by the freely assumed, [unintended, golden, mountain] ⇒ unintended[unintended, golden, mountain]. If being unintended is an extraconstitutive property instead, then inferring from the properties as intensional identity conditions of an intended object to the object's actual exemplification of any of its extraconstitutive properties, as opposed to any of its constitutive properties, is logically unauthorized.

The unintended golden mountain may or may not actually be unintended, if to be unintended is extraconstitutive. Although, in another sense, it must also certainly be unintended, golden, and a mountain, in order to be exactly that and no other actually intended object. There is an equivocation in two senses of 'unintended' in the proposed solution, one that is brought into intensional identity conditions and the other that may or may not be actually exemplified by an unintended object so identified.

7.8 Mind-Independent Objectivity of the Meinongian Domain

The important lesson of successful efforts to establish a comprehension principle for a Meinongian object theory reference domain is perhaps this. That the best response to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain is not that object theorists must choose alternatively to enforce a distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, on the one hand, versus some form of the modal moment solution, on the other. The distinction between properties possessing or lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality may turn out to be indispensable to avoiding the full range of Russell-inspired counterexamples. It functions properly only with respect to a previously distinguished division of extraconstitutive properties, that can thereafter enter into an object's intensional identity conditions, without necessarily being exemplified by the objects they serve to identify.

What is required is a sympathetic synthesis of both solutions. It is specifically extraconstitutive properties, based on that prior distinction, that can appear within intensional identity conditions for a Meinongian object, independently of its ontic status as actually or abstractly existent or nonexistent. We cannot forestall a limitless stream of Russell-encouraged counterexamples to any comprehension principle for Meinong's object theory, without judiciously observing both the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. Among extraconstitutive properties, we must then further distinguish between those possessing and those lacking the modal moment of full-strength factuality. These, a fortified

revisionary Meinongian object theory must allow, are assumable as intensional identity conditions, without their implying their actual exemplification. The two approaches are therefore not rival, but complementary, solutions, neither of which is sufficient in and of itself to solve the family of counterexamples suggested by Russell's commonsense problem of the existent golden mountain and existent round square.

Including converse intentional properties among the extraconstitutive properties in a revisionary Meinongian object theory invalidates Mally's 1914 argument for the objectivity of an object theory reference domain.[5] However, it is not axiomatic in the first place that a phenomenological Brentano-motivated intentionalist object theory needs an objective mind-independent comprehension principle to include the specific intended objects in its referential semantic domain. Objectivity in the sense of mind-independence of the sort Mally sought to achieve is attained in another way, without benefit of Mally's argument, when incapacitated by the classification of converse intentional properties like being unintended as extraconstitutive.[6] A Meinongian reference domain of all existent and nonexistent potentially intended objects is objectively comprehended by the abstract operations through which a distinct object is added to the domain. The principle of inclusion is the mind-independent mathematical combinatorics governing all logically possible assemblage of constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. Appropriate restrictions are required to block inference to an object's actual exemplification of merely predicated extraconstitutive properties, even when they are included among the object's intensional identity conditions, and when they are not independently known to be actually exemplified.

The original impetus for a Meinongian object theory may have depended on an interpretation of Brentano's 1874 thesis of the intentionality of all and only the psychological. Its reference domain is objectively determinable without phenomenology, descriptive psychology, or the exercise of inner perception, as the complete range of all the logically possible intendable objects whose intensional identity conditions are determined by every logically possible combination of properties, constitutive and extraconstitutive. Actual exemplification of constitutive properties

[5] Mally 1914. I discuss these alternative approaches to semantics and metaphysics in depth in Jacquette 2002a, especially 158–81.

[6] I omit discussion of Zalta's dual modes of predication in this context, although it is sometimes described as Meinongian. Zalta's abstract objects are Platonic and Fregean existents or subsistents, in the old-fashioned terminology, rather than Meinongian beingless objects, neither actual physical nor abstract. See Zalta 1983, 1988. Jacquette 1991c. The burden of my argument is that the constitutive versus extraconstitutive property distinction, like dual modes of predication, cannot solve the full range of Russell-inspired counterexamples to a principled comprehension of the Meinongian object theory domain in lieu of judicial application of Meinong's concept of the watering-down of extraconstitutive properties and modal moment of full-strength factuality. The solution is unavailable to any dual modes of predication approach that rejects the constitutive versus extraconstitutive property distinction. Plural modes of predication in a Meinongian context were originally suggested by Mally 1909a, b. For translations see Jacquette 2008 and the present volume's "Appendix".

by at least some existent or nonexistent ideally intended objects is logically guaranteed. Actual exemplification of extraconstitutive properties, in contrast, is not logically guaranteed, but is a matter of correspondence with relevant truth-making states of the world, when it is not logically implied or denied. Converse intentional properties are unequivocally classified as extraconstitutive, which, like the extraconstitutive property of existence, does not prevent them from entering into a domain object's intensional identity conditions, even when they do not actually hold true of and are not actually exemplified by the intended object so identified.

Chapter 8
Meinong's Concept of Implexive Being and Non-Being

8.1 Intertwining of Objects

In what is undoubtedly one of his most complex later works, *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit: Beiträge zur Gegenstandstheorie und Erkenntnistheorie*, Meinong introduces the distinction between implexive being and non-being. Meinong uses the concept of implexive being and non-being to explain the metaphysics of universals, and as a contribution to the theory of reference and perception.

The word 'implexive' derives from the Latin *implecto*, meaning to plait, weave or twist into, entangle in, involve, entwine, or enfold.[1] Findlay, in *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values*, translates Meinong's technical term '*implektiert*' as 'embedded'. This fits the etymology and captures the right philosophical sense, once we understand the precise nature of the embedding relation Meinong means to describe (Findlay 1995, 169–70, 210).

Meinong says that incomplete objects (*unvollständige Gegenstände*) have implexive being (*das implexive Sein*) by virtue of being implected in complete objects. Similarly, incomplete objects have implexive non-being by virtue of being implected in beingless objects. The terminology encourages us to think metaphorically of a literal embedding of what is incomplete in what is complete. Meinong further extends the concept of implexive being and non-being to the concept of implexive so-being (*implexives Sosein*). A beingless incomplete object is said by Meinong to have a certain constitutive property (*konstitutorische Bestimmung*) in its implexive *Sosein* when it is embedded in another object whose *Sosein* includes the property.[2]

[1] An earlier source is the Greek word '*emplexon*'. Leverett, ed. 1950, 406.

[2] Meinong introduces the distinction between *konstitutorische* and *ausserkonstitutorische Bestimmungen* (constitutive and extraconstitutive properties) in *AMG* VI, 176–7. Findlay 1995, 176. See also Parsons 1978; 1980.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_8

The distinction between implexive being and non-being enables Meinong to offer a broadly Brentanian-Aristotelian empiricist object theory explanation of the metaphysics of universals. Berkeley and Hume disproved the existence or subsistence of universals, to express the objection in later Meinongian terms, by discovering their essential incompleteness. The universal 'the triangle' is neither red nor non-red, scalene nor non-scalene, isosceles nor non-isosceles. The predicational incompleteness of universals does not disqualify them for further consideration, but implies only that they belong among the other beingless objects in Meinong's extraontology. The problem that remains for Meinong is to explain how universals are nevertheless instantiated in different particular real world entities. Meinong follows Brentano's lead in Aristotelianizing the metaphysics of universals, effectively as a theory of tropes or individual property instantiations, which on phenomenological and semantic grounds he extends from existent to include nonexistent intended objects.[3] On the distinction between implexive being and non-being Meinong mounts an object theory interpretation of Aristotle's doctrine of the inherence of universal secondary substances that are not abstract Platonic universals in particular existent primary substances. The derivative concept of implexive so-being is then adduced in Meinong's efforts to develop an object theory of modality and probability, and more specifically in the task of providing an object theory analysis of different degrees of possibility (*AMG* VI, 209–32).

Why does Meinong propose that the incomplete is embedded in the complete, the 'abstract' universal as property trope in the concrete particular? What, more precisely, beyond the metaphor or mental image such language may evoke, is the concept of implexive being supposed to mean? Meinong's use of the phrase 'implexive being' as a term of art for the entwining of an incomplete in a complete object is itself entangled in his later densely woven philosophical prose. There are conceptual problems in trying to understand how Meinong thinks of certain kinds of objects as implected in others. When interpreting Meinong's concept of implexive being and non-being, it is useful, therefore, to attempt three things, to: (1) defend a set theoretical account of the mereological relations involved in implexive being, non-being, and so-being; (2) critically examine Meinong's use of the concept of implection, as a check on the set theoretical model, and as a way of deciding whether Meinong's applications go beyond the limitations of or do not yet fully exploit the metaphysical and semantic possibilities of the distinction between implexive being and non-being; (3) suggest how a revisionary neo-Meinongian semantics might apply Meinong's concept of implexive being, non-being, and

[3] Brentano 1966a. Brentano's later Aristotelian reism culminates a lifetime's effort to incorporate Aristotelian ideas into Austrian and middle European philosophy against the then prevailing tide of German idealism, beginning with his (1862) dissertation, *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles* through the (1867) Habilitationsschrift, *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles*, (1911b) *Aristoteles Lehre vom Ursprung des menschlichen Geistes*, and (1911c) *Aristoteles und seine Weltanschauung*, and including the three editions of Brentano's Aristotelian, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* from 1874 through the 1911a edition as *Von der Klassifikation der psychischen Phänomene*. See Kotarbinski 1976; Körner 1977; Jacquette 1990–91.

so-being, in meeting referential extensionalist criticisms of what has wrongly come to be known as the ontic excesses of 'Meinong's jungle'.

The purpose is to arrive at an understanding of Meinong's concept of implexive being and non-being that can be put to immediate practical use in defending Meinong's object theory against fundamental extensionalist misconceptions. We gain a better sense of the scope and power of Meinong's distinction by considering its potential for applications that Meinong did not explicitly anticipate, but that a neo-Meinongian semantics can more fully develop in maintaining its position as a viable alternative to a dominant ideologically hostile referentially extensionalist tradition in logic and philosophy of language. The interest of Meinong's distinction between implexive being and non-being is metaphysical, although like many lines of inquiry in properly analytic philosophy, it begins with an effort to understand the meaning of interesting everyday thinking and colloquial expression.

8.2 Implexive Being, Non-Being, and So-Being

The concept of implexive being makes its first appearance in Meinong's text as an explanation of the metaphysics of universals. Meinong, as a reflection of his commitment to a Brentanian empiricism, accepts Berkeley's rejection of abstract general ideas.[4] The objection, as Meinong understands it, implies that universals like 'the triangle' are beingless incomplete objects, because they lack both at least one relevantly constitutive property and its complement in such property and property-complement pairs as scalene-non-scalene, isosceles-non-isosceles.[5]

Berkeley and Hume, from their respective empiricist standpoints, seek to solve at most what might be called the *epistemic* problem of universals. They reject universals or abstract general ideas because of their essential incompleteness, and find it necessary thereafter only to account for what is popularly regarded as reasoning about abstract general ideas, given that there are none. Berkeley's ingenious solution, which Hume in *A Treatise of Human Nature* admires as 'one

[4] Berkeley 1949–58a, II (*Treatise*), 45. Berkeley 1949–58b, II (*Three Dialogues*), 192–4. Hume 1975, 154–5: 'An extension, that is neither tangible nor visible, cannot possibly be conceived: and a tangible or visible extension, which is neither hard nor soft, black nor white, is equally beyond the reach of human conception. Let any man try to conceive a triangle in general, which is neither *Isosceles* nor *Scalenum*, nor has any particular length or proportion of sides; and he will soon perceive the absurdity of all the scholastic notions with regard to abstraction and general ideas.'

[5] *Alexius Meinong Gesamtausgabe*, 178: 'Besonders geeignet sind vielmehr Begriffsgegenstände, wie uns deren etwa durch Definitionen gegeben werden. Das Dreick z.B., darin hatte der sicher nicht überrationalistische Locke gegen Berkeley und gegen viele Spätere) am Ende doch recht, ist als solches weder gleichseitig noch gleichschenklig, weder rechtwinklig noch schiefwinklig, noch das Gegenteil davon: es ist in diesen Hinsichten und noch in vielen anderen eben unbestimmt. Gegenstände dieser Art stehen in deutlichen Gegensatz zu solchen, die, wie wir deren oben zuerst betrachtet haben, in bezug auf alle wie immer gearteten Gegenstände bestimmt sind. Man kann solche Gegenstände mit Recht vollständig bestimmte nennen, Blaues, Dreieck und ihresgleichen dagegen unvollständig bestimmte.'

of the greatest and most valuable discoveries that has been made of late in the republic of letters' (Hume 1978, 17), has two parts. The intuitive belief that we seem to reason about universals or abstract general ideas is first interpreted by the proposition that particular ideas are delegated in thought to represent any of a class or category of similar particular ideas. Then, apparently as revealed by a somewhat idealized introspection, Berkeley claims that if we wrongly try to draw inferences about the properties of all the ideas in a category from the peculiarities of the particular idea at first representing all its kin, then counterexamples that do not share the same property will ordinarily occur at once to thought, rushing in to challenge any false unwarranted generalizations, as thought proceeds to correct itself.[6]

This explains or explains away in empiricist friendly terms what is called 'reasoning about universals'. A phenomenologically plausible nominalism accounts for abstract thinking, without adding universals or abstract general entities to the ontology. The solution less creditably leaves unanswered a cluster of important metaphysical problems. These include the nagging suspicion that there must be something more in common between the particular triangles in the category 'the triangle', by virtue of which particular triangles are rightly judged to belong to the same category. The suggestion that all particulars of a certain sort are triangles solely because it is convenient or serves pragmatic interests to classify them together or give them all the same general term is not very philosophically satisfying.

These and nothing else are rightly called triangles, and bare-knuckle nominalism does not begin to explain why only certain entities are rightly collected in just that general category. We may feel strongly that there must be more to it than that, even if we share empiricism's distrust of predicationally incomplete universals or abstract general ideas as existent or subsistent entities. Just these geometrical shapes fall under the abstract term 'triangle', no one disagrees. Why do they do so, if it all boils down to cognitive economics? If we are empiricists, then we can hardly agree with Plato that there is some universal essence of the Triangle or Triangularity. Now, it seems blameless enough to agree on using 'triangle' exclusively for any closed plane geometrical figure with exactly three sides or exactly three angles. It is obviously more convenient, though that is not the issue, to say 'triangle' than to say 'closed plane geometrical figure with exactly three sides or exactly three angles'. The question is rather, What if anything makes it more convenient to speak of what are still considered *kinds* of things as either triangles or closed plane geometrical figures with exactly three sides or exactly three angles, or not? The empiricist answer is supposed to be that objects are collected together under a 'universal' property term for convenience in practical circumstances on grounds of shared similarities. This idea appears to work better for some nominalist

[6] Berkeley 1949–58, II (*Treatise*), 29–40; II (*Three Dialogues*), 192–7. Hume endorses Berkeley's theory of representative generalization in place of abstract generalization in 1975 [1777], 158, n. 1: '. . .all general ideas are, in reality, particular ones, attached to a general term, which recalls, upon occasion, other particular ones, that resemble, in certain circumstances, the idea, present to the mind.'

reductions of universals than others. It handles colors better than shapes, the phenomenal better than the rational. Consider a rectangle that is shaped almost entirely like a very pointy obtuse scalene triangle. The figure would be a triangle, except that at the spiky tip the absolute minimal amount is shaved off and linked to the other connecting line segment to make a four- rather than three-sided figure. It is in fact a rectangle, but the question for empiricist nominalism is, Why do its similarities not outweigh such a tiny difference, unless we are somehow dealing after all more directly with a grasp of real abstract Platonic universals, of what it is objectively speaking to be a Triangle and what it is to be a Rectangle? What if the figure is only so slightly different than the corresponding unshaved triangle that the difference could not be disclosed to any empirical inspection, all of which in fact and counterfactually speaking would judge it to be a triangle? Why for the empiricist nominalist should the rectangle, so much more similar to other triangles than it is to other rectangles, not belong to the empirical similarities collecting the 'universal' triangle rather than rectangle?

The downfall of any type of nominalism beyond the bare-knuckle, whether conceptualist or similarities collecting empiricist, is that whatever explanation is offered for why just these things are supposed to fall under one predicate category rather than its complement will only involve for the nominalist more words that have no more meaning beyond their unspecified convenience in assigning a single coverall word to do duty for indefinitely many instances. The question is always, *Which* instances are to be included and *which* excluded, and *why*? Arguably, the best approach might be to advance some version of Aristotle's thesis that the (small 'f') forms, definitions, universals, or secondary substances inhere or are somehow contained in particular existent primary substances, and that it is by virtue of such inherence of 'the triangle' in any particular existent triangular shaped thing that all particular triangles belong together in the same category, to be rightly referred to by the same universal or abstract general concept term (Aristotle, *Categories* $2^{a}10$–16; *Metaphysics* $1017^{b}1$–25). Aristotelian inherence of secondary substances in primary substances provides the logical model for Meinong's later theory of implexive being and non-being.

It is to resolve the metaphysical problem of universals, left over from the British Empiricists' solution to the epistemic problem of universals, after universals as abstract entities have been eliminated from ontology, that Meinong first puts forward the concept of implexive being. Meinong agrees with Berkeley and Hume that universals are essentially incomplete, and that therefore universals are neither existent nor subsistent.[7] After Meinong has elaborated the basic principles of *Gegenstandstheorie*, the fact that universals like 'blueness' or 'the triangle' are beingless incomplete objects means only that they belong to a special category of

[7] Meinong completed his 1877 Habilitationsschrift on Hume's nominalism, undertaken on Brentano's recommendation, and appearing as the *Hume-Studien I* in 1878 in the *Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften*. It was followed by a sequel in 1882, on Hume's nominalist theory of relations, the *Hume-Studien II*. See Meinong 'Selbstdarstellung', 1921. An English translation of Meinong's *Hume-Studien I, II*, respectively, on Hume's nominalism and theory of relations (*AMG* I, II), is offered by Barber 1970; 1971.

the extraontological referential semantic domain of *Außersein*. Meinong, true to Brentano's empiricist methodology and Aristotelian metaphysics, tries to answer the question why all blue things are blue and all triangles triangular things, by explaining in object theory terms what we can speak of somewhat anachronistically as related to Aristotle's notion of the inherence of secondary substances in primary substances. Meinong invokes the concept of the *implection* of beingless essentially incomplete universals in complete existent or subsistent particulars.

Meinong describes the metaphysics of non-Platonic universals, classifying them as beingless incomplete objects implected in complete existent or subsistent objects. The concept of implection makes its debut in this context in Meinong's *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit*, when he writes:

> Now, if we consider part-whole relations, we can characterize the relationship of the incomplete object in its entirety, not only in terms of what it is not, but also in terms of what it is; thereby in particular establishing the validity of what has often enough been conjectured. Without a doubt, 'the ball', for example, has an exact meaning only if this or that particular ball exists; and in this way the turn of phrase 'the ball exists in this or that particular ball' surely makes good sense as a trope or analogy. I venture similarly to say the same, by means of a special terminology, that 'the ball' is implected in my friend's billiard ball (my translation) (*AMG* VI, 211).[8]

Meinong further offers a more positive account of incomplete objects. He wants to move beyond the purely negative statement that incomplete objects are *other than* or that they are *not* complete objects. He sketches a theory in terms of a part-whole relation between incomplete objects, as in some sense mereologically though nonphysically contained in complete objects. He indicates that the mereological concept affords insight into what we can describe as the Aristotelian view that the universal ball in some sense exists and may exist in all and only the particular balls in which it inheres or is instantiated. What exactly is the relation of an incomplete object to the complete object in which it is implected? In what sense are we to imagine ballness, 'the ball' or the universal ball, as existing, not in the usual way, but implexively, as having implexive being in Meinong's friend's particular actually existing billiard ball?

Meinong distinguishes between different objects intensionally by invoking identity conditions based on individuating *Sein*-independent and *Sein*-indifferent *Soseine* consisting of distinct sets of constitutive properties (Meinong 1904a, *AMG* II, 490–3). To each unique set of such properties there is associated a unique Meinongian object. The same Leibnizian identity principles hold with respect to existent actual and abstract entities, as well as nonexistent intended objects. This

[8] Nun darf uns aber das Verhältnis des unvollständigen Gegenstandes zum vollständigen nicht nur hinsichtlich dessen interessieren, was es nicht ist, sondern auch hinsichtlich dessen, was es ist, zumal dabei zur Geltung kommen kann, was mutmaßlich oft genug eigentlich gemeint worden ist, wenn man zur Beschreibung der Sachlage die Relation das Teiles zum Ganzen heranzog. Ohne Zweifel bedeutet es nämlich doch etwas für "die Kugel", when "eine Kugel", genauer also, wenn diese oder jene bestimmte Kugel existiert, und als Tropus oder Analogie ist der Wendung "die Kugel existiert in dieser oder jene bestimmten Kugel" sicher ein guter Sinn beizulegen. Ich versuche der Gefahr, Ähnliches für gleich zu nehmen, durch besondere Benennung vorzubeugen, indem ich von "der Kugel" sage, sie sei in der Billiardkugel meines Freundes "Implektiert".

makes it possible to understand Meinong's concept of implexive being, and of the mereological implection of incomplete beingless objects in complete existent or subsistent objects, in terms of set theoretical relations between the *Sosein* of the incomplete beingless object and the *Sosein* of the complete existent or subsistent object in which the implected object is implected.

The *Sosein* of my friend's billiard ball consists, among many other things, of this incompletely specified predicationally complete set of constitutive properties:

> *Sosein*(my friend's billiard ball)={spherical; physical (spatiotemporal); black; marked with the number '8' in a circular white field; weighing x grams; carved from illegally imported ivory; used in playing billiards; belonging to my friend; . . .}

Then the *Sosein* of the universal ball, ball-ness, or 'the ball' as a beingless incomplete object, implected in my friend's actually existent billiard ball, like the inherence of Aristotelian secondary substances in primary substances, according to Meinong's concept, might be understood on the present interpretation as consisting of the following incompletely specified predicationally incomplete set of constitutive properties, for simplicity sake leaving out of account differently shaped 'balls' like rugby balls and American footballs:

$$Sosein(\text{`}the\text{ ball'}) = \{\text{spherical}; \ldots : \text{ physical (spatiotemporal)}\}$$

Meinong's concept of *Sein*-independent *Sein*-indifferent *Sosein* associates with every distinct abstract set of constitutive individuating properties a unique existent or nonexistent ideally intended object. This makes it possible to interpret implection criteriologically as the inclusion of a proper subset of the constitutive properties of an implected object in the set of constitutive properties in which the implected object is implected. We can proceed now lightly to formalize the intuitive set theoretical relations that obtain when an incomplete beingless Meinongian object is implected in a complete existent actual or abstract object.

8.3 Formal Neo-Meinongian Theory of Implection

The concept of implection, like intuitive proper subset membership, is, in every interesting application, unidirectional. If object O_1 is properly implected in object O_2, then object O_2 is not implected in object O_1, just as when a set S_1 is a proper subset of set S_2, then S_2 is not a subset of S_1. If we wish to allow improper implection as a limiting case, in which objects are interimplected, then, by means of an obvious symbolization, we must deny that if any incomplete object O_1 is properly implected in any complete object O_2, then O_2 is not (properly or improperly) implected in O_1. More abstractly than in Meinong's example, we can then explain implexive being and non-being as an inclusion characterizable in set theoretical terms as the proper subset membership of the elements of one *Sosein* set of constitutive properties of the implected object in the *Sosein* set of constitutive properties of the object in which the implected object is implected. The condition is

fulfilled when and only when the implected object's *Sosein* is included or subsumed in the *Sosein* of the implecting object in which the implected object is implected.

Meinong's distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, as we have seen, divides the constitutive properties that go to make up an object as the particular object it is, by which it is identified and individuated by some application of Leibniz's Law, from the extraconstitutive properties that supervene on the totality of an object's constitutive properties. To further characterize the distinction, extraconstitutive properties by contrast are those that in predication must be added on to a fully constituted intended object, as distinct from the *Sosein* of exclusively constitutive properties belonging to relevantly predicationally incomplete objects like the golden mountain and round square. Constitutive properties are such that a beingless impossible object can have or have truly predicated of it both the properties and their complements, as when we speak by free assumption of the round square or round-non-round object. Extraconstitutive properties, in contrast, as cannot be over-emphasized, are such that not even a beingless impossible object, on pain of outright logical contradiction, can intelligibly have both the properties and their complements. If we distinguish syntactically between propositional negation and predicate complementation, as previous chapters have proposed, then another way to put the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive predications is to say that constitutive predications are such that their propositional negation formulations are not logically equivalent to their predicate complementation formulations, while extraconstitutive predications are such that their propositional negation formulations are truth functionally interderivable with their predicate complementation formulations. Criteria for the distinction were previously formalized as defined in (C) and (XC).

The *Sosein* function is then defined exclusively for constitutive non-! properties in this way:

$$\forall x \forall F_1 \forall F_2 \ldots \forall F_n \ldots \big[Sosein(x) = \{F_1, F_2, \ldots, F_n, \ldots\} \leftrightarrow [F_1 x \wedge F_2 x \wedge \ldots F_n x \wedge \ldots]\big]$$

Implection (proper or improper) of an object in another object is formalized in terms of set theoretical membership of the constitutive properties in the *Sosein* of the implected object in the *Sosein* of constitutive properties belonging to the subsuming implecting object as:

$$\forall x \forall y [Imp!x,y \leftrightarrow Sosein(x) \in Sosein(y)]$$

Proper and improper implection are distinguished by means of the following pairs of logically equivalent forms:

$$\forall x \forall y [Pimp!x,y \leftrightarrow (Imp!x,y \wedge \neg Imp!y,x)]$$
$$\forall x \forall y [Impimp!x,y \leftrightarrow (Imp!x,y \wedge Imp!y,x)]$$
$$\forall x \forall y \big[Pimp!x,y \leftrightarrow \big(Sosein(x) \in Sosein(y) \wedge Sosein(y) \notin Sosein(x)\big]$$
$$\forall x \forall y \big[Impimp!x,y \leftrightarrow \big(Sosein(x) \in Sosein(y) \wedge Sosein(y) \in Sosein(x)\big]$$

Where the *Sosein* of an object is as specified below, we can offer a perspicuous interpretation of the proper implection of O_1 in O_2, that, even in symbolic notation, is visually an entwining, interweaving, or embedding of the properties that constitute a properly implected object in the relatively more complete set of constitutive properties that constitute the object in which a properly implected object is properly implected. We have:

$$Sosein(O_1) = \{F_1, F_2, \ldots, F_i, \ldots\}$$
$$Sosein(O_2) = \{F_1, F_2, \ldots, F_i, \ldots, F_n, \ldots\}$$

We see that object O_1 is properly implected in object O_2 if and only if $Sosein(O_1) \in Sosein(O_2) \wedge Sosein(O_1) \notin Sosein(O_2)$. This provides an intuitive set theoretical sense in which an incomplete properly implected object is analogically or metaphorically speaking embedded, interwoven, or entwined in a relatively more complete object, by the literal embedding, interweaving, or entwining of the members of the *Sosein* set of its constitutive properties in the *Sosein* set of constitutive properties of objects in which the properly implected object is properly implected. The same account explains implexive non-being as the embedding of the *Sosein* of an implected object in the *Sosein* of a beingless object. The implexive so-being of an implected object is the set of constitutive properties with which the implected object is associated by virtue of its implection in a particular object with those properties. The universal ball by this account has, not the so-being, but only the implexive so-being, of being red, if it happens to be properly implected in a particular red ball, and the implexive so-being of being small and blue, if it is implected in a particular small blue ball (*AMG* VI, 209–14, 715).

8.4 Meinongian Implection and Aristotelian Inherence

The set theoretical interpretation of implection does not fully exhaust its meaning in Meinong's theory. Meinong also appears to aim at an analysis that interprets Aristotle's metaphysics of the inherence of secondary substances in primary substances as the implection of incomplete beingless universals in complete existent particulars. Aristotelian inherence seems to call for something with a bit more real presence or *Dasein* (*not* Heidegger's technical concept of human being-in-the-world or *Da-Sein*), than the bloodless abstract absorption, and, in that sense, embedding, intermingling, or entwining, of the members of one abstract *Sosein* set of constitutive properties with the members of another.[9]

[9] Meinong distinguishes between implection and related logical-metaphysical relations to which it is akin, notably implication (*Implikation* and *Implizieren*), and what Meinong refers to suggestively as 'impresence' (*Impräsenz*). *AMG* VI, 195, 200, 249–50, 402–4.

To approach this aspect of Meinong's concept of implexive being, let us think of a particular existent object, such as Meinong's friend's billiard ball. Aristotle's concept of inherence suggests a kind of being or real occurrence of the universal 'the ball' in all particular balls. It is as if we should expect to be able to look at an object before us and perceive its inherent form (with a small 'f'), or the universals it instantiates, as physically embodied or interwoven within it. Schopenhauer takes this possibility seriously as the epistemic basis of his idealist aesthetics. He holds that it is possible in moments of individual will-suppressed pure objectivity for the aesthetic genius literally to perceive the Platonic Forms (with a capital 'F' this time) instantiated in existent works of nature and art.[10] Meinong, fortunately, perhaps, does not go this far. He finds middle ground between pure abstraction and real perceptible presence in interpreting Aristotelian inherence, not as ordinary being or being in the true or full sense of the word, but as what he calls the implexive being of universals as incomplete objects properly implected in complete real world objects. Implexive non-being is similarly understood as the implection of an incomplete object in a beingless object, which on the present interpretation is truth-functionally equivalent to the set theoretical membership of the *Sosein* set of all and only the constitutive properties of the implected object in the *Sosein* sets of objects in which it is implected. Meinong speaks here in self-consciously Aristotelian terms in this context of *Inhärenz*, the *inhärent*; *Inhäsivität*, and the *inhäsiv*. Which is to say, of inherence and inhesion. He tries to infuse a sense of the real presence of Aristotelian inherence in the implection of universals in particulars by referring to implexive *being* as though it were a special kind or mode of existence.

The billiard ball exists by virtue of the coinstantiation of its predicationally complete and internally consistent *Sosein* set of constitutive properties. The universal 'the ball' implexively exists by virtue of being properly implected in (among other things) Meinong's friend's existent billiard ball. By virtue, that is, of the coinstantiation of its incomplete but predicationally internally consistent *Sosein* set of constitutive properties, embedded in the *Sosein* set of an existent billiard ball. The incomplete *Sosein* of the universal 'the ball' is also thereby instantiated before us in a perceivable real world object, and implected wherever other balls happen to exist. This, figuratively speaking, is the distinctive Aristotelian-Meinongian *Dasein* of universals. Meinong goes beyond Aristotle in allowing uninstantiated universals whose *Soseine* are equally freely assumable to be implected or to inhere in subsistent and in other relatively predicationally more complete beingless objects. By Meinong's concept, universals as beingless incomplete objects implected in existent actual or abstract intended objects may seem themselves to have a peculiar sort of being, an implexive actual dynamic or abstract existence.[11]

[10] See Jacquette 1994f. Also the essays in Jacquette, ed. 1996d.

[11] See Findlay 1995, 125: '. . .only the attributes of existents have genuine being, and the characteristics of which these attributes are instances have only a sort of derivative being *in* their instances'. In note 5, Findlay identifies the derivative being in question as 'implexive being'.

The suggestion is attractive, but problematic. It entails that beingless incomplete objects, in spite of themselves, ontically, nevertheless have a kind of being. Since incomplete objects are properly implected in relatively predicationally more complete existent, subsistent, and beingless objects, at least some incomplete objects have both implexive being and implexive non-being. Meinong acknowledges the difficulty, and tries to blunt its force by imposing a restriction. He limits implexive being to objects that are not implected in any beingless object. The trouble with this proposal, as Findlay rightly remarks, is that the comprehension of the extraontology of Meinong's semantic domain by free assumption is so liberal that there simply are no incomplete objects that fail to be properly implected in indefinitely many beingless objects. We can identify such objects to order as belonging to the Meinongian domain by freely assuming their corresponding *Sosein* sets of constitutive properties, with each of which an object of the required sort is guaranteed to be uniquely associated.

At first, Findlay indicates that Meinong exaggerates the problem. He states: 'This is by no means so serious a difficulty as Meinong supposes, as implexive existence and implexive non-existence are not contradictory terms like being and non-being' (Findlay 1995, 210). Implexive being and implexive non-being are indexical, in the sense that Meinong should be able more fully and accurately to predicate of the same object the logically compatible properties of having implexive-being-as-properly-implected-in-existent-object-O_1, and of having implexive-being-as-properly-implected-in-existent-object-O_2 (where $O_1 \neq O_2$). After discounting Meinong's solution, Findlay nevertheless proposes an alternative, as though the problem required a more adequate response. He advocates amending Meinong's distinction by stipulating instead that an object has implexive non-being, if it is not implected in any existent object. Findlay sees as a further decisive advantage in the account that it appears best able to support Meinong's efforts to show that possibility admits of degrees. Findlay believes that Meinong's conclusions about an object's degree of possibility can be understood as the ratio of existent versus nonexistent objects, in which a beingless but to that degree logically possible object is properly implected. The more specific an object's *Sosein*, the more particular it is, and hence the fewer existent and the more nonexistent objects in which it can be properly implected. An object like 'the small red ball' is implected in fewer existent or subsistent objects and in more beingless objects than the universal 'the ball', which is implected alike in all existent, subsistent, and beingless balls, of any size and any color. This gives 'the red ball' a lesser degree of possibility than 'the ball'. There is pretheoretically in some sense a greater degree of possibility that a comparatively more general incomplete object like 'the ball' is instantiated in the world than that the comparatively more specific incomplete object 'the red ball' be instantiated; and this with a greater degree of possibility than 'the small red ball', and so on (*AMG* VI, 212–5).

Meinong offers an even more specific illustration, involving the implexive being or coinstantiation of the constitutive properties of a Goethe or Beethoven as a unique actually existent person (*AMG* VI, 215). Findlay finds the idea doubtful. He raises a complaint against Meinong's concept of implexive non-being as an object's

implection in a beingless object and the restriction of implexive being to objects not implected in any beingless objects:

> The possibility of the implexive being of a Beethoven will presumably depend on the ratio between the number of existent and the number of non-existent objects in which a Beethoven is embedded. But. . .the realm of *Aussersein* is unlimited; consequently the non-existent Beethovens will infinitely exceed the existent ones. From this we draw the conclusion that in all cases the possibility of the implexive being of an incomplete object will be indefinitely small (Findlay 1995, 211–2).

The trouble is that the relative degree of possibility of any and every incomplete object is indistinguishable and implausibly diminished by Meinong's theory. This is understood by Findlay as a further unwelcome consequence of Meinong's restriction of implexive non-being only to incomplete objects that are not implected in any existent object. Findlay proposes a way of repairing Meinong's concept:

> This conclusion might have been avoided by a slight emendation. Instead of saying that an object has implexive non-being if it is embedded in a non-existent object, Meinong might have said that it has implexive non-being if it is *not* embedded in a given existent. Thus, 'the sphere' will have implexive being as embedded in billiard balls, &c., but it will also have implexive non-being in so far as it is *not* embedded in, say, a sky-scraper or a saucer. The possibility of the implexive being of an object would then be indicated by the relative frequency with which it was embedded in actual cases. Such a possibility would, of course, be a purely empirical one (Findlay 1995, 212).[12]

The revision of Meinong's concept of implexive non-being in Findlay's view restores Meinong's conclusion that there are variable degrees of possibility in the instantiation or implexive being of beingless objects.

> As Meinong says, the tendency to produce a musical genius of the level of Beethoven is very much less strong than the tendency to produce the plain man. Hence we may say that a Beethoven has a lower possibility of implexive being than a plain man. . .We see therefore that, with a slight alteration in his definition of implexive non-being, Meinong would have been able to establish his view that possibilities of being can differ in degree (Findlay 1995, 212).

Findlay thinks it important on Meinong's analysis to measure an object's degree of possibility empirically against what actually exists. There are, crucially, some respects in which the condition is counterintuitive. It might be preferable if degrees of possibility were determined in a way that is logically independent of the contingent instantiations of properties that happen to obtain in the real world. Imagine a possible world in which there are no balls, but zillions of cloned Goethes or Beethovens, differing from one another in their *Sosein* sets of constitutive properties as little as mass-produced automobiles turned out on a factory's assembly line. In such a world, the degree of possibility of the implexive being of a Goethe or Beethoven happens to be greater than the degree of possibility of the implexive being of 'the ball'.

[12] Findlay 1995, 213: 'Only if, by *a priori* necessity or by the fundamental pattern of nature, *all* the existent or subsistent objects in which a given incomplete object is embedded have a certain property, will be a *fact* that this incomplete object has the property in question implexively.'

If we agree that it makes sense to speak of degrees of logical possibility, as opposed, say, to conditional probability, then degrees of *logical* possibility presumably ought to be *logically* independent of logically contingent actual world occurrences. The implexive being of a Goethe or Beethoven should somehow be intrinsically less possible than the implexive being of the universal ball, even if there happen to be more Goethes or Beethovens than balls, just because the *Sosein* of a Goethe or Beethoven is intrinsically more complete and complex, and hence places greater logical demands on the possibility of coinstantiation involving so many specific constitutive properties, than that of something as general as simply, 'the ball' or [ball]. We should want to make sense of the intuitive judgment that it is intrinsically less possible for the world to contain more Goethes or Beethovens than balls, which we cannot do if degrees of possibility are determined empirically, as Findlay recommends, by the ratios of implexive being or coinstantiation of different sets of constitutive properties, that in the real world actually and logically accidentally or contingently happen to prevail.[13]

A better solution might be to depart even more radically from what Meinong misleadingly suggests in his choice of terminology, by arguing that implexive being is not a kind of being at all, but rather a kind or mode of non-being. In that case, we do not encounter the problem when the very same beingless object is properly implected in existent, subsistent, and other beingless objects, that it has conferred on it both implexive being as a kind of being and implexive non-being as a kind of non-being. If we naively say that implexive being is a kind of being but not real being, then we seem equally obligated to say that implexive non-being is a kind of non-being, but not *real* non-being. It is hard to know exactly what this might be supposed to mean, but it appears to leave Meinong open to the charge that he sometimes permits his freely invented distinctions to run away with him (Parsons 1980, 44). The implication is that if implexive non-being is not real non-being, then, as an extraconstitutive property, it must be some sort of real being. It follows that objects like the golden mountain and round square, despite their beinglessness as incomplete Meinongian objects, nevertheless partake of some sort of real being. Meinong might want to claim that such objects exemplify a *depotenzierte* or watered-down, but still 'real' constitutive being, lacking what Meinong elsewhere in *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit* refers to as the modal moment, *das Modalmoment* (*AMG* VI, 266), which previous chapters have discussed in more detail.[14] Meinong's concept of the modal moment appears confused, more trouble than it is worth. It may even be logically incoherent or infinitely regressive in

[13] Findlay 1995, 213: 'Some of the *implectentia* of 'the triangle' are isosceles, some are scalene, some equilateral. It is therefore 'possible' for 'the triangle' to be isosceles, scalene, or equilateral, and such possibilities are mere possibilities, and not facts. 'The triangle' would only be scalene implexively if all its *implectentia* were scalene; as only some are, we can only say that there is a certain *tendency* to make the implexive possession of this property by 'the triangle' a fact. The magnitude of all such possibilities will depend on the range of *implectentia* involved.'

[14] Ibid., 77, 103–112. See Jacquette 1985–86.

application, unable to explain and solve the problems it is meant to address, and that it should therefore be eliminated from Meinong's object theory.[15]

All such objectionable consequences are avoided by interpreting Meinong's concept of implexive being, not as a kind of being, but as a kind or mode of non-being. Implexive non-being for the same reason is then another kind or mode of non-being, distinct and opposite from implexive being, by which a beingless object can inhere or be contained by implection in another beingless object through the absorption of its *Sosein* set of constitutive properties in the *Sosein* set of constitutive properties of the beingless object in which it is properly implected. Implexive being and implexive non-being by this account are two different and opposite ways or modes of non-being for beingless objects. Findlay might therefore be cautioned as presupposing or concluding too quickly from Meinong's use of the phrase '*das implexive Sein*' that a subcategory of being (*Sein*) is literally intended. As Findlay writes: 'Whether Meinong is right in regarding what he calls implexive being as a genuine variety of being, fit to be set beside existence and subsistence, is not easy to say' (Findlay 1995, 169). The textual evidence is equivocal, and there is no absolutely compelling reason from what Meinong says about implexive being to infer that he understands it as a kind of being, despite its inclusion of the term '*Sein*'. The situation rhetorically is no different than when he speaks of *Sosein*, *Nichtsein*, *Quasisein*, or *Außersein* as distinct from and independent of *Sein*. It remains open to interpret both Meinong's concepts of implexive being and implexive non-being as kinds or modes of non-being, rather than of being.

This extraontological categorization of implexive being and non-being removes any appearance of inconsistency from Meinong's concept. A beingless object can have both implexive being and implexive non-being by being implected in both existent or subsistent and beingless objects. The two implications are harmless, provided that we do not understand implexive being as a kind of being. The only question is whether such a reading of Meinong's distinction provides a sufficiently metaphysically robust sense of Aristotelian inherence. It is hard to know in the first place how far in the direction of a metaphysically robust realism Aristotle's original doctrine of the inherence of universals in particulars can reasonably be pressed. Where Meinong's concept is concerned, much depends on what we take to be his theory of the relation between an object and its *Sosein*. The two at most assuredly are correlated, but not identical. An object has, but is not identical to its *Sosein*. Not every object is itself an abstract set of constitutive properties. An object is rather the coinstantiation of the constitutive properties abstractly belonging to its identifying and individuating *Sosein*. That there can be a coinstantiation of the constitutive properties in an incomplete object's *Sosein* in the *Sosein* of another complete existent or subsistent object does not seem sufficiently metaphysically robust as an account of the Aristotelian inherence of primary in secondary substances or of universals in particulars. The universal ball is embedded, entwined, or implected in a particular billiard ball as in all other balls, whether existent or nonexistent. *The ball* is *in* the billiard ball, so to speak, even as we look at it, though considered in

[15] Routley 1980, 496. Jacquette 1985–86, 430–8.

itself it is too incomplete to have anything more than implexive 'being' as a kind or mode of non-being, if, for example, it were abstracted from the objects in which it is implected and made to stand on its own.

This is not as metaphysically robust as physical part-whole containment, with which Meinong says implection can only be compared as an analogy, rhetorical trope, or figure of speech. We may not be entirely comfortable with the idea of a 'mereology' that falls short of physical part-whole containment. Meinong may nevertheless have given as adequate an interpretation of the Aristotelian concept of the inherence and real presence of secondary substances or universals in primary substances or concrete particulars as the concept admits. The main difference is that Meinong's theory, while largely Aristotelian in its metaphysics of the instantiation of universals in existent particulars, is more Platonic, and in that sense extraontologically more encompassing, in its inclusion of universals uninstantiated in actually existent particulars. They are the mind- and world-independent, freely assumable incomplete objects, abstractly constituted by all possible predicationally incomplete combinations of constitutive properties. The account at the same time is also more Meinongian, by virtue of allowing the implection of beingless objects in existent and nonexistent objects. All beingless, uninstantiated, as well as existent instantiated universals and particulars, contrary to Aristotle's doctrine, are allowed entrance to Meinong's combined ontological and extraontological referential semantic domain, regardless of whether or not they happen actually to be instantiated as real world entities.

8.5 Objections to Meinong's Jungle

The most common and totally mistaken criticism of Meinong's object theory is that Meinong plants an ontological jungle of metaphysically undesirable objects. We have encountered the metaphor before, concerning which there is still more to be explained and further analogies to be exploited.

Jungles in the popular conception have two conspicuous traits. They are lush and tangled growths of vegetation. The jungle metaphor can be understood in two ways. By accusing Meinong of planting a jungle, a philosopher might mean that Meinongian semantics involves too many intended objects (*too lush a growth*). Here, if as near a complete all-purpose semantics as we can achieve can do without Meinongian incomplete and impossible nonexistent intended objects, as radically extensionalist critics imagine, then Meinong's jungle is theoretically offensive by virtue of violating Ockham's Razor. Or, though not to exclude the first possibility, detractors who charge Meinong with having planted a jungle sometimes reject a semantics of beingless objects, regardless of their cardinality, on the grounds that they are in some sense logically or metaphysically disordered (*too tangled a growth*).

It is not clear who first accused Meinong of planting an ontological jungle. William C. Kneale in *Probability and Induction* (1949) seems to have originated the phrase, when he writes, apparently on behalf of what he perceives to be largescale agreement among philosophers: 'But after a period of wandering in

Meinong's jungle of subsistence. . .philosophers are now agreed that propositions cannot be regarded as ultimate entities, independent alike of facts, sentences, and acts of thinking' (Kneale 1949, 12). In his note 2, on the same page, Kneale then adds: 'The jungle is described in Meinong's book, *Über Annahmen*.' Findlay, in the Preface to the second 1963 edition of *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values*, refers to Kneale, and contrasts what he claims has 'been regarded by some as a bewildering and tangled 'jungle" with what he prefers to think of as resembling 'rather an old formal garden containing some beautiful and difficult mazes' (Findlay 1995, xi). Routley, in *Exploring Meinong's Jungle and Beyond*, speaks, without attributing the expression to anyone in particular, of 'the attitudes which underlie remarks about 'the horrors of Meinong's jungle'.'[16] P.M.S. Hacker, in *Insight and Illusion: Themes in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, similarly maintains, having taking note of Russell's ontic thesis, that: 'The Theory of Descriptions . . .enabled Russell to thin out the luxuriant Meinongian jungle of entities (such as the round square) which, it had appeared, must *in some sense* subsist in order to be talked about. . .' (Hacker 1986, 8). Hacker's criticism is typical of extensionalist detractors who charge Meinong with having planted a jungle in either or both senses of the word. As with most criticisms of Meinong's jungle, Hacker assumes that even incomplete and impossible nonexistent objects must have being in some sense, in order to be referred to, counted, and stand as subjects of true predications. This entirely non-Meinongian assumption has been referred to throughout as the being-predication thesis.

Like most long-standing misinterpretations of Meinong's object theory, the being-predication thesis originates with careless formulations in Russell's influential commentary on Meinong's philosophy. Russell encourages the jungle objection when he describes Meinong's theory as involving a commitment to the 'logical being' of nonexistent objects, without which reference and predication are unthinkable. In *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, Russell writes:

> It is argued, e.g. by Meinong, that we can speak about 'the golden mountain', 'the round square' and so on; we can make true propositions of which these are the subjects; hence they must have some kind of logical being, since otherwise the propositions in which they occur would be meaningless (Russell 1971, 169).[17]

[16] Routley 1980, v. I thank Richard Routley (Sylvan) (posthumously) for directing me toward Kneale as the likely origin of the phrase 'Meinong's jungle'.

[17] Russell's *Introduction* was first published in 1919, after his conversion to radical referential extensionalism. Russell's interpretation of Meinong's object theory as committed to the being-predication thesis begins with his earliest critical commentaries. See Russell 1971, 36: 'The process suggested by Meinong's argument is. . .exceedingly and curiously complicated. First we think of a golden mountain, then we perceive that we are thinking of it; thence, we infer that there is a presentation of a golden mountain, and thence finally that the golden mountain subsists or has Being.' Also 59: 'The immanent object does not exist, according to Meinong, and is therefore no part of the mental state whose object it is; for this mental state exists. Yet, although not part of any mental state, it is supposed to be in some sense psychical. But it cannot be in any way bound up with any particular mental state of which it is the object; for other states, at other times and in other people, may have precisely the same object, since an object or a proposition can be presented or believed more than once. I confess these facts seem to me to show, without more ado, that objects and propositions must always have being. . .'.

Did Meinong plant a jungle? The question has two meanings. We must ask whether Meinong multiplies entities beyond necessity, and whether he is committed to logically or metaphysically disorderly objects. To approach these issues, we must first try to determine whether or not Meinong accepts the being-predication thesis that Russell and some later commentators attribute to him. My answer is that Meinong most definitely did not plant a jungle in either the lush or tangled sense, because he (1) did not accept the being-predication thesis, and (2) preserved order among *irrealia* by allowing nonexistent ideally intended objects into the ontically neutral referential semantic domain only on the same Leibnizian identity conditions required also of existent entities.

In asking whether Meinong planted an ontological jungle, we must resist confusing Meinong's later domain of *außerseinde Gegenstände* with objects that have being in some sense or other, including Russell's concept of 'logical being'. Meinong's ontology is not ontologically inflationary because beingless Meinongian objects, by virtue of their beinglessness, cannot possibly be numbered among the objects that constitute an ontology in the true sense of the word, as a domain exclusively of objects with being. We can have as many beingless Meinongian objects as the semantics of discourse requires, without inflating ontology with unnecessary entities or objects with *being*. The point of a Meinongian semantics is precisely to offer the most natural interpretation of the intentionality of thought in its free direction toward existent and nonexistent, totally beingless objects. Insofar as thought intends putatively beingless objects like the golden mountain and round square, phlogiston, the planet Vulcan, vortices, Pegasus, God and the gods, the reduction of mathematics to logic, and other thought experimental, fictional and impossible intended objects, it does not require that such objects exist, actually or abstractly. They need not in any sense have being, including Russell's ontically thin concept of 'logical' being, however that is finally supposed to be understood. If Meinong had accepted some form of Russell's being-predication thesis, after Meinong had outgrown his temporary theory of *Quasisein*, then object theory would indeed be burdened by an exorbitant *ontology* of subsistent abstract entities. Meinong does nothing of the kind, however. He does not plant an ontological jungle rampant with beingless objects. Rather, he supplements and complements the extensional *ontology* of existent spatiotemporal concrete and subsistent Platonic abstract entities with an ontically neutral *extraontology* that includes beingless incomplete and impossible intended objects beyond being and non-being, as much as it does dynamic and abstract existent intended objects.[18] In 'Über Gegenstandstheorie', a 1904 contribution to his edition of papers on the current

[18] My use of the term 'extraontology' is intended as a direct translation of Meinong's concept of the *Außersein*, denoting a semantic domain of beingless incomplete and impossible objects, which Meinong also speaks of as inhabited in an ontically absolutely neutral way by the pure homeless object beyond being and non-being.

state of object theory, *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie*, Meinong explains:

> Any particular thing that isn't real (*Nichtseiendes*) must at least be capable of serving as the Object for those judgments which grasp its *Nichtsein*. It does not matter whether this *Nichtsein* is necessary or merely factual; nor does it matter in the first case whether the necessity stems from the essence of the Object or whether it stems from aspects which are external to the Object in question. In order to know that there is no round square, I must make a judgment about the round square. . .Those who like paradoxical modes of expression could very well say: 'There are objects of which it is true that there are no such objects.' The fact, familiar the world over, which is meant by this statement throws. . .a bright light on the relation of objects to reality, or their relation to being. . . (Meinong 1904a; *AMG* II, 481–530).

If we can make sense of Meinong's theory of the *Außersein* of the pure object, then nonexistent objects like the golden mountain and Quine's possible fat man in the doorway, together with even more exotic impossible objects like the round square, do not belong to Meinong's ontology, but at most to a Meinongian ontically neutral *ausserseiend* extraontology. For any combination of constitutive properties we may care to specify, there will be, by the Meinongian semantic domain comprehension principle, exactly one object corresponding to each distinct *Sosein* set of constitutive properties. Since the fat man in the doorway is in the doorway, and the numerically distinct bald fat man is in the doorway, along with the standing fat man, sitting fat man, standing bald fat man, sitting bald fat man, and so on, there are, as previously observed, indefinitely many possible nonexistent fat men in the doorway. All of these objects have included within their identifying and individuating *Soseine* the constitutive properties of being fat, a man, and in the doorway, and are in that sense multiple fat men in the doorway. Quine seems to think it must be an embarrassment for any semantic theory to allow so many obese men simultaneously to occupy the same narrow confines. While this implication would be intolerable for existent objects, there is no corresponding conceptual difficulty whatsoever for nonexistent Meinongian objects. This is true, because, despite having the property of being obese objects in the doorway, as nonactual possible objects, they do not compete for coextension of the same real space-time. Similarly for impossible Meinongian objects like the round square fat bald man in the doorway.

The fact that totally beingless Meinongian objects have identifyfing and individuating properties provides reasonable answers to Quine's questions about the logical or metaphysical orderliness or disorderliness of possible nonexistent nonsubsistent objects, with implications for the problem of the identity and individuation of impossible nonexistent nonsubsistent objects. That Quine does not anticipate such a solution suggests that like Russell he may also subcribe and assumes all other semantic theorists must subscribe to the being-predication thesis. It is only if nonexistent objects like the fat man and fat bald man in the doorway cannot be distinguished by virtue of one's having and the other's lacking the property of being bald (a generalization of the same Leibnizian identity principles used in the case of existent actual and subsistent abstract entities), that Quine's rhetorical demand for unsatisfiable identity criteria for nonexistent *possibilia* can have any force. Otherwise, the answer is obvious, and is just the solution Meinong gives in offering his thesis of the ontic neutrality or indifference of pure objects in the *Außersein*, and of the ontic independence of *Sosein* from *Sein*.

If nonexistent nonsubsistent Meinongian objects belong to the extraontology rather than ontology of the Meinongian semantic domain, then, in the strict sense of the word, Meinong in allowing incomplete and impossible nonexistent and nonsubsistent objects cannot rightly be said to have planted a jungle by inflating ontology with explanatorily or otherwise theoretically unnecessary objects. The objects Meinong postulates are in fact strictly needed to account for the intentionality or object-directedness of ordinary and scientific thought and discourse. Beingless objects do not inflate ontology, because they reside instead in the Meinongian semantic domain's extraontology. Meinong obviously does not claim that nonexistent nonsubsistent objects exist or subsist. By denying the being-predication thesis, on the contrary, Meinong allows his semantics to refer to and truly predicate constitutive properties of absolutely beingless objects.

Nor can Meinong's object theory accurately be said to have planted a tangled jungle in the sense of admitting logically or metaphysically disorderly objects into the ontology or extraontology. Beingless Meinongian objects are identified and individuated on the basis of the constitutive properties truly predicated of them as constituting their being-indifferent being-independent natures or so-beings. Meinong's object theory is neither an excessively lush nor tangled semantic jungle.

Beingless objects do not inflate ontology, because they reside instead in the Meinongian referential semantic domain's extraontology. Meinong obviously does not claim that nonexistent objects in any sense exist. We are uncharitably remiss not to give the philosopher more credit than that. Nor can Meinong's object theory correctly be said to have planted a tangled jungle in the sense of admitting logically or metaphysically disorderly objects into the ontology or extraontology. Beingless Meinongian objects are identified and individuated, exactly like existent and subsistent entities, by application of Leibniz's Law. Meinongian objects are identified and individuated intensionally on the basis of the constitutive properties truly, if, in some instances, stipulatively, predicated of them, as constituting their unique being-independent being-indifferent *Soseine*. Meinong's object theory, as a result, is not rightly known as either an excessively lush or tangled ontic or semantic jungle (see also Campbell 1972).

8.6 On Defoliating Meinong's Jungle

> Oh hear the call! — Good hunting all
> That keep the Jungle Law!
> Rudyard Kipling, 'Night-Song in the Jungle'
> *The Jungle Book*, 1894

The distinction between Meinongian ontology and extraontology permits object theory to support an even more parsimonious ontology of existent objects than Russell's later extensionalist theory of entities or 'individuals', including universals (Russell 1912a, Chapter IX, 95–7; Russell 1912b). Or than Quine's extensionalist desert landscape ontology of spatiotemporal entities, supplemented on grounds of indispensability for the applied mathematics of the physical sciences by an attached subdomain of abstract classes and whatever can be made of them (Quine 1953, 12–15, 18).

We can go further in explaining Meinong's ontically neutral semantics of objects. There are two revisionary directions in which the basic principles of Meinong's object theory ontology and extraontology can be developed so as to achieve an absolute minimalist semantic domain for reference and predication in ordinary and scientific discourse. We can extend the principles of Meinongian object theory to show how all abstract entities, including properties (qualities and relations), propositions, sets, numbers, and other mathematical objects, can be eliminated as existent or subsistent entities from a Meinongian domain by shifting them from the ontology to the extraontology. It is argued that Meinong's thesis of implexive being and non-being achieves an extraordinary ordering and reduction, even of the total number of distinct beingless objects that belong to the extraontology.

Once we have admitted the division of a Meinongian semantics into ontology and extraontology, it is a relatively simple matter to propose a principled basis for consigning all abstract subsistent entities from the ontology to the extraontology. Meinong himself does not do this. He prefers to maintain as part of ontology most (though, interestingly, not all) mathematical entities, along with propositions and states of affairs or *Objektive*. The number 1, for instance, strikes Meinong in its conceptual simplicity as a much more basic and complete, and, as such, putatively subsistent, entity (Meinong 1910, 69). Universals, by contrast, as remarked, Meinong consigns to the extraontology as beingless predicationally incomplete objects. For Meinong, the number 1 subsists, but 'the triangle' does not. In a revisionary neo-Meinongian object theory, we can imagine adaptations of Meinong's original theory, in which the ontology is so redefined as to contain all and only actual concrete existent entities, from which *abstracta* of all subdivisions are removed and relegated to a subdomain within the extraontology, along with other incomplete objects, like the golden mountain, alongside impossible nonexistent nonsubsistent objects like the round square.

Even if Meinong's extraontology is lush, provided it remains untangled by clear-cut identity conditions for all ist nonexistent objects, it avoids ontic commitment to the being of entities, for which there is no empirical proof or disproof, including *abstracta*, without relinquishing the advantages of individual reference and true predication of properties to (beingless) abstract objects. These are the kinds of objects that even Russell and Quine plainly would not choose to recognize as entities if they believed they could possibly do without them, but whose being they are required to acknowledge because of their devotion to the extensionalist being-predication thesis, and the need for applied formal principles in the exact sciences. By replacing the Russellian or Quinean extensionalist account of *abstracta* with a Meinongian extraontological subdomain of ontically neutral abstract objects, we eliminate Russell's world of universals and purge Quine's desert landscape of existent abstract classes. Here Meinong appears to lay the groundwork for a more austere ontology than even Quine's most economical extensionalist semantics. The proposal is merely a further development of Meinong's relegation of universals to the extraontology as beingless predicationally incomplete objects, on the basis of Berkeley's and Hume's criticisms of abstract general ideas. We can go still further. In the same revisionary neo-Meinongian spirit in which we consider making the Meinongian ontology even less jungle-like than the ontic domains of Russell and Quine, we can propose a final step that completes the nominalistic move in this

direction. Within a general Meinongian object theory framework, drawing on Meinong's concept of implexive being and non-being, it is possible to advance an absolutely minimalist Meinongian extraontology consisting of only one beingless object, which might be called the *maximally impossible object*.

The concept of implexive being and non-being suggests an obvious strategy for extraontological reduction in Meinongian logic. The beingless objects of the extraontology can be reduced in number and made more orderly if at least some beingless objects are regarded as implected in others. We approach this sort of economy in the miniature by acknowledging the red round square as a beingless object in the extraontology, and interpreting references to the red round (object), round square (object), red square (object), round (object), square (object), and red (object), as implected in the red round square. The idea can then be taken to its logical extreme by introducing the concept of a single beingless object of the Meinongian extraontology in which all other beingless objects are properly implected.

The maximally impossible object is the round square taken to its absolute predicational limit. The maximally impossible object is the beingless object that has in its *Sosein* every metaphysically possible and therefore collectively a maximally metaphysically impossible combination of constitutive properties. It is the nonexistent object that is not only round and square, but golden and a mountain, non-golden and a non-mountain, fat, bald and a man, non-fat, non-bald, a non-man, and so on, for every property and property-complement pair. If the Meinongian extraontology admits the round square, then it must surely admit the maximally impossible object, despite the fact that Meinong nowhere mentions such an object. Meinong's concept of implexive being and non-being implies that the maximally impossible object has implected within it every beingless possible and impossible object. It does so by embedding in its excessively rich *Sosein* the *Sosein* of every other beingless object. It is therefore possible for anyone concerned about the lushness of the revisionary Meinongian extraontology to impose an extraontological reduction on its contents, to reduce the sheer number of beingless possible and impossible objects it contains to just one, the maximally impossible object, in which every other beingless object is properly implected.

From the maximally impossible object, individual reference and true predication of constitutive properties to the beingless objects it implexively contains can be theoretically derived in much the same way that extensionalist semantic ontologists sometimes propose a reduction to and derivation of such entities as properties from sets or propositions, sets from propositions or properties, or properties from sets or propositions, and of some kinds of sets, properties, or propositions from other ontically more primitive kinds of sets, properties, or propositions. The *Sosein* of the round square, and of the golden mountain, the possible fat bald man in the doorway, the universal redness, and so on, and with them their distinguishing identity conditions, are all logically distinguishably properly implected in the *Sosein* of the maximally impossible object. Meinong's concept of implexive being and non-being can thus be used to reduce even the extraontology of beingless objects to the implexive non-being of possible beingless objects in existent (or subsistent, if these are allowed) objects, by virtue of the proper implexive so-being of all beingless objects in the so-being of the maximally impossible object, and of the improper implexive so-being of the maximally impossible object in

itself. The maximally impossible object by this conception just is the coincidence in a single beingless object of every constitutive property and its complement. The Leibnizian identity conditions for all beingless objects, their uniquely individuating *Soseine*, can be defined in terms of selected subsets of constitutive properties and their complements implected in the *Sosein* of the maximally impossible object. The maximally impossible object literally contains within itself the implexive non-being of every beingless incomplete or impossible Meinongian object.

Let us now add some new formalisms to the neo-Meinongian theory of implection. This makes it possible to express the implection of all beingless objects in a single maximally impossible object. We begin by regimenting some working assumptions about the concept of being, featuring equivalences involving the conditions of internal predicational completeness and consistency. As before, an exclamation mark attached to a predicate indicates an extraconstitutive property, and the absence of an exclamation mark indicates a constitutive property.

$$\forall x[Cons!x \leftrightarrow \neg\exists F[Fx \wedge \text{non-}Fx]]$$
$$\forall x[Cons!x \leftrightarrow \neg\exists F[F \in Sosein(x) \wedge \text{non-}F \in Sosein(x)]]$$
$$\forall x[Comp!x \leftrightarrow \forall F[F \in Sosein(x) \vee \text{non-}F \in Sosein(x)]]$$
$$\forall x[Comp!x \leftrightarrow \forall F[Fx \vee \text{non-}Fx]]$$
$$\forall x[Being!x \leftrightarrow [Comp!x \wedge Cons!x]]$$
$$\forall x[Being!x \leftrightarrow \forall F[[Fx \vee \text{ non-}Fx] \wedge \neg[Fx \wedge \text{non-}Fx]]]$$
$$\forall x\big[Being!x \leftrightarrow \big[\forall F[F \in Sosein(x) \vee \text{non-}F \in Sosein(x)]\wedge$$
$$\neg\exists F[F \in Sosein(x) \wedge \text{non-}F \in Sosein(x)]\big]\big]$$
$$\forall x[Being!x \rightarrow Cons!x]$$
$$\forall x[Being!x \rightarrow Comp!x]$$
$$\neg\forall x[Comp!x \rightarrow Being!x]$$
$$\neg\forall x[Cons!x \rightarrow Being!x]$$

It may seem at odds with the possibilities to hold as above that $\forall x[Being!x \leftrightarrow [Comp!x \wedge Cons!x]]$. Can we not imagine an object with all the properties of Napoléon Bonaparte, except that the intended object in question cut himself shaving on the morning of the battle at Austerlitz, whereas in real life Napoléon did not cut himself? (Or the reverse, in case Napoléon did cut himself shaving on that morning in 1805?) Then the imaginary Napoléon would be consistent and complete but not existent. I think the answer is that we can at best pretend to imagine that sort of toggling on or off of a single constitutive property in an existent object's *Sosein*.

The example involves the unmanageable counterfactual of asking whether the completeness and consistency of an existent object can be preserved under the imagined reversal of any characterizing predication to its complement. If there is a cascading effect of Napoléon cutting or not cutting himself on the morning of the battle at Austerlitz, how would we know? How could we tell? If we are driven toward something like Kripkean stipulation for transworld identity of Napoléon-cut and Napoléon-uncut, then we should acknowledge that stipulation is a human cognitive act that is incapable in principle of checking against inconsistency with

the rest of Napoléon's constitutive properties, when it is assumed that the actual Napoléon-uncut might have been cut, or the reverse. We are never in a sound epistemic position to assess all of the consequences of even so little as a single change in the facts of the world no matter how trivial and inessential an alteration it may seem. More importantly, we must consider a significant cascade of changes in such other properties of Napoléon as everything that happens to his skin and general physical condition as a result of the imagined event of his cutting himself while shaving. If Napoléon-uncut in real life did not cut himself shaving on the morning in question, then unlike Napoléon-cut, he will not have a mark on his face so many millimeters from the tips of his nose and pupils of his eyes, from his knees, and so on, for every other point in his own physical anatomy and in relation to every other existent entity in the physical universe. Nor will he have any of the properties that are dated to particular times occurring after cutting his face shaving on exactly that day, and so on. We can partly motivate object theory semantics phenomenologically, but we cannot expect that psychological considerations will decide all of the important logical and metaphysical questions that the theory must address, or to be able to sniff out a predicational contradiction resulting from even the slightest change in any intended object's characterizing so-being. As a result, it does not appear that there are viable counterexamples of this considered type forthcoming against the principle that to have being is equivalent to predicational consistency and completeness.

Now we are ready to define the concept of the maximally impossible object as the object that has in its *Sosein* every constitutive property and the complement of every constitutive property. We consider two alternative definitions that are logically equivalent by the concept of the *Sosein* function:

$$\forall x[Maximp!x \leftrightarrow \forall F[Fx \wedge \text{non-}Fx]]$$
$$\forall x[Maximp!x \leftrightarrow \forall F[F \in Sosein(x) \wedge \text{non-}F \in Sosein(x)]]$$

The *Sosein* function and definitions of the maximally impossible object, together with Leibnizian constitutive intensional property-based identity conditions for Meinongian objects, further imply that there is only one unique maximally impossible object:

$$\forall x \forall y \left[\left[Maximp!x \wedge Maximp!y \right] \rightarrow x = y \right]$$

We can therefore speak of *the* maximally impossible object. It is useful for this purpose to invoke the concept of a Meinongian theory of definite description, previously formalized in Chap. 6:

$$\text{(DDM)}\ \ (\forall F_1 ... \forall F_n[F_1(\iota_m x(F_i x \wedge ... \wedge F_n x) \leftrightarrow \exists x[(F_i x) \wedge ... \wedge F_n x) \wedge \forall y[(F_i y \wedge ... \wedge F_n y) \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge F_1 x]]$$

By comparison, classical Russellian definite description theory requires the extraconstitutive existence or being of the definitely described object to which any predicate truly applies:

$$\text{(DDR)}\ \ \forall F_1 ... \forall F_n [F_1(\iota_r x(F_i x \wedge ... \wedge F_n x)) \leftrightarrow \exists x[[E!x \wedge F_i x] \wedge ... \wedge F_n x] \wedge \forall y[[F_i y \wedge ... \wedge F_n y] \leftrightarrow x = y] \wedge F_1 x]]$$

This allows us to use the Meinongian definite descriptor $\iota_m x$, in contrast with the Russellian $\iota_r x$, to refer more succinctly to the maximally impossible object and formalize in several ways its logical singularity. Here we posit the maximally impossible object as belonging to the Meinongian domain by simple Meinongian quantification, and equivalently by Meinongian description and abstraction:

$$\exists x[\text{Maximp}!\, x]$$
$$\exists x[x = \iota_m Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\exists x[\lambda y[y = \iota_m Maximp!\, y]x]$$

The *Sosein* function and definition of implection, proper implection, and of the maximally impossible object, now enables the logic to represent the implection of every beingless object in the maximally impossible object, and the proper implection of every incomplete object and every beingless object other than the maximally impossible object in the maximally impossible object. Here is a suggestive but by no means exhaustive series of such formalizations:

$$\forall x[Maximp!\, x \leftrightarrow x = \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\forall x[\neg Being!\, x \rightarrow Imp!\, x, \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\forall x[\neg Comp!\, x \rightarrow Pimp!\, x, \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\forall x[[\neg Being!\, x \wedge \neg Maximp!\, x] \rightarrow Imp!x, \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\neg \exists x[\neg Being!\, x \wedge \neg Imp!\, x, \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\neg \exists x[\neg Comp!\, x \wedge \neg Pimp!\, x, \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\neg \exists x[\neg Being!\, x \wedge \neg Maximp!\, x \wedge \neg Imp!x, \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\neg \exists x[Being!\, x \wedge Imp!\, x\, , \iota_m y Maximp!\, y]$$
$$\neg \exists x \forall y[Being!\, x \wedge Pimp!\, x\, , y\,]$$

The latter expressions by the definition of implection and proper implection imply that there is no singularity of beinglessness, but a plurality of beingless objects in neo-Meinongian extraontology. The simplest proof is to consider that by free assumption we have beingless objects that by Leibnizian identity conditions are distinct from or other than the maximally impossible object, so that not every beingless object is strictly identical with, despite being implected in, the

maximally impossible object. Again, we have a variety of ways to express these conclusions:

$$\exists x[\neg Being!\, x \wedge Pimp!x,\iota_m yMaximp!\, y]$$

$$\exists x[\neg Being!\, x \wedge \neg\ Pimp!x,\iota_m yMaximp!\, y,x]$$

$$\exists x[\neg Being!\, x \wedge \neg Maximp!\, x]$$

$$\neg \forall x[\neg Being!\, x \rightarrow Maximp!\, x]$$

$$\exists x \forall y[\neg Being!\, x \wedge Maximp!\, y \wedge x \neq y]$$

$$\neg \exists x[\lambda y[y = \iota_m y \neg Being!\, z]x)$$

$$\neg \forall x[\neg Being!\, x \leftrightarrow x = \iota_m y \neg Being!\, y]$$

$$\exists \mathrm{x}[\mathrm{Pimp}!\, x,\iota_m yMaximp!\, y \wedge \neg Being!\, x]$$

$$\exists x[\neg Being!\, x \wedge x \neq \iota_m yMaximp!\, y]$$

$$\exists x \exists y[\neg Being!\, x \wedge \neg Being!\, y \wedge x \neq y]$$

What, then, about the greater theoretical economy of a neo-Meinongian semantics? There seem to be as many beingless objects as in Meinong's extraontological jungle. We have said that implection and implexive being like implexive non-being should not be understood as a kind or mode of being, but as a kind or mode of non-being.

Extraontological economy is achieved in a neo-Meinongian semantic domain if reference to beingless objects in (the equivalent of the) axioms of the new object theory or reductive metatheory are reduced to just one, the maximally impossible object. We know that there most definitely is only one such beingless object in the object theory domain, and that all other beingless objects are properly implected in it — including all incomplete or impossible, nonexistent Meinongian objects. The beinglessness of all beingless objects implected in the maximally impossible object is confirmed by the set theoretical interpretation of the entwining or embedding of the elements of the *Sosein* set of the constitutive properties of the implected object among the elements of the *Sosein* set of the constitutive properties of the object in which the implected object is implected.

We can derive every beingless object from the singular maximally impossible object in which all are implected. In this sense, as in other ontic reductions in non-Meinongian extensional ontologies, a neo-Meinongian object theory or extraontological metatheory need not acknowledge more than one beingless object in its primitive terms and minimal ontic and extraontic domain commitments as belonging to its extraontology. All other beingless objects are properly implected in it, from which they can all therefore be theoretically derived. An economy results even in an extensional ontology by adopting a version of Aristotle's inherence theory to avoid explicit ontic commitment to the existence or subsistence of

universals, from which they can then be abstracted, or by other ontically reductive strategies. In much the same way, a neo-Meinongian object theory or intensional ontology and extraontology accomplishes an economizing of the extraontology by adopting a version of Meinong's implection theory. It is also though it is somewhat more than, an inherence and inhesion theory. The concepts of implexive being and non-being, as two kinds or modes of non-being, include all beingless objects implected in the singular maximally impossible object from which they can similarly be derived.

It must be emphasized that Meinong ventured no such application of his theory of implexive being, so-being, and non-being. The concepts as he presents them seem nonetheless naturally to lend themselves to this kind of reduction. We can think of the Meinongian semantic domain as divided into two main parts. The ontology consists only of actually existent spatiotemporal entities, a truly desert landscape. The extraontology reductively speaking need consist only of the beingless maximally impossible object, within the so-being of which the so-being of every other beingless object is properly implected. Here, then, is surely no ontological or extraontological lush or tangled jungle. The neo-Meinongian ontology, consisting only of spatiotemporal existents, is more austere and desert-like than even the most economical materially adequate extensional semantic domain, for it does not admit any *abstracta* as existent entities. The neo-Meinongian extraontology is well-ordered by the intensional Leibnizian identity conditions that associate via the domain comprehension principle a unique beingless object with every metaphysically incomplete or impossible set of constitutive properties. Every beingless object is identified and individuated by virtue of its unique combination of constitutive properties or their complements, and every such combination is implected within, and can therefore be derived from, the so-being of the maximally impossible beingless object, the only object that extraontologically primitively or reductively need be considered as belonging to the most austere imaginable neo-Meinongian extraontology.

8.7 Aristotelian Realism and the Parmenidean One in Meinong's Object Theory Logic and Semantics

What of the proper implection of actually existent objects in the maximally impossible object? Meinong does not consider this application of the concept of implection, but it arises irrepressibly on the set theoretical interpretation of implection, even for complete but impossible Meinongian objects other than the maximally impossible object. An illustration is the proper implection of Meinong's friend's billiard ball in the beingless impossible Meinongian object whose *Sosein* includes all of the constitutive properties in the *Sosein* of Meinong's friend's billiard ball plus the complement of at least one of its constitutive properties.

There are two directions in which this implication can be pursued. Meinong does not seriously entertain the possibility that existent objects might be properly implected in nonexistents. This oversight might be explained in part by Meinong's general lack of philosophical interest in predicationally over-determined or complete but impossible objects. If we choose to preserve Meinong's restriction of implective being and non-being to the implection of beingless objects only in existent or predicationally relatively more complete but still nonexistent objects, the red round square being comparatively relevantly predicationally more complete than the round square. We can redefine (proper or improper) implection in this way:

$$\forall x \forall y [Imp!x,y \leftrightarrow [\neg Being!x \wedge Sosein(x) \in Sosein(y)]]$$

The specific definitions of proper and improper implection can remain just as they are formulated above, with correspondingly restricted entailments, determined by the limitation of implection to beingless Meinongian objects. This restricted form of implection reflects a relatively metaphysically robust sense of implexive being, by which the implection of objects with being in any other object is forbidden. As such, the relation is more closely akin to Aristotelian inherence. It might be further justified by the need to distinguish between the implection of objects in other objects and the mereological physical containment of existent parts in existent wholes.[19]

If it is judged philosophically more correct to recognize implection as obtaining wherever the *Sosein* set of constitutive properties of an object, regardless of its ontic status, is contained in the *Sosein* set of an object, regardless of its ontic status, then we can preserve the original unrevised definition of implection. To do so is to permit the proper implection of existent objects in beingless overdetermined or predicationally complete but impossible Meinongian objects, including the maximally impossible object. This ontically unrestricted form of Meinongian implection is not nearly as metaphysically robust as the ontically restricted concept in its similarity to Aristotelian inherence. It leads directly to a Meinongian version of Parmenideanism, by which the phenomenal world of physical or material spatio-temporal objects is implected in the maximally impossible object as an all-absorbing One. Here we have implection as a purely abstract logical or set

[19] See Simons 1991. In Section 5 on 'Implexive Containment', 294–6, Simons argues that Meinongian implection of incomplete objects in existents or subsistents has all the formal properties of mereological containment, provided that the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction is enforced, but is not itself a genuine mereological part-whole relation. Simons' example involves the existence of the proper parts of George Washington and the nonexistence but only implected existence of George Washington's implexive parts. The problem is clearly related to Meinong's discussion of the relative degrees of possibility of instantiation of a Goethe or Beethoven. Here we must distinguish between Goethe and Beethoven on the one hand, and whatever subset of the *Sosein* set of constitutive properties of these persons might be thought sufficient to instantiate an instance of a Goethe or a Beethoven. It is not immediately clear how this

theoretical relation, without ontic implications, in which the existent, actual and abstract, objects are properly implected in certain beingless objects, and fully reductively in the One maximally impossible object.[20]

Parmenides, as the fragments suggest, believes that the phenomenal world is nonexistent because of its ephemeral ever-changing fluxlike nature. This idealist conception can be accommodated in the ontically unrestricted formulation of Meinong's concept of implexive being and non-being. We might appeal for such a conclusion to the essential predicational incompleteness of physical objects implied by the indeterminacy thesis in quantum physics. If spatiotemporal objects at the microphysical level consist of quanta that necessarily lack either determinate position or determinate momentum or velocity, then all of what we are accustomed to think of as existent physical reality by Meinong's theory of beingless incomplete objects is actually nonexistent.[21] If 'existent' spatiotemporal or physical 'reality', consisting of the entities we regard as constituting the furniture of the universe, is predicationally incomplete and hence nonexistent, as Parmenides for different but related reasons also taught, then all beingless objects of the phenomenal world are properly implected in a single beingless object, the maximally impossible object, as the Meinongian-Parmenidean One.

The philosophical success of Meinong's object theory is seen in its fundamental ontic neutrality as the semantics of all possible thought and expression. Providing the semantics for such opposite metaphysics of the phenomenal world as those of Parmenides and Aristotle is the most demanding test of the ontic neutrality of Meinong's object theory. Through its concept of implexive being and non-being, Meinong's theory makes possible by means of special provision among many other items in a spectrum of possibilities, both the formulation of a Parmenidean notion of the nonexistence of the phenomenal world and the collection of all that is thinkable into an all-embracing One, and of the Aristotelian thesis of the phenomenal world as the only reality, consisting of primary substances or discrete existent physical entities and their inherent ontically dependent secondary substances. We should expect Meinong's object theory to provide the semantics for these among many other correct or incorrect metaphysical systems, and we should be prepared to criticize Meinong's object theory it if it does not.

It might yet appear too remarkable, if Meinong's Brentanian Aristotelianism as a methodological superstructure built on ontically neutral object theory foundations,

might be done, except by nominal stipulation of a set of essential properties that fall short of the complete *haecceity* or individuating essence of Goethe himself or Beethoven himself. For other incomplete but not impossible objects like the golden mountain or Pegasus, there is no clearcut basis by which to regard such objects as something more individual and less universal than such standard examples of universals as the ideal state or the color blue.

[20] The beingless maximally impossible object as the Meinongian One is in other ways obviously quite different from the Parmenidean concept of the One interpreted as the only Reality.

[21] Heisenberg 1930, 1959. Forrest 1988, especially 25–45, 102–22. An elegant formal description implying the predicational incompleteness of quantum phenomena in terms of probability *t*-cones is given by van Fraassen 1991, 51–3. See Mehra 1974, 107–16. Also Chapter 16 in the present volume.

taken to its logical extreme, leads back to Parmenides by way of the empiricist epistemic limitations embodied in the indeterminacy principle of modern quantum physics to a metaphysics of the (beingless) One and the world of empirical phenomena as nonexistent because fundamentally predicationally incomplete? Meinong avoids such inferences in the metaphysics he superimposes on his ontically neutral object theory only by refusing to recognize the implection of any existent or subsistent objects in other existent, subsistent, or beingless objects. We can express Meinong's implicit stipulation formally as proposed by means of a restriction on the *Sosein* set theoretical interpretation of implection, allowing only beingless objects to be implected in other objects. However mad or intellectually objectionable we may find Parmenidean idealism as opposed to Aristotelian realism, it is a sign of the ontic neutrality of Meinong's object theory semantics, as the most general theory of meaning, that it provides an absolutely ontically noncommittal semantic foundation, explaining the meaning, providing the most exact intensionally sensitive interpretation, for the most diverse conceptions of metaphysics, by means of its logical category of the extraontology, and the distinction between implexive being and non-being.

Chapter 9
About Nothing

Here Mrs Mac Stinger paused, and drawing herself up, and inflating her bosom with a long breath, said, in allusion to the victim, 'My usband, Cap'en Cuttle!'

The abject Bunsby looked neither to the right nor to the left, nor at his bride, nor at his friend, but straight before him at nothing.

—*Charles Dickens,* Dealings With the Firm of Dombey and Son, Wholesale, Retail and for Exportation 2002 [1848], Chap. LX, 'Chiefly Matrimonial', 923

9.1 Intentionality

If the logical form of established grammatical usage is any key to understanding the intended objects of thought and language, then, nonparadoxically, *nothing* is *something* a thought can be *about*. A thinking subject can think about nothing or nothingness as an intended object, and in so doing make nothing(ness) an intended object of exactly those thoughts.

Thinking about nothing in this sense is very different from not thinking at all. If I am thinking about nothing, then I am thinking rather than not thinking. If I receive the answer 'Nothing' to the heedless question, 'What will I think about when I am dead?', then the intention should not be understood to say that after I am dead I will contemplate the concept of nothing(ness), but rather that I will then have ceased to exist, and will not be engaged in thinking or any other activity of any kind, even if my body should happen to persist for a certain time thereafter.[1]

Thinking of nothing in the negative sense of simply not thinking is very different from the positive sense of actually thinking in real time about nothing or about the concept of nothingness. It is also very different from thinking about nothing as the absence of some particular thing or kind of thing. If I reflect on there existing nothing in my bank account, this is not to encounter nothing or the concept of nothingness as an intended object of thought. Although, again, thinking about the fact that there is nothing in my bank account is manifestly different than not

[1] Epicurus, *Epistle to Menoeceus*, paragraph 3. Wittgenstein 1922, 6.431–6.4311; 6.4311: '*Der Tod ist kein Ereignis des Lebens. Den Tod erlebt man nicht*.'

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_9

thinking about my bank account, or not thinking about anything in particular, or in the extreme case not thinking at all, as when I am cognitively disabled. Such predications can be handled by means of negative existentials in classical predicate-quantificational semantics, as asserting, $\neg\exists x\forall y[[Money(x) \wedge My\text{-}Bank\text{-}Account(y)] \rightarrow In(x,y)]$. This is not to think or speak of *nothing(ness)*. No such predicate appears. Rather, the intended object is my bank account, of which is predicated the lamentable relational property of not containing any money. Many cases can be similarly handled, but importantly not all facts involving a subject thinking about nothing or the concept of nothingness can be analyzed away by means of negative existentials.[2]

9.2 Thinking About Nothing(ness)

To think *of* nothing, in one of its obvious but philosophically less interesting meanings, is, equally, either not to think, or to think, but about nothing in particular or nothing of moment, or perhaps nothing that can even almost immediately afterward be recalled, or that the thinker is willing to share.

What, then, does 'nothing' mean in speaking of 'nothing in particular', as the right answer to certain questions, if there is no available particular predicate F of which truthfully to say, $\neg\exists xFx$? Or is ostensibly speaking of 'nothing' or 'nothing in particular' a mere turn of phrase that should be eliminated from logically more circumspect expression, by virtue of a kind of formal reduction of 'nothing' or 'nothing in particular' to the nonexistence of a particular kind of something (F)? What form could such an eliminative reduction of putative reference to nothing in particular to the nonexistence of something in particular be expected to take? Where does property F come from all of a sudden? Are we meant in that case to interpret 'F' as a predicate variable to be instantiated in principle by any otherwise appropriate property, rather than a particular property? Even if we look at things in the most generous way, we appear committed in an extensionalist semantics to the implication that thinking of nothing or nothingness can only be understood as not thinking about something in particular other than nothing or nothingness as distinct intended objects.

The alternative considered in the discussion to follow is to make nothing or nothingness N (hereafter, abbreviating N-nothing(ness)) the specific intended object of some thoughts. This means that N is an intended object, and in particular that it is the nothing we may think about that is interpreted in the neo-Meinongian analysis

[2] Quinean paraphrastic analysis techniques are imagined to eliminate ostensible references to N-nothing(ness) as something positive, an intendable object in its own right, in favor of negative existentials. The idea would be that instead of saying that we are thinking about N-nothing(ness), there is instead nothing of a certain description or answering to a certain distinguishing constitutive property or set of constitutive properties of which we are thinking. Similar applications are piloted for different purposes by Quine, especially in 1980b. See Pagin 2003.

to follow as the property of nothingness. The force and content of such thoughts are not paraphrastically eliminated without vital loss of meaning by negative existential predications to properties other than *N*. We can say that a thought is about nothing or nothingness, as in the case of thinking literally about nothing in particular, or thinking about what Jean-Paul Sartre in his (1956 [1943]) existential phenomenological treatise, *Being and Nothingness* (*L'Être et le Néant: Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*), seems to have meant by his concept of nothingness (*néant*). We can wonder why there is something rather than nothing, and make countless other applications referring to what we shall soon argue is the intended object constitutive property *N*, from the most seriously intended to Dickens's comic observation of the nuptially victimized Bunsby, even in trying to understand what is meant figuratively by ostensible reference to nothing or nothingness as a literary device.[3]

What about Dickens's bamboozled Bunsby? Can a person literally look at *nothing*, or is this rhetorical excess? What is there to look at? Or is the point supposed to be that where Bunsby once thought he had a future to enter, there is now nothing or nothing in particular to expect, the sudden unexpected nonexistence of anything good, rewarding or personally satisfying to him, has disappeared with the shrinking of his personhood in the recent unhappily wedded state into which he has been psychologically but otherwise to him unaccountably railroaded? Maybe something like that. Bunsby, seeing no future or anything immediately around him, could equally be eliminatively reductively expressed as, $\neg\exists x Can(Sbx)$. After all, it is not as though Bunsby can (*Can*) literally see nothing or nothingness, *N*, $\exists x[Nx \wedge Can(Sbx)]$, as a naive reading of Dickens's droll description might suggest. There is in that case supposedly nothing there to see. How, then, is it conceivable to think about nothing or nothingness in the abstract, as a concept arrived at through a chain of reasoning, rather than by reflecting later on any occurrent moments of perception?

Bunsby also cannot see anything if he is blind, but this would be a markedly different situation than Dickens describes. Bunsby is not blind, but comically going through some kind of cognitive shock, an externalized denial of unbearable facts. He is paralyzed by the enormity of his plight and its immediate realization, to the point of experiencing a kind of sensory stupor. While his senses may be functioning properly neurophysiologically in and of themselves, there remains a neurological disconnection between their information intake and Bunsby's state of awareness, as his consciousness at least temporarily suffers a kind of disintegration. From this standpoint, poor Bunsby, as Dickens portrays his alienated condition, is hopelessly enveloped in, and, metaphorically speaking, can only perceive, the miserable nothingness before him, of the wedded state he has just unaccountably entered. The future in particular has become an impenetrable void, and there is nothing positive there for him to discern, even when he tries now as before to let hope run wild. Everything is instead a terrible blank, from which all former value such as it was has been suddenly and mystifyingly leached. It has somehow come to pass that

[3] Sartre 1956 [1943]. Dickens 2002 [1848].

he has tied the knot with Mrs. Mac Stinger, and he is numb with bewilderment as to how it all occurred, and what the dreary path must hold that now lies inescapably before him. Accordingly, in Dickens's image, he sees *nothing*.

This is not yet to think or speak of nothingness as an intended object of thought. At most it is to signal that a thought or string of thoughts does not have an intended object capable of being designated as worth mentioning. Compare the teenager's answer 'Nothing' to a parent's question, 'What did you do in school today?' Or to the potentially more urgent: 'What is wrong, dear?' Or the merely curious: 'What did you bring me from Hokkaido?' 'What are you holding in your hand?' 'What are you going to do with that letter?' We shall need to say something more positive about *N* if we are going to make a plausible argument about *N*-nothing(ness) as a semantically peculiar intendable object of thought.

9.3 Intentionality and a Strong Intentionality Thesis

To proceed, we consider the logical implications of a strong Intentionality Thesis (IT), meant to be similar in spirit to that already discussed in Brentano and Meinong, accepted and applied by others of their schools:

> (IT) INTENTIONALITY THESIS:
> Every thought intends a first-person (internal to the thoughts of the thinking subject) transparently ostensible object, directly transcribable from the grammatical structure of the thought's linguistic expression as what the thought is about.

If (IT) is true, then the proposition is false that we can think about nothing in the sense of entertaining a thought that by implication fails to intend any object. We can therefore concentrate, for purposes of the present inquiry, on the remaining alternative that, if (IT) is true, then we can think about nothing in the sense of entertaining a thought that is about an appropriate concept of nothing or nothingness, to be designated by a limiting-case predicate '*N*', like zero or the null set, representing more generally in semantics the property defined more exactly below of being or having *N*-nothing(ness).[4]

[4] An independent ahistorical revival of intentionality theory is offered by Searle 1983. The priority of the intentionality of thought over language or of language over thought is discussed by Brentano scholar and intentionality champion Chisholm with Sellars in Chisholm 1958. Battlelines dividing mind-body reductive physicalism from proponents of the conceptually irreducible intentionality of thought are already drawn by Chisholm's dilemma for reductive explanations of psychological phenomena in Chisholm 1957. Chisholm's dilemma is that in order to avoid conspicuous explanatory inadequacy a purported reduction must ultimately depend in general terms upon an ineliminable concept of intentionality, and on astronomical numbers of distinct individual intentionalities as abstract relations between thoughts and symbols, for thoughts and their intended objects, existent and nonexistent, or considered in an ontically neutral or agnostic way. The challenge is for any reductivist to explain or explain away the intentionality of thought in the events of consciousness without appeal to any intentional concepts. For all its argumentative force, it is genteelly left as an open question whether the concept of intentionality can be eliminated or

When the above interpretations and eliminative paraphrases are exhausted, we are encouraged to consider the possibility that we might be able to think about *N* as an unusual but still intendable object, in every other respect like any existent dynamic or abstract intended object. If we do consider such thoughts as intending nothing or nothingness, then *N* is an intendable object of thought like any other, and is at the same time pure intendability. To think about *N*, about nothing or nothingness on the proposed interpretation, is univocally to intend a specific intended object, and in that instance and in that technical sense to think about what is after all something. In this instance, it is in particular to think about nothing or nothingness, and thereby to make nothing or nothingness the intended object of exactly those thoughts. It is to do so, even though that 'something' which is thought about is precisely *nothing*, and logically and conceptually cannot possibly exist.[5]

As soon as we fasten upon a reasonable conceptualization of nothing or nothingness, as these intended objects and concepts function in everyday and philosophical thinking, we are unable to deny that nothing or nothingness is the intended object of those thoughts in which its accepted definition is considered, even if the definition is finally rejected. Individual nonexistents can be collected under a universal generalization, as the nonexistent *F*'s, *G*'s, etc. They will comprise all the individual possible nonexistences of this and that, unicorns and centaurs, finally amounting in extensional union to all and only nothing or nothingness. There then further follows the tolerable consequence that only existent entities *are* something, permissible intended objects of thought, ultimately anything of which we can think or to which we can truly or falsely predicate properties. None of this so far provides a concept of nothingness, which would then be a matter entirely of its properties, the existence or nonexistence of which in turn should not be prejudged.

If thoughts generally intend objects, and if some thoughts are ostensibly about nothing, what is it to think about nothing or about nothingness? Anyone with a normally seasoned cognitive and linguistic capability is potentially able to think about the concept of nothing or nothingness, and so make nothing or nothingness the intended objects of those thoughts. What follows in a neo-Meinongian object theory if nothing or nothingness is an intended object of some thoughts, as are other properties such as red or redness when we think about them?[6]

reduced away from future more rigorous scientific explanations of adequately described psychological occurrences. An extraordinarily heavy burden of proof in the process is unmistakably shifted to the reductivist side to explain, if it can, how the intentionality of thought by which references to intended objects and decisions to act to bring about intended states of affairs, are analyzable exclusively in terms of purely non- or extra-intentional concepts. Intentionalists continue to wait for what is repeatedly trumpeted as the future direction of reductive scientific psychology to replace so-called 'folk' psychology, apparently as an article of faith based on deeper but unsupported metaphysical commitments, of which no conspicuous sign has so far been seen in the marketplace of ideas.

[5] See Jacquette 2009a, b.

[6] See Jacquette 2011d. Jacquette 2013b.

9.4 Advantageous Semantic Resources of Intensional Logic

If we limit ourselves to classical symbolic logic, with an extensionally interpreted semantics, then we cannot correctly interpret, 'Jean-Paul Sartre (s) proposes an existentialist phenomenological ontology (P) of nothingness (N)', purely in terms of the existential quantifier, as the formula stating:

$$\exists x[Ps(Nx)]$$

The construction extensionally implies $\exists x[Nx]$, which is formally to say that nothing or nothingness exists! It cannot be that easy, or that logically, semantically, and especially ontically hazardous, to explicate the meaning conditions of thoughts and their expressions ostensibly about nothing. More, it cannot be that easy to refute Sartre out of mouth. Whether or not nothingness is potentially an intended object of thought, we do not want to be cornered into admitting that nothing, by virtue of supporting certain true or false predications, is an *existent* object in a classical extensionalist referential semantic domain. Such conflicting expectations might properly lead us from the familiar constraints of classical extensionalist existence-presuppositional logic to something more metaphysically intentionalist and semantically intensionalist, and in that sense ontically neutral, in the full range of true predications and 'existential' quantifications it supports.

Nor do the problems of using only standardly understood quantifiers to express thinking about nothingness as an intended object end here. If we introduce a qualitative predicate 'T' for 'thought', and a relational predicate 'I' for 'intending' ('being about') something, then in classical extensional logic we cannot correctly symbolize thinking about nothing or nothingness as:

$$\exists x \neg \exists y[Tx \wedge Ixy]$$

This is unacceptable, because it states that there exists a thought that is not about anything and intends no existing intended object. This places the symbolization immediately outside the present investigation, by flatly contradicting (IT). (IT) might finally be false and destined for the scrap heap, but to show this will take more work than merely formalizing the proposition that there exists a thought that is not about any, and as such intends no, existing object.

The reasons are: (1) The fact that nothing or nothingness is not an existing intended object is not yet enough to single out the specific intended object of thoughts about nothing or nothingness. (2) Proponents often admit and even celebrate the supposed fact that (IT) implies that some thoughts are about or intend nonexistent objects. (3) Merely to advance the above sentence blatantly begs the question against (IT), and as such cannot be construed as implying anything more than a standoff with the intentionality thesis, a collision of opposing slogans.

(IT), which can be formalized as $\forall x \exists y[Tx \rightarrow Ixy]$, is true in that case iff $\exists x \neg \exists y[Tx \wedge Ixy]$ is false, without providing an independent reason for supposing

that $\exists x \neg \exists y[Tx \wedge Ixy]$, other than the intuition and expectation that (IT) is true. Nor can we express the proposition that the dead think of nothing in the negative existential quantifier rather than intentional sense, if we assume that the dead have no thoughts, $\forall x[Dx \rightarrow \neg \exists y[[Ty \wedge Thinks(x, y)] \rightarrow \exists z Iyz]]$. This latter proposition is true on the reasonable assumption that the dead do not think at all. The truth, if such it is, nevertheless does not unlock any secrets or encode any insights concerning the logical structure of living thoughts that are about *N*-nothing(ness) as an intended object.

A thinker thinks about *N* as an intended object in reflecting, for example, on whether there might have been nothing or nothingness, rather than something physical, material, dynamic, or spatiotemporal existing in the world. *N*-nothing (ness), as such, is never more than an intended object of thought, since it is, after all, literally nothing. It would appear that nothing prevents us from thinking about nothing, just as we may think about other intended objects of abstract philosophical or mathematical interest. Nothing in the general semantic conceptual and ontic economy on such a conception is like zero or the null set in arithmetic and set theory.[7]

When we think and speak ostensibly about nothingness, we relate ourselves in thought to a curious assortment of intended objects, of things that thought is free to think about. As we have emphasized, there is a sharp, formally representable logical, semantic, and ontic difference between a thought being about nothing or nothingness, as opposed to not being about anything. The intentionality of thinking about nothingness is reflected in the intensionality of corresponding constructions, for which classical quantifier duality is denied on the strength of (IT), proceeding from the above problematic logical formalization:

$$\exists x \neg \exists y[Tx \wedge Ixy] \leftrightarrow \exists x \forall y[Tx \rightarrow Ixy]$$

Even if we are inclined to accept the proposition on the left of the equivalence, that a thought can be about something nonexistent, as compatible with (IT), there is no doubt that the formula on the right, that there exists a thought that is not about anything, logically contradicts (IT). If, indeed, we accept (IT), even if only for the sake of argument, then we have examples of thoughts that are about nothing or nothingness as an intended object ready to hand:

(T1): This thought (T1) is about *N*-nothing(ness).
(T2): Some other thought (TN ($\neq$2)) is about *N*-nothing(ness).

Neither (T1) nor (T2) need be true in order to harvest thoughts about nothingness as an intended object in applications of (IT). All we need identify conditionally, and hence for inclusion in the logic's referential semantic domain, is a thinking subject

[7] Kaplan 2000. Among other useful sources on the history and role of the null set in contemporary set theory, see Conway and Guy 1996; Mendelson 1997; Tiles 2012.

having entertained the thought that a thought could be about *N*, in order to establish that in some sense thought can intend *N*.

What we need, then, in light of the abject failure of classical quantifier logic to express the possibility that a thought might be about nothingness as an intended object, is a special predicate. The symbolic predicate '*N*' for being or having the constitutive property *N*-nothing(ness) further enables us to say:

$$\exists x \exists y [Tx \wedge Ny \wedge Ixy]$$

This elegant formula may have something to recommend it, if only we can make sense of the deductively valid implication that:

$$\exists x [Nx]$$

Classically, the proposition asserts that there *is* something that has the property of being or instantiating property *N*. Extensional semantics for the predicate '*N*' show it no favoritism, but requires that there *exist* something that has the property of being *N*. So quickly and effortlessly do individually reasonable assumptions reach a logical impasse. What are logic and the commonsense interpretation of meaning supposed to conclude about the apparent reference of thought and language to nothingness, which we have designated *N*? What could it mean to think about and in other ways derivatively to intend and hence to refer to nothing or nothingness? If '*N*' is a predicate, then what is its extension? It cannot be intensionally identified by virtue of its null extension alone, for it is not the only null extension predicate, as witness 'unicorn', 'centaur' and 'flying horse', 'the gods', 'phlogiston', 'vortices', 'ideal lever', 'ideal fulcrum', 'ideal gas', 'projectile moving without impending forces', and uncounted others.

9.5 Intentionality and Intensional Logic

If we can think about nothing or nothingness as an intended object, as might be argued both on linguistic and phenomenological grounds, then, as previously observed, we shall require a designated predicate like '*N*' for the concept. The only way to restore classical quantifier duality compatibly with (IT) is by adopting an ontically neutral interpretation of the quantifiers and allowing nonexistent objects into a referential domain that subsumes but exceeds the logic's ontology. For this purpose, we shall require an intensional object theory predicate logic whose nonlogical terms and well-formed formulas are interpreted by a referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects that far outstrips its ontology.

The idea of there being an intension for predicate '*N*', the motivation for thinking it might be possible to rigorously define the property of being nothing or nothingness, is not yet an occasion to rejoice. Before we propose a definition or conceptual analysis of *N*-nothing(ness), we must first answer some of the most

obvious objections to the enterprise. Can we reconcile ourselves to speaking of the set of all nothings or nothingnesses? The dilemma is that either predicate '*N*' is instantiated by an intended object in the ontically neutral referential semantic domain of extraontology, or not. If it is, then there *is*, in at least a referential ontically neutral sense, *something* that is or has the property of being nothing or nothingness. If not, then there is *nothing* to which thought can refer, which is not the same as referring to nothing or nothingness. In that case, it becomes impossible on the assumption after all to think about or otherwise intend the property of *N*-nothing (ness) as we think we can the property of *R*-red(ness).

To say that nothing belongs to the intension of predicate '*N*', $\neg\exists x[Nx]$, in effect, that nothing nothings, in the ontically neutral quantifier logic, prevents thought from taking nothing or nothingness as an intended object of such intentional states and propositional attitudes as that of doubt, imagination, consideration, wonder, inference, comparison, and a host of others. If we are to make sense of the proposal that we can think about nothing or nothingness, even if only ever so thinly, as when we doubt that nothing or nothingness can logically be an intended object of thought, then we must be prepared to accept as true the proposition that:

$$\exists x[Nx \wedge \neg E!x]$$

Evidently, we cannot go so far as to assert the following reductive analysis of the *N* predicate by means of the material equivalence:

$$\forall x[Nx \leftrightarrow \neg E!x]$$

If an intended object in the referential semantic domain of existents and nonexistents is *N*, then it does not exist. The converse is not intuitively true, if, as seems correct to say, if something does not exist, then it is nothing. If unicorns do not exist and flying horses do not exist, it does not follow deductively that unicorns having the constitutive property $N =$ flying horses having the property *N*.

We cannot validly draw generalizations concerning the concept of *N*, if, like Sartre, we are interested in the phenomenology of nothingness, by considering specifically the unexemplified concepts of being a unicorn and being a flying horse. On the proposed object theory explanation of property *N*, Sartre can only be making things up to say about the concept of nothingness, for there is no nature, essence, or analysis to be given of *N*, beyond the thinnest of identity conditions for *N* to be an intendable object of thought, as self-identical, identical to *N*. This is not to prevent Sartre from saying many interesting things, especially in his phenomenology of nothingness, in connection with and concerning the state of mind of those thinkers who intend *N*. There is nothing at all to say about *N* as the intended object of any such thoughts, for it is, after all, nothing. There may nevertheless be much to say about the thoughts and thinkers themselves, and this is what Sartre on reflection seems to offer as thoughts about being and nothingness, typified by such phenomena as presence in absence. It is of necessity a book about what thinkers might think in thinking about nothingness, rather than about nothingness itself as a properly

intended nonexistent object of thought, concerning which unsurprisingly there can be nothing more substantive to say.

9.6 Intendability as a Constitutive Property of Intended Objects

It should be obvious that the property *N* of being, having, exemplifying or instantiating nothing(ness) in a Meinongian environment is equivalent to, and actually an abbreviation in linguistic expression for nothing-more-than-something-intendable, or nothing-more-than-an-intendable-object. In that appropriately paradoxical-sounding phrase, neo-Meinongian nothing(ness) is understood like the category of something, except that whereas some somethings exist, there is only one nothing and it does not exist. This is not an effort at obscurity, but a literal statement of implication from the modest assumptions being considered. It would, could and should be argued that there is the need for some such concept or category in a complete Meinongian object theory logic and semantics, making the only interesting first question whether or not such a concept or category deserves being called nothing, nothing(ness) or *N*. Property *N* in Meinong's intentionalist non-Fregean (Frege would likely say psychologistic) semantics is also the name of the intended object nothing(ness), which is to say of nothing in the only sense in which the proposed extension of Meinongian object theory can or needs to recognize it. Properties or concepts though unsaturated functions are also intended objects, as even Frege allows in a qualified sense, and the suggestion here is that when we think or speak of nothing as an intended object, *N*, we are thinking or speaking of nothingness. The property is construed here as that of being nothing and interpreted in neo-Meinongian object theoretical terms as (superveniently, extraconstitutive) nonexistent bare naked intendability or of being nothing other than an intendable object. That is the analysis in a nutshell, but why should anyone other than its doting designer want to accept it or even lend it serious consideration?

Terminological choices are never trivial or innocent, and it is important to have good reasons for potentially philosophically loaded nomenclatures. The rationale here for calling nothing(ness), nothing-more-than-something-intendable or nothing-more-than-an-intendable-object, is that we must be able to speak of objecthood in Meinongian object theory, and hence in minimalist terms of an intended object that has no other properties than being intendable. The point of rehearsing many different contexts in which philosophers and other language users deploy the word 'nothing' and 'nothingness' is to show that in such applications discourse putatively about nothing or nothingness amounts to referring to something manifestly intendable but nothing more. If *N*-nothing(ness) were *not* intendable, then language users could not even ostensibly be thinking of or referring to it, contrary to established grammatical usage, interpreted as a Meinongian semantics approaches at face value the meaning of all other colloquial discourse. It would be

objectionably draconian to eliminate discourse ostensibly about nothing or nothingness as meaningless on the grounds that it cannot be otherwise explained. If you think about nothing(ness), or we can say more cautiously, if it is possible to think about nothing(ness), then you are or it is possible to be thinking only of bare naked nonexistent objecthood.

Being intendable or intendability can therefore not be eliminated from *N*-nothing(ness)'s *Sosein*, if it is to be considered something nonexistent about which we can think and refer to in a Meinongian semantic domain. We can also speak instead of nonexistent objecthood on all such occasions, and the coincidence of these concepts in a Meinongian framework has been remarked. This does not make nothing(ness) the same as being an object, because being an object leaves open the possibility that the object based on the totality of its *Sosein* constitutive property set exists or does not exist, whereas *N*-nothing(ness), this property so defined taken as intended object of thought, definitely does not exist. The reason why *N*-nothing(ness) does not exist is once again that its *Sosein* is incomplete although consistent, in Meinong's sense, containing nothing but the constitutive property of being intendable. The explanation works only if (but not necessarily if) the property of being intendable is constitutive in a preferred neo-Meinongian logic and semantics, a question reserved for discussion below.

We can intend nothing(ness) in this sense, as we have throughout the essay. It is, moreover, a clear rather than vague intention, if we can clearly state identity conditions for the intended object, as the present discussion proposes to have done. The logical and metaphysical perspective of the theory is that whenever we speak of nothing, as we frequently do, in ordinary and scientific discourse, we are in fact referring to the one and only intended object with the one and only property of having no other properties than being intendable, on which its nonexistence supervenes and is immediately implied. It is the concept of a minimal intended object, an object with nothing more to distinguish it from other objects than the fact that it has no other constitutive properties than being an intendable object, whereas all other objects have at least one other mutually distinguishing constitutive property. If this is not an appropriate terminological decision, then the challenge is for the critic to provide a more plausible interpretation of discourse ostensibly about nothing.

There are nevertheless interesting questions about the property status of *N*-nothing(ness). It has been introduced as a constitutive property, and this is certain to seem controversial for a number of reasons. The choices here seem relatively limited, and the categorization of *N*-nothing(ness) as intendable and nothing more, as having objecthood and nothing more, is supposed to serve as supervenience base for the extraconstitutive property of not existing. Certainly nothing can exist if as an intendable object it has no other distinguishing constitutive characterizing or identity-conditional properties.

We cannot say *N*-nothing(ness) $= \{\}$ or $= \varnothing$, the null set. The null set is an existent abstract object, at least according to a default realist philosophical ontology of mathematical entities, with all kinds of further constitutive properties studied in set theory. The null set is not merely intendable and nothing else. There is plenty else where the null set is concerned. Can we then say that the *Sosein* of *N*-nothing

(ness) = ∅? This is not an attractive interpretation, because it says that *N*-nothing (ness) has no *Sosein*, that there are no constitutive properties by which *N*-nothing (ness) can be distinguished from any other objects by virtue of satisfying any positive identity conditions. The implications then would need to be either that Meinong's independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* for all intendable objects thesis would need to be rejected and qualified, involving a leap into unknown and conspicuously non-Meinongian territory, or it would need to be said that *N*-nothing(ness) is not a Meinongian intendable object. The present investigation is obviously exploring the phenomenological and linguistic data suggesting that *N*-nothing(ness) in a variety of forms is an intended nonexistent object, and *qua* Meinongian, the inquiry does not want to step away from Meinong's signature independence thesis that every thought intends an object and every intended object has a distinguishing, characterizing Leibnizian intensional so-being of constitutive properties. These considerations point toward the rejection also of the interpretation of *N*-nothing(ness) whereby the *Sosein*(*N*-nothing(ness)) = ∅.

To follow Meinong's lead historically and philosophically on this principal question, it seems we must consider that although *N*-nothing(ness) does not exist, it is not itself nor is its *Sosein* as intended object of thought simply null. There is at least one constitutive property by which *N*-nothing(ness) is made secure in its identity conditions as a specific intended object, and distinguished thereby from every other object with which *N*-nothing(ness) also shares the property as common to any and every intendable object. What can it be except the property of being intendable, and, in the case of *N*-nothing(ness), *nothing* else? We cannot deny that *N*-nothing(ness), nothing and nothingness as it is thought about and spoken of in everyday and scientific and philosophical theoretical and heuristic discourse, is intendable, without denying that it is thought about and spoken of, assuming these wordings to imply that *N*-nothing(ness) is sometimes intended.

We have already seen that the *Sosein*(*N*-nothing(ness)) ≠ ∅. So there is something in *N*'s *Sosein*. What? If it were anything more colorful than merely being intendable, then we would no longer be speaking of nothing, but of a specific intended object with a more colorful *Sosein* than nothing, regimented here as *N*-nothing(ness). The bare minimum for an intended object of thought to be distinguished as such and from all other intendable objects appears to be the property of being only intendable, where obviously being only intendable as an intended object's total *Sosein* cannot support its existence. Nothing, *N*-nothing(ness), that property intended as an object of thought, does not exist. There are as many relevant constitutive property and property-complement gaps in its identity conditions as there could possibly be, one for every such pair that some intended existent or nonexistent object other than *N*-nothing(ness) more colorfully has in its *Sosein*. One might reasonably conclude that if the bare minimum constitutive property of *N*-nothing(ness), even leaving aside the question of whether this is a new concept or a good explication of what people mean when they think and talk about nothing. Whether or not it is a good neo-Meinongian explanation of this brand of discourse, there must be some more basic property by virtue of which any object is intendable.

Call it a maximally basic supervenience property base for the property of being intendable (MB).

The property MB is altogether hypothetical, indeed, fictional, and in a sense anything we say about it follows trivially, *ex falso quodlibet*. No reduction of intendability to anything conceptually more let alone maximally basic has ever been viably proposed. Still, if such an analysis were forthcoming, then *N*-nothing (ness) could stay current by updating the definition whereby *Sosein*(*N*-nothing (ness)) = {MB}. This is to say that nothing would then be MB and nothing more, and MB would be the minimal property shared universally among all intendable objects and on which their intendability ontically supervenes. If MB grounds intendability, then MB becomes the new minimal commonality among all intendable objects, intendability supervening on MB, and *N*-nothing(ness) is *that* and nothing more. The present stance with respect to such hypotheticals is to hold that in lieu of a good argument against the conceptual irreducibility of intendability, in effect, against the grain of intentionality as a conceptually primitive relation in the intentionalist tradition, it is reasonable to suppose that intendability, being intendable, is the one and only constitutive property of nothing as intended object, construed as the property *N*-nothing(ness). It is a nominalization we freely name '*N*', on which totality of the object's *Sosein* the extraconstitutive property of nonexistence supervenes, adding to the object's constitutive property of bare minimal intendability the extraconstitutive property of not existing.

If MB ever appears on the scene, contrary again to the primacy of the intentional, the proposed analysis can be modernized within the same structured analysis. In the meantime, if nothing is to be an intended object, in keeping at least with the surface grammar of the kinds of discourse that have been sampled and idealized in this inquiry, then in Meinongian or neo-Meinongian terms it must have an identifying *Sosein* containing at least one constitutive property totality that no other object has. This does not imply that nothing = something, because something can in principle exist, and because something does not imply being only intendable and nothing else. We can nevertheless say crudely that nothing is *a* something, but not every something is nothing; indeed, only one Meinongian something is a nothing.

Thus, we face the question as to whether intendability or being intendable is a constitutive rather than extraconstitutive property. Previous considerations have driven inquiry in that direction, but now it is important to see whether it is tenable to classify intendability as constitutive rather than the opposite. What are the objections? One might say that being intendable is not constitutive because it is not freely assumable. Of course, it *is* freely assumable in the sense that nothing prevents us from assuming of any intended object that it intendable. Supposing that by definition all Meinongian objects are intendable, then we cannot consistently assume of any unintendable object that it is intendable, because there are no existent or nonexistent unintendable Meinongian objects. We can inconsistently assume such things, if we are so inclined, just as we can construct a contradiction in any theory equipped with propositions and propositional negation. That possibility is never the fault of the theory, but rather a logical abuse of the theory's expressive capabilities.

One might also propose that being intendable is not freely assumable because we cannot freely assume the complementary property holding of any intended object. We cannot freely assume that an intended object is unintended. Again, nothing whatsoever prevents us from making such a necessarily false assumption, just as we can freely assume that a round square is triangular. The unintended object does not transgress free assumption, but is merely another impossible Meinongian object, even and especially, indeed, only on the grounds that being intended or unintended is a constitutive property. To be intended is a property of everything, to be unintended of nothing, among the existent and nonexistent Meinongian intendable objects in the neo-Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain. We should expect nothing less, since an intensional comprehension principle for a Meinongian logic must distinguish objects from non-objects in some way or other, and presumably on the basis of whatever properties distinguish all included from all excluded objects. We can build these inclusions and exclusions, themselves extraconstitutive, on the basis of differences in the constitutive properties of Meinongian objects, but then excluded non-objects, on whatever basis they are excluded, will not be intendable precisely because they have been excluded from the category of all and only intendable existent or nonexistent objects.

Answering the objection that being intendable is not a constitutive property, because we cannot freely assume something to be unintended, it may be enough to say that we can freely assume and thereby intend an unintended object, although that does not make the object unintended. We are assuming after all that it is intended. The inclusion of the property of being unintended in the unintended object's *Sosein* is conditional on the possibility of there being such an intention. Every thought intends an object in Meinong's philosophy, but not every thought intends the object it ostensibly intends. By analogy only with extraconstitutive predications, I can in some sense entertain the thought of Russell's existent round square, although the intended object of my thought is not an existent round square, but rather the round square to which I falsely attach an extraconstitutive existence predication. This is a common trait of both Russell's existent round square and the unintended object, but that condition alone does not imply that being unintended is in the same extraconstitutive category as being existent.

A thought ostensibly about the unintended object *would* counterfactually imply on the Meinongian independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis that the unintended object is unintended. Mally reasons in exactly this way in his 1918 essay, 'Über die Unabhängigkeit der Gegenstände vom Denken', to demonstrate that the object theory domain is mind-independent by virtue of containing constitutively unintended objects. The historical fact does not cut any philosophical ice, but it is worth remarking that at least in Meinong's Graz school of object theorists, in the form of an argument that Meinong seems to have accepted from Mally and endorsed as liberating the objects from psychologism, that being intended and hence being unintended were assumable constitutive properties. Again, that does not make it so, leaving open the question whether there are any good independent reasons for thinking that being intended or intendable and unintended or unintendable are constitutive rather than extraconstitutive. First, if extraconstitutive properties do

not supervene on an object's totality of constitutive properties, then they can only be explained in relation to other extraconstitutive properties, making the whole enterprise ultimately circular, and as such a non-explanation. Moreoever, in the case at least of the classic extraconstitutive properties, existence, nonexistence, consistency, inconsistency, completeness, incompleteness, possibility, impossibility, necessity, contingency, and the like, we can always say something more about what it is for an object to fall under a predicate representing the extraconstitutive property in question. We are in a position to know whether a given object exists or does not exist, is possible or impossible, complete or incomplete in its *Sosein* of relevant constitutive properties. There is nothing similar to be said in the case of being intendable and being unintendable. We do not know what it would be for an intended object to be unintendable.

This discrepancy alone sets being intended and being unintended apart from any of the usual candidate pairs like existing or not existing, being complete or being incomplete, possible or impossible, as clearcut extraconstitutive properties. If the choices are that a property must be constitutive or extraconstitutive, if being intendable is not in a unique privileged third category of its own, then the argument against being intendable as an extraconstitutive property is an argument for its being a constitutive property. If intentions ostensibly about an unintended object do not actually intend an unintended object, contrary to Mally's 1914 reasoning, but every thought intends an object, then what intended objects do such intentions intend? If I ostensibly intend an unintended object, then I might be said to intend an intended object to which I falsely superadd the predication of being unintended. The predication is certain to be false in that case, as it is, as Euclid showed, if I try to predicate the property of being the greatest prime number to any prime number n. The fact that the predication, by which the unintendable object is said to be unintendable, is always false, need be construed as no more threatening than this to the foundations of neo-Meinongian object theory logic and semantics than other necessarily false predications.

The result is to undermine Mally's proof for the mind-independence of the object theory domain, without thereby implying the contrary positive thesis that the object theory domain is mind-dependent. If ostensibly intending an unintended object does not actually intend an unintended object, but an intended object to which the false predication of being unintended is superadded, then there is no further problem concerning any intended object whose so-being includes the constitutive property of being unintended. The property of being unintended has other uses anyway, as when we speak in the past tense of the unintended consequence of an action undertaken at a previous time. It is not only that the consequence is unintended in the sense that it was not a result of an action that was predicted at the time the action occurred or likely to occur as a result of the action, or of which the agent was aware or at which the agent deliberately aimed, but in the sense that it was not thought of back then until it happened by anyone at all. The difference is when we try to think or speak not merely of objects that are not intended but that are supposed to be unintendable. We do not generally think or speak of unintendable consequences in an ultimate sense, but at most only in

temporally relative terms of available knowledge and what is practically or causally possibly or probably intendable. It is in this philosophically mostly uninteresting sense that laser surgery was not practically intendable in Roman times, but obviously not unintendable in any ultimate or universal sense. The latter sense alone is relevant to object theory logic and semantics.

We can perhaps imagine a novel in which a character invents what in the novel is called an unintendable object. To distinguish it from other inventions, we may need to think or speak of the object as the unintendable one, in order to single it out from other inventions in the novel or in other literature and real life, and from other real and other fictional intended objects more generally. The proper reaction to such a consideration is that the novel in question would need to be considered internally logically inconsistent. Again, nothing prevents an inconsistent novel from being written, just as nothing prevents anyone from entertaining or expressing an outright logically contradictory proposition, at no embarrassment to any system of logic or theory of meaning. Paradoxes and antinomies need to be a lot sneakier than that in order to attract any legitimate philosophical attention. The novel is inconsistent in proposing that there could be an unintendable object, just as it would be if it had said that the mad inventor had designed and built a round square. Logic need not tremble at these possibilities of expressing necessary falsehoods, none of which point toward any serious difficulty in the core of neo-Meinongian object theory principles.

We can in any case freely assume that there is a golden mountain which is nothing, a golden nothing or nothingness mountain, nothing golden mountain, or the like, even getting past how grammatically grating they first sound, recognizing that these are objects that, by virtue of the definition of *N*-nothing(ness) as the relevant assumable property of being intendable and nothing more, and on the present proposition that an intended object is uniquely identified by its total so-being of all constitutive properties, the nothing golden mountain delegated for all variations unlike the golden mountain is not only nonexistent, but impossible. The nothing golden mountain is a Meinongian impossible object like the round square, since if it is any kind of golden mountain, nonexistent anyway, it is not nothing in the proposed sense. It is not intendability and nothing else or nothing more because it is also golden and a mountain or mountainous. Neo-Meinongian object theory once again is not threatened by the intendability of a nothing golden mountain or overkill nothing round square, any more and for the same reasons than it is by the intendability of a round square. A nothing golden mountain is no challenge to the proposal that *N*-nothing(ness) as nonexistent (extraconstitutive) intendability (constitutive), although a nothing golden mountain, the intended object that is nothing, golden, and a mountain, is as impossible a combination of constitutive properties, on the totality of which the necessary nonexistence of *N*-nothing(ness) superenes, as the round square or generic round non-round intended object.

If we are to apply the criterion for distinguishing between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, what happens in the case of the property of being intendable? If the appropriate contrast is between intendable and being

non-intendable or unintendable, assimilating these latter for the moment as one, then what shall we say of the internal versus external negation constructions and their logical interrelations for these property predicates? The criterion in practice should be simply this, that being intendable is a constitutive property if and only if it is not logically equivalent to not being unintendable. By comparison, to be existent is an extraconstitutive property because it is logically equivalent to not being nonexistent. Similarly for possibility, completeness. What then of being intendable? Is being intendable logically equivalent to not being unintendable? Or can a nonexistent Meinongian object be intendable and unintendable, in the way that a nonexistent Meinongian object can be round and non-round? We have already said that every Meinongian object, existent or nonexistent, by definition is intendable. It should follow logically, then, if anything is intendable it is not the case that it is unintendable. Or does it? Is being unintendable the same thing as not being intendable? That is the crux of the matter in a single question. It is no help to be reminded that being unintendable is the same thing as not being intendable if and only if being intendable and being unintendable are extraconstitutive properties. That is the question at issue. What are the relevant intuitions here, and toward what classifications if any do they gesture? If they point in no particular direction, then we might feel free to follow the interpretation whereby intendability and unintendability are constitutive rather than extraconstitutive properties. The question is therefore whether our considered intuitions direct us toward a classification of intendability and unintendability as constitutive or extraconstitutive properties. Before we answer too quickly that to be unintended is not to be intended and vice versa, we should reflect that the same can appear superficially to be true of the predications non-red and not red. Surely, we imagine, if something is non-red, then it is not the case that it is red. If it is non-red, then it is presupposed that it has some color other than red and hence is not red. The application for constitutive property *R*-red(ness) is nevertheless denied on principle in the proposed version of neo-Meinongian logic and semantics.

Whether or not being red or non-red is like being intended or unintended (non-intended), being non-red does not imply not being red in the case of impossible Meinongian objects like the red non-red square. Nor does not being red imply being non-red. If to be non-red means to have some color other than red, then the implication should be avoided even outside a Meinongian logical and semantic structure, since in that application to be not red or not to be red does not imply being non-red. The number 3 is not red, but in the expected sense it is not therefore non-red, in the sense of having any color other than red. If something has no color, it is hardly appropriate, but more like a Rylean category mistake, to conclude that it is non-red from the assumption that it is not red or not the case that it is red. Importantly, for Meinong, relevantly predicationally incomplete objects like the golden mountain or round square are not red, it is not the case that they are red, because the constitutive property of being red, like the constitutive property of being non-red, is not in their respective *Soseine*: *Sosein*(golden mountain) = {golden, mountain(ous)} and *Sosein*(round square) = {round, square}, where the

constitutive property of being red and the complementary constitutive property of being non-red are nowhere to be found.

The issue is to decide if intended and unintended (non-intended) are more like existence and nonexistence (extraconstitutive) or more like red and non-red (constitutive) in an orderly development of neo-Meinongian logic. For one thing, whether an object exists or does not exist, equivalently, nonexistent, as a physical or abstract entity, depends on the facts of the world, whereas any and every object in the Meinongian referential semantic domain of extraontology is guaranteed by definition to be intendable. Whereas whether an intended beingless Meinongian object is red or non-red is independent of world contingencies or the necessary properties of existent entities and relations, but entirely on the combinatorial possibility of the relevant so-being sets of constitutive properties that include or exclude the constitutive properties of being red or its complementary constitutive property of being non-red, being an intendable object is to say nothing more nor less than to say that the object is an object. All objects are intendable, for all objects are intended objects in the Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain. We can hardly expect an object not to be an object. But why should the property of being an object or the property of being intendable, however these concepts are analytically related, be considered constitutive rather than extraconstitutive, beyond its utility in supporting the proposed neo-Meinongian analysis of nothing and nothingness?

Moreover, we should not overlook the fact that if *Sosein*(golden mountain) = {golden, mountain(ous)} does not explicitly include the constitutive property of being red or of being non-red, neither does it explicitly include the property, constitutive or extraconstitutive, of being intendable. What entitles a neo-Meinongian analysis of the concept of nothing and nothingness to consider that a nuclear property of intendability goes silently along for the ride within any Meinongian object's *Sosein*? Are there other 'implied' or implicit constitutive properties concealed within a spare characterization of an intended object's core of constitutive properties? We might say that there are. If the golden mountain is golden, then being golden further implies a variety of constitutive properties belonging to whatever is gold as a natural kind, and hence, unless excluded by a special combination of constitutive properties, for such a distinct intended object as the non-metallic golden mountain, or the like, we can analyze the constitutive properties in an intended object's *Sosein* to determine that the object's having those constitutive properties means that it has further unmentioned constitutive properties. If the golden mountain is a mountain or mountainous, we do not have to say that it is a geographical feature, unless we want to distinguish it from non-geographical mountains. These, like unintended objects, are also presumably equally merely impossible Meinongian objects. They are impossible precisely because their characterizing *Soseine* contain co-uninstantiable constitutive properties, by comparison again with the unassuming round square, rather than with Russell's 'problem' of the existent round square. The fact that this can be done in the case of any object, which is to say redundantly but with appropriate emphasis, any intended object, that the analogy holds in that respect, reinforces the intuitive

expectation that being intendable, and hence being an intended object, identified with the property of being nothing or nothingness, *N*-nothing(ness), of being intendable or ideally intended and nothing more, is constitutive rather than extraconstitutive.

9.7 Analysis of Intendable *N*-Nothing(ness)

Not everything that fails to exist is nothing or nothingness. A golden mountain $\neq N$-nothing(ness), on plausible intensional identity conditions for nonexistent objects, simply because there exists no golden mountain. Phenomenologically, it is also one thing to think of a golden mountain, and quite another to think of *N*-nothing(ness). Nevertheless, it seems true that:

$$\forall x[Nx \rightarrow \neg E!x] \wedge \neg\forall x[\neg E!x \rightarrow Nx]$$

We make progress by defining the constitutive property *N* in meta-predicate or metalogical terms in a second-order logic, as the property of not existing and having only whatever extra-ontic (constitutive) properties are properties of every possibly intended (existent or nonexistent) object of thought, in the logic's expanded referential semantic domain.[8] The definition is given by this material equivalence:

- *N*-Nothing(ness) as a Nonexistent Intended Object (and Nothing More)

$$\forall x[Nx \leftrightarrow [\neg E!x \wedge \forall y, \varphi[\varphi x \rightarrow \varphi y]]]$$

The concept of *N* can also be defined as the property of being intendable (positive) and having no constitutive properties, and consequently of having the supervenient extraconstitutive property of being nonexistent (negative). However,

[8] On the grounds for distinguishing constitutive from extraconstitutive properties in Jacquette 1996a, 114–6, *N*-nothing(ness) must be constitutive rather than extraconstitutive, because it is freely assumable as defining an intendable object and because the externally negated proposition that an object has *N*-nothing(ness), $\neg Na$ is intuitively not logically equivalent to the object having the complement of the property of being or having *N*-nothing(ness) in non-*N*-nothing(ness) or non-*Na*. Thought remains free to intend that an object *a* of which it is true that *Na* has the complement property of being or having non-*N*-nothing(ness). In that case, it is true of nonexistent object *a* by free assumption that both $Na \wedge$ non-*Na*. It does not follow logically that therefore an impossible object *a* does not have the property of being *N*-nothing(ness) or that $\neg Na$, which would result not merely in an impossible intendable object, but in an outright logical syntactical contradiction, $Na \wedge \neg Na$. Logic recoils at such a conclusion because we do not expect contradictions to be validly deducible from the true proposition that *Na* and that a thinker freely intends that the said intendable impossible object *a* has the complement predication, non-*Na*. There is a line to be drawn in intensional logic between the comprehension of impossible intendable objects and the suggestion that logical contradictions are forthcoming from true and otherwise unproblematic assumptions.

the concept of *N* is not derivable as such from the immediately preceding biconditional defining *N* as a nonexistent intended object and nothing more. We must therefore assert as a distinct and logically independent theorem of any logic of *N*, the unavoidably circular proposition, consequently unacceptable as a definition of the concept of *N*, that:

- *N*-Nothing(ness) as the Possession of No Other Constitutive Property

$$\forall x[Nx \leftrightarrow \neg\exists\varphi[\varphi \neq N \ \wedge \ \varphi x]]$$

We speak in what follows of *N*-nothing(ness) without further qualification, when we mean to refer to the concept as it appears in general discourse, and as *N* in designating more specifically the concept of *N* defined above. The concept of *N* is thereby made equivalent to a nonexistent intendable object that has no substantive or extra-ontic constitutive properties, that are not also properties of any and every intendable existent or nonexistent object.

N is the total absence of whatever properties are beyond those minimally required of objects generally to be intendable objects at all, but does not include being intendable or an object as constitutive properties. They are instead extraconstitutive properties. It is by virtue of sharing only these and no constitutive properties that the constitutive property *N* is singled out intensionally from all other concepts. The point is that, as an intendable object, *N* has only what it needs in order to be intended, and absolutely *nothing* more. If every intendable object has at least one constitutive property, and if being intendable as an object is not a constitutive property, then there must still be at least one constitutive property that every intendable object has in its possession, by virtue of which it can logically be identified and distinguished from every other intendable object.

We can say that *N* has, along with every other intended object, the extraconstitutive property of being intendable. It then has what amounts to the same thing, the extraconstitutive property of being an object. What makes the property of being intendable extraconstitutive, is that we cannot freely posit a nonexistent intendable object that is non-intendable, or such that it is not intendable. It is impossible for an object to have the extraconstitutive property of being non-intendable or of not being intendable. The reasoning has this elementary logical structure, noting that intendable objecthood is constitutive rather than extraconstitutive, if, as assumed here, to be an object is short for being an intendable or ideally intended object, and if to be intendable or ideally intended is a constitutive rather than extraconstitutive property:

- Argument for Preserving Universal Intendable Objecthood (O) and Possession of at Least One Constitutive Property (φ) by Every Intendable Object, Hypothetically Including *N* = *N*-Nothing(ness)

$$\forall x[Nx \rightarrow Ox]$$
$$\forall x[Ox \rightarrow \exists\varphi[\varphi x]]$$
$$\forall x[Nx \rightarrow \exists\varphi[\varphi x]]$$

As a consequence, constitutive property *N* poses no possible counterexample threat to the universal constitutive propertyhood of every intendable object of thought. Nor, on the same grounds, does constitutive property *N* logically challenge the universal referential domain comprehension principle instanced relevantly here for constitutive property *N*, in the first assumption of the inference formalized as $\forall x[Nx \rightarrow Ox]$. The truth of the final step of inference in $\forall x[Nx \rightarrow \exists \varphi[\varphi x]]$ is trivially guaranteed by the tautology, $\forall x[Nx \rightarrow Nx]$, and there is logically no need for constitutive property *N*-nothing(ness) to possess any other distinctive or distinguishing constitutive properties beyond itself, in addition to constitutive property *N*.

If we are interested in the general concept of intended object, we cannot afford to overlook the concept of *N* as a further unadorned unqualifiedly intended object. *N*, on such a conception, is the most basic and fundamental intendable object, with no predicational frills or additions by virtue of possessing any other constitutive properties than the constitutive property of being *N*-nothing(ness). It earns title to this constitutive property by being the subject of no constitutive properties other than the constitutive property of being an intendable object, and whatever possessing such a constitutive property further entails, among other constitutive properties, such as being intendable, being an object, and perhaps such extraconstitutive properties as being self-identical, unitary, a possible referent, and the like.

It may be controversial to consider being $= N$ or being $\neq N$ as constitutive properties. However, they cannot reasonably be regarded as extraconstitutive of the intended object of being *N* itself. The suggestion that being or having property *N* is constitutive rather than extraconstitutive preserves the intuitive truth of the object theory principle that every intendable object has at least one distinguishing or characterizing constitutive property or nonempty so-being. The constitutive property of being *N* has the constitutive property of being *N*, and nothing else constitutive, although it has whatever properties it shares minimally in common with every other possible object of thought. Again, and *nothing* more.

We want to be able to say that whatever if anything property *N* consists of, it consists anyway of the property of being $= N$. We cannot intelligibly propose that *N* consists of any constitutive properties other than the constitutive property of being *N*, while it enjoys exactly the same extraconstitutive properties as every other intendable object. These properties include, among others, being intendable, an object, and a distinct individual referent of certain terms, such as '*a*', if, in an ontically neutral quantifier semantics, the sentence $\exists x[Nx \wedge x = a]$ is true. If it is also true that $\exists x[Nx \wedge x = b]$, then we shall have no choice except to conclude that $a = b$.

We suppose with Meinong that every intendable object has at least one constitutive property. Where every intendable object other than *N* is concerned, the object's constitutive properties include more than merely the property of being that very object. *N* is different precisely for this reason, because its intensional identity conditions depend exclusively upon *N* having only the constitutive property *N*, of being or having constitutive property *N*. This occurs only in the case of the constitutive property of being *N* itself, and whatever property possession its

possession immediately logically implies, while by definition and free intention it possesses no other constitutive properties. We conclude, on the present assumption, where '*O*' represents the constitutive property of 'being an intendable object', observing the distinction between extraconstitutive shriek-! and unshrieked non-! constitutive properties:

$$\forall x[Ox \leftrightarrow \exists \varphi[\varphi x]]$$

It follows from the above working assumption, that thought can intend *N*-nothing(ness), that the intended object *N* has at least one constitutive property. This is the property, disappointingly, of being identical to *N*, any and all of which must somehow derive from the constitutive property *N* itself, while possessing no other distinguishing constitutive properties.

The constitutive property *N* additionally has the constitutive properties it shares with all other intendable objects, of being an intendable object, being an object of thought, being an object, being intendable, along with the extraconstitutive supervenient property of belonging to an intensional logic's referential domain, and whatever further extraconstitutive semantic or ontic properties are shared by all intendable objects. Uniquely, among all intendable objects, the constitutive property *N* of being or having *N* is constituted exclusively by its being the only intendable object whose intensional identity conditions involve nothing beyond its self-identity, of simply being intendable. As a distinct intendable object, *N* has analytically exactly this trivial constitutive property, of being or having *N*, of being nothing other than itself, while lacking any further characterizing constitutive property. Hence, *N* has no nature, essence, or deeper meaning of concept to discover or explore. Those, including Sartre, who speak of nothing or nothingness as though it had more savor, have drastically failed to understand the concept.[9]

The suggestion that *N* is a constitutive property then allows us freely to entertain, as we could never do with respect to extraconstitutive properties like existence, possibility, completeness, or the like, the assumption that an intendable object is non-*N*, or which is such that it is not the case that it is or has constitutive property *N*. This is logically, semantically and ontically harmless, because it allows an intensional formalism to countenance intendable objects other than *N*, such as any existent object or any object characterized by any constitutive property other than *N*. That is, we are free thereby to assume as an intendable object any object other than *N*, which is an expected and reassuring result, rather than any sort of challenge to the logic or semantic integrity of object theory adopting a constitutive *N* property. Any intended object other than *N* will nevertheless have other constitutive properties than being itself, whatever it is, or of being *N*, by virtue of which

[9] Sartre 1956 is apparently willing to countenance the possibility of meaningfully saying something constitutive about nothingness. Sartre writes, for example: 'Or on the contrary is nothingness as the structure of the real, the origin and foundation of negation?' See Sartre's discussion throughout Part One, 'The Problem of Nothingness', 1956, 3–70.

under Leibnizian identity conditions it can be distinguished from every other intended object of thought.

N as an intended object of certain thoughts is any nonexistent object that has only those extraconstitutive properties that are indistinguishably had by any and every intended object. Additionally, it has the constitutive property of being *N* itself, of being *N*. And, the point is, nothing else. The object has no other constitutive properties beyond being or having constitutive property *N*. We need not commit ourselves to what extraconstitutive properties are essential for every minimally intendable object. Likely candidates for the category include being an intendable object, being an object, intendable, capable of being thought about, self-identical, unitary, and whatever other extraconstitutive properties might belong to any and every intendable object in a language's referential domain, without supporting further qualification. It is whatever extraconstitutive properties entitle a putative intended object a place in a referential semantic domain. Ontology is absorbed into the ontically neutral semantic extraontology of existent and nonexistent intendable objects, intensionally comprehended by every logically possible combination of all constitutive properties and their complements.

If the above analysis of *N* is correct, then *N* itself, defined as a nonexistent minimally intendable object, is nothing more or other than pure intendability. *N*, as we should expect, has no color, shape, weight, flavor, or any other extra-ontic constitutive property φ. It is literally nothing, but nevertheless nonparadoxically something that thinkers can intend, think of or about, refer to in thought and its expression. If we choose to dress the object with further properties, then we are *superadding* something to the intendable object *N* that does not belong intrinsically to its nature, concept, or essence, as when we attribute the property of being boring or exciting to an intended object, perhaps an event, performance or performer at the theatre. We consider for convenience as representative of the things that might be said in superaddition to the bare bones of *N* such things as the property of being a projection of the mind's fear of the unknown personal oblivion that may be expected when death occurs, and the cessation of individual consciousness. We refer, again, for convenience, to this psychological and philosophical superadditive attribution to *N*, marked by this attitude, although perhaps not entirely in fairness to its tradition, as *an* (not *the*) *existentialist* dressing of intended object *N*.

If we choose to thematize and theorize about *N*, in something like an existentialist way, then we will have clothed *N* with properties that are external to the nature, concept, or essence of *N*. This concept, we have said, is to be nothing whatsoever, beyond being intendable and whatever being intendable minimally implies. *N* is literally nothing, even in relation to such an existent or nonexistent intended object as one's death, or one's actual fear or other state of anticipation of death. *N*, metaphorically, is the semantic equivalent of an astrophysical black hole, which in contrast must nevertheless at least have the historical properties of having undergone certain changes at certain times. *N* as an even more powerful kind of semantic black hole, is devoid of any constitutive properties other than being what it is, *N*, and permitting nothing positive that we might otherwise hope to be able meaningfully to say about nothing or nothingness. We should expect to make no

contribution to the kind of existentialism that has been deliberately over-simplistically described. We can only think about *N* as a blank canvas or empty space to be embellished with the constitutive property of being *N*, and whatever extraconstitutive properties preclude *N* from being unintendable. This is to say, from being itself, as the identity conditions for this highly conceptually delimited constitutive property as itself an intendable object have been prescribed.

We can only truly attribute *accidental* properties to *N*, to invoke the Aristotelian and Scholastic distinction. These are predicative add-ons that do not reveal anything about the nature, concept, or essence of *N*. We gain no insight into what *N* is supposed to be, on the exemplary partly fictionalized existentialist or any other substantive thematization of nothing or nothingness as related to the experience of anticipating personal death and the cessation of individual consciousness. We may at most thereby be meaningfully attributing properties to ourselves, insofar as we may intend this or that about nothing or nothingness, a concept we arrive at by worrying that our consciousness of occurrent thinking shall someday permanently cease to exist, or the like, whereas *N* itself has nothing more substantive to it than belongs to any and every intendable object. It is not a constitutive property *of N* that I happen to think about or intend it while strolling on the beach.

N, besides being itself a nonexistent object, as we have emphasized, has only the extraconstitutive properties, that belong to every intended object. Thus, *N*, like every other intendable object, by possessing the property of being intendable, supports the further crucial implication that certain thoughts can intend *N* as an intendable object. If we try to say that *N* is either more or less than pure intendability, then we shall have either strayed, on the one side, into making nothing into something more specific than whatever is implied merely by its being capable of being intended, thereby necessarily confusing it with some other intendable object other than what is strictly *N*. Or, on the other side, we shall have crossed over from *N* as an intendable object to a reductive negative existential quantification. There are obviously such concepts, even if no one has so far thought to give them a name, but they are different than the concept of *N* as pure intendability and quantificationally nothing more.

When we consider the ontic relations for intendable *N*, we arrive at the following intuitive principles, formalized in the intensional logic toward which we have previously gestured:

- Ontic Relations for Intendable *N*-Nothing(ness)

  1. $\exists x[Nx]$
     There is an (existent or nonexistent) intendable object of *N*-nothing(ness).
  2. $\forall x\big[Nx \leftrightarrow [Ox \wedge \neg\exists\varphi[\varphi x \wedge \neg[Ox \rightarrow \varphi x]]]$
     An object is intendable *N*-nothing(ness) iff it is an intendable object (and nothing more).
  3. $\exists x[Nx \wedge \neg E!x]$
     N-nothing(ness) does not exist (is a nonexistent intendable object).

4. $\neg\exists x[Nx \wedge E!x]$
   Equivalently, there is no existent *N*-nothing(ness).
5. $\forall x[Nx \rightarrow \neg E!x]$
   Equivalently, again, all *N*-nothing(ness) is nonexistent.
6. $\neg\forall x[E!x \rightarrow Nx]$
   It is not the case that all existent objects are *N*-nothing(ness).
7. $\neg\forall x[Nx \rightarrow E!x]$
   It is not the case that all *N*-nothing(ness) intendable objects exist.
8. $\neg\forall x[\neg E!x \rightarrow Nx]$
   It is not the case that all nonexistent objects are (or have the property of being) intendable *N*-nothing(ness).
9. $\forall x\neg[\neg E!x \rightarrow \neg Nx]$
   Everything is (all objects are) not such that being nonexistent implies not being (or not having the property of being) *N*-nothing(ness).
10. $\exists x[Nx \wedge \neg\exists y[E!y \wedge Ny]]$
    Some (existent or nonexistent) intendable object is such that it is (or has the property of being) *N*-nothing(ness) and *nothing* is an existent object that is also (or also has the property of being) *N*-nothing(ness).

The concept of *N* as such is indistinguishable from the concept of being intendable, and hence of unqualified (intendable) objecthood. It is the otherwise totally empty concept of being a nonexistent intended object of an existent or nonexistent thought. Relying on some of these ontic propositions and a form of the general (IT) thesis, we can now formally derive the implication that there is at least an intendable, existent or nonexistent thought that intends *N*. We assert, first, that there is an existent or nonexistent (ontically neutral) thought *T*, such that for any intendable object *O*, *T* intends, *I*, object *O*. The inference holds immediately once we include *N* among the intendable objects belonging to the intensional logic's combined referential semantic domain of existent objects in an ontology and nonexistent objects in an extraontology.

- Argument Sketch for the Intendability of *N*-Nothing(ness)

  1. $\forall x[Tx \rightarrow \exists y[Oy \wedge Ixy]]$
  2. $\exists x[Nx]$
  3. $\exists x[Nx \wedge Ox]$
  4. $\exists x,y[Tx \wedge Ny \wedge Ixy]$

At the opposite predicational extreme, we consider the metalogical extraconstitutive property of being a maximal intended object, possessing every constitutive property and its complement, red and non-red, round and non-round, *N* and non-*N* or non-*N*-nothing(ness), and so on. Such an intended object, needless to say, is metaphysically impossible. Like the round square, it is nevertheless capable of being intended, thought about as no other intended object, by virtue of having all constitutive properties and their complements φ truly predicated of it, and is, indeed, for this reason, not only necessarily nonexistent but *maximally impossible*:

- (*M*) *M*-Maximp Impossibility as Intended Object

$$\forall x[Mx \leftrightarrow \forall \varphi[\varphi x]]$$

The opposed poles in a full object theory semantic domain are therefore the intendable object *N*, possessing no constitutive properties other than *N* itself, the constitutive property of being *N*. Plus extraconstitutive properties implied by *N*'s being intendable that it shares with every other intendable object. (*M*), at the opposite extreme, defines an intendable maximally impossible object, that has *all* constitutive properties *and* their complements. Every other intendable object of thought is situated in between these two semantic extremes, with specified differences in their constitutive properties.

Since such an intendable object is metaphysically impossible, there is no need to add the explicit provision, as in the case of (*N*), that the maximally impossible object does not exist or has the supervenient extraconstitutive property of being nonexistent. We would nevertheless be within our rights semantically to add the explicit nonexistence condition for emphasis in, $\forall x\big[Mx \leftrightarrow [\neg E!x \wedge \forall \varphi[x\varphi]]$. If we supplement the principle that in order to be something other than nothing an intendable object must have at least one constitutive property other than being itself that does not belong to any and every intendable object, then it would be unnecessary also to add a clause to the definition of (*N*) that the intendable object *N* does not exist. The nonexistence of *N* would then follow from $\forall x\big[E!\mathrm{x} \rightarrow \exists \varphi[\varphi x \wedge \neg \forall y \varphi y]$, where the biconditional obviously does not hold. We could in that case define *N* more economically as, $\forall x[Nx \leftrightarrow \forall y, \varphi[\varphi x \rightarrow \varphi y]]$. In this form, it is even more apparent that the concept of *N* in the proposed analysis is equivalent to that of being a purely intendable object. This formulation is alternatively redundantly to say being intendable or, in the most general sense, simply being an object.

N is the intended object that has no constitution, other than the most uninformative of being an intended object. It is the constitutive property of being = *N*, where *N*(*N*), *N*-nothing(ness) nothings and does not exist, $N(N) \wedge \neg E!N$. *N* owns no first-order properties or property-complements belonging to any existent entity. Aristotle teaches that we are not supposed to define concepts in purely negative terms (*Topics* V.6 136a5-b3; VI.6 143b11-144a3; see Deslauriers 2007, 197–207). However, *N is* undoubtedly the essentially purely negative intendable concept *par excellence*. As such, *N* could not be adequately defined in any other way, as the exception that proves the rule. *N* can only be understood by reference to what it is *not*. Indeed, as that which *is* not, although it is not the nonexistence of any particular kind. It is the equally and coextensively constitutive property of objecthood, being an object (properties also being intended), being intendable, and their equally constitutively minimal ilk.

9.8 *N*-Nothing(ness) Constitutive Only of *N*-Nothing(ness)

Argument supports the conclusion that *N* is a constitutive rather than extraconstitutive property, and thereby an incidentally intended object. We freely assume that there are objects with the property of being or having non-*N*, just as we intend exactly one object with the property of being or having *N*. We cannot do so in a Meinongian object theory framework invoking any extraconstitutive properties, like existing, being possible, being an intendable object, and so on. We have such license for *N*-nothing(ness) in part because *N* and non-*N*, unlike *E*! and non-*E*!, which is to say $\neg E!$, cannot be used to make anything existent out of anything nonexistent. We cannot conjure something existent from association with *N*-nothing(ness), which is to say that $\neg \exists x[Nx \wedge E!x]$. The same strategy at this structural level is found in Russell's indecisive problems of the existent golden mountain and existent round square. Nor are we permitted to make something existent nonexistent, to consider the mirror image of Russell's problem that Russell and other critics of Meinong's object theory have not mentioned. An example, on the present assumption, is when someone intends the *nonexistent* real number π, that many philosophers of mathematics would strongly prefer to have *exist* as an abstract individual entity.

These considerations do not pose serious threats to Meinongian logic and semantics. We are never authorized in Meinongian object theory to make these kinds of inferences. The concept of *either-or* extraconstitutive (XC) properties like existing, being possible, being an intendable object, and so on, is contrasted with the *both-and* possibilities of exclusively constitutive (C) properties for at least some intended objects. An existent intended object, if we leave aside quantum physics semantic applications, will not both have *and* not have any (C) property *F and* its complement non-*F*. It will not be both red and non-red, and so on. Nonexistent intended objects can have both *F* and non-*F* in their *Sosein*, for any and every (C) property *F* cluster. Whereas, any extraconstitutive (XC) property *G*! will either be true or false of any intended object, with all the same force and rigidity of classical logic's principles of non-contradiction and predicational excluded middle, governing every constitutive property combination in the referential semantic domain of Meinongian object theory logic. If an intended object lacks the extraconstitutive (XC) property of existing, then it can equivalently be said not to exist and to be nonexistent. If a nonexistent intended object has the constitutive (C) properties of being red and non-red, in contrast, it cannot logically equivalently be said to be red and not to be red.

Intended objects can get as wild as they want, as far as their constitutive (C) properties are concerned. Their supervenient extraconstitutive (XC) properties, whether the objects exist or not and their exact condition at any point in time, are determined by their totalities of constitutive (C) properties. The red non-red billiard ball cannot pass as existent, although it is otherwise a perfectly respectable nonexistent intended object, ontically neutrally speaking. Nonexistent intended objects will either have relevantly predicationally incomplete or

(non-exclusively) impossible total so-being constitutive property clusters. They satisfy intensional Leibnizian self-identity conditions in just this way, allowing the equivalent criterion whereby (C) properties are recognized as those permitted in sound applications of Leibnizian identity of indiscernibles. There is, under Meinong's logical conservativism, only and exclusively either a complete or an incomplete, possible or impossible property cluster or *Sosein*, for any intended object. The positive so-construed constitutive property of being or having non-*N* is implied of all existent and all nonexistent intended objects other than *N*, without exception, by virtue of their possessing at least some other constitutive property than being themselves, or, in *N*'s case, of being identical to *N*.

All uses of *N* are consistently distinguished throughout from any extraconstitutive properties, by using the shriek sign '!' only for extraconstitutive properties, like *E*! and *Possible*!, *Complete*!, and their complements, etc., and never for *N*. By the same convention, the variable property term 'φ' throughout represents any specific exclusively constitutive property. If *N* is to be an intended object of reference and predication in thought and symbolic expression, especially in art and language, then *N*, nothing or nothingness, *N*-nothing(ness), is as much a nonexistent object of thought as it is a property. It follows as an ontic novelty in Meinongian object theory that there are least some nonexistent properties. If there is something to be said about nothing, despite its being nothing, if it is to be an intendable object that we can think and say whatever we want or need theoretically to say about it, true or false, so long as it is *about N*, then *N* must be a constitutive rather than extraconstitutive property. *N* is all that *N* has, and it is only by virtue of an intended object's total constitutive (C) properties that *N* has such extraconstitutive (XC) properties as not existing.

Even *N* as a constitutive property must itself hold of freely intended objects with at least the constitutive property of being or having property *N*. This means among other things that we can think about *N*, and that we are encouraged to develop a philosophically motivated logic of nonexistent objects and metaphysics of non-being. This is also the reason why on the proposed analysis Nothing nothings, or, better, why Nothing Nothings. What is denied is only that nothing Nothings in the negative existential sense in the ontically neutral intensional logical framework that is now assumed. If a critic tries to say, even if only in an effort at *reductio ad absurdum*, $\neg\exists xNx$, the proper reply is that this argument-unsupported high-handedness works exclusively in a radically referentially extensionalist logic. There nonexistence is referential oblivion, whereas intensionally to have mentioned *N* at all, even in a negative existential, is as good as comprehending it as an intendable object belonging to a Meinongian logic's ontically neutral referential semantic domain of *Außersein*.

N meets the usual tests of a constitutive as opposed to an extraconstitutive non-characterising purely ontic property. An intended object can be freely assumed as constituted as being or having property *N*, or the complement of property *N*, non-*N*, without logical difficulty. The complement of property *N* is where we generally want to find ourselves in applied ontology, knee-deep in everything *but N*. What is decisive is that we do not have the same liberty of intending *N* and non-*N*

objects in the case of any extraconstitutive properties, such as being existent or nonexistent, possible or impossible, being an intendable object or not being an intendable object, and the like.

Moreover, there is only and exactly one intendable object with nuclear property *N* (or of being identical to *N*). It should come as no surprise that this is *N* itself. Everything else, every other intendable object, is non-*N*, by virtue of having some further distinguishing constitutive property. It is among the non-*N* intendables that we expect to find useful truths about specific objects, existent or nonexistent, to increase our knowledge. The remaining intendables occur within a spectrum whose semantic poles are marked by *N* for *N*-nothing(ness) and *M* for maximal impossibility. The gamut runs from *N* in this direction as having, unlike every other intended object, absolutely no distinguishing constitutive properties beyond what it minimally needs intensionally for intendability, essentially self-identity, to maximally impossible *M* as possessing at the opposite extreme every logically possible constitutive property and its complement. The point is that the objects of an object theory get fixed along that spectrum from *N* to *M*, or, if it is preferred, even if only on alphabetical grounds, since logically it does not matter, from *M* to *N*. The objects range between those singleton extremes according to their unique distributions of constitutive properties, impossible, incomplete, or consistent and complete, where actual or abstract existent entities are concerned.

The point is to establish the range of intensional identity conditions for all intended objects, as an adequate domain comprehension principle that an ontically neutral intensional logic needs to provide. Intensional (constitutive property) identity conditions cover all the logical possibilities between the least possible, the property of nonexistent intended object *N* of being *N*. As any other intended object can say the same, the difference is that *N*, unlike every other intended object, has absolutely no further distinguishing constitutive properties other than being itself identical to *N*. However otherwise uninteresting, being *N* is still a constitutive property on the proposed analysis of intended object *N*. By virtue, moreover, of being *N*'s only constitutive property, it further distinguishes *N* as a particular intendable object from every other intendable object on grounds of intensional, constitutive property-related Leibnizian self-identity principles.

We can think and say whatever we want about the concept of *N*, on the interpretation being considered, without the possibility of thereby discovering anything constitutive concerning its nature or essence. We can and should know going into the effort that *N* is so defined as to have no other constitutive properties than being intendable, which means being individual, which means being self-identical, which means satisfying the relevant identity conditions, meaning, in this case, being identical to *N*. With *N* as a constitutive property, we can proceed to freely imaginatively combine *N* with any other constitutive property we choose, in order to intend hybrid intended objects, as in the free true or false assumption, where R is the property of being red, that $\exists x[Nx \wedge Rx]$. Every such application is certain to be logically and therefore materially false, because, if true, it would

logically imply that being N also has the constitutive property of being R, whereas we have it analytically by the definition of N, that $\forall x[Nx \rightarrow \neg\exists\varphi[\varphi x \wedge \varphi \neq N]]$.[10]

9.9 Can We Think About or Otherwise Intend *N*-Nothing(ness)?

Suppose, now, that someone were to deny, appearances notwithstanding, that, phenomenologically, we can ever think about nothing or nothingness. This is, of course, as we shall continue to emphasize, not having one's mind go blank or imagining vast empty regions of space. It is also a different issue altogether from the question whether we can think without thinking about anything—provided that N-nothing(ness) is one of the things about which we can sometimes think.[11]

Appropriately enough, N as an intended object is interpreted intensionally by means of higher-order properties of first-order properties in a second-order logic. N is a limiting case of Leibnizian identity conditions, the combined identity of indiscernibles and indiscernibility of identicals. It is a pure constitutive-property-bare intendable object, on this conception, lacking any further distinguishing constitutive properties or their complements whatsoever, and possessing only those common to every intended object. The situation is then just as it should be, because the definition makes N the one and only uniquely intended object satisfying minimal intensional identity conditions of which absolutely *nothing*, no constitutive property beyond those implied by being intendable as N, is true.

To the extent that we may think of N as that which lacks all additional constitutive properties and their complements, we are, after all, nonparadoxically, thinking of *something*. We are thinking of a purely intendable constitutive-property-bare particular object with no additional distinguishing intrinsic qualifications. This logical-semantic peculiarity is precisely what distinguishes N from all other intended objects, existent or otherwise, in the intensional logic's referential semantic domain containing all the existent and nonexistent intendable objects to which reference in principle can be made. We can only say metalogically that the property of N is that of having no constitutive properties beyond those that make it a particular intendable object N, intended by specific referring thought tokens and their expression.

[10] Here N-nothing(ness) is defined as the intendable object having only the constitutive property of being N-nothing(ness), and nothing else. It follows intuitively and formally in the proposed formalization of the previous characterization of N that any object of reference in the ontically neutral semantic domain has the constitutive property of being or having N if and only if for any intendable object and any constitutive property φ the object has constitutive property φ only if any and every object in the entire semantic domain has constitutive property φ.

[11] I discuss the logic presupposed by the conceivability of a null universe in Jacquette 2010b, 153–63. See Jacquette 2010a, 175–7.

If we attempt to predicate converse intentional properties of *N*, such as the property of being thought about in a certain way by a certain thinking subject *s*, then all such predications, while true of *N*, do not add anything to the concept or identity conditions of *N* itself. At most, they serve to qualify other objects in relation to *N*, such as those individual existent thinkers that may intend *N*. If we refer to nothingness *N* as intended by subject *s* (Sartre), then we do not distinguish *N* as possessing the additional property of being-intended-by-Sartre. *Either* we introduce a new concept involving a misleading misuse of language, speaking explicitly of *N*-as-intended-by-Sartre, which is *not N* as purely intendable object, *or* we refer to *N* without further qualification as constituted only by property *N*, and we understand the relation being-intended-by-Sartre as qualifying only Sartre in intending *N*. Sartre's intending would then not translate immediately into the converse intentional property of being-intended-by-Sartre.

We violate implicit identity conditions for *N* as the purely intendable object if we suppose that its nature, concept, or essence can be altered or supplemented in any way when it happens to be intended by any particular thinker. We have no need of further sufficiently fine levels of individuation, including relation to intending thinkers, as we would then have to assume for all the particular intending thoughts of all particular thinking subjects in every place and at every moment of time. We sacrifice thereby the possibility of collective intentionality in relevant applications after a convergence of intentions by different thinkers on the same intended object. Among so extensive a plethora of absurdly distinct nothings or nothingnesses, we could never make sense of the same two or more thinking subjects intending the same intendable object *N*. This could not be the most basic object theory definition or explanation of *N* available, and, though not precluded, it is not the proposed analysis.[12]

9.10 Philosophical Applications of Intendable *N*-Nothing(ness)

With such an instrument in hand, we can intelligibly formulate questions as to why there exists something rather than nothing, $\exists x[E!x \wedge \neg Nx]$; otherwise, without a good reason for thinking the proposition is true, we have no defense against the contrary suggestion that nothing *exists*, $\exists x[\neg E!x \wedge Nx]$. The present analysis steamrollers such barely imaginable objections by observing that *N* is so defined that $\forall x[Nx \rightarrow \neg E!x]$. We never imagine the abject nonsense that nothing *could* have *existed*, were it not for the existence of something. If we cannot quantify over an instance of *N*, at least as an intended object of thought, then, clearly, we cannot understand the putative conceivability or logical possibility of nothing

[12] Searle 1995. For an alternative account and more extensive bibliographic references to this literature, see Jacquette 1994d, 2009a, 2012.

rather than something existing. However we finally prefer to define it, there is an evident need for a predicate '*N*' to stand for the property of nothing or nothingness that is also the intended object we sometimes think about, as when we search for an adequate definition of the predicate for logical purposes, or inquire like Sartre into the concept of being in relation to nothing or nothingness.

If I read Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, whatever I make of it, to develop a previous example, I shall at various points be thinking *about* Sartre's *concept* of *nothingness*, which Sartre is translated as frequently intersubstituting for a concept of *nothing*. We can, accordingly, think of nothing or nothingness, at least as another thinker invites us to consider it, by ostensibly writing about the concept in a book. The interesting question from the present perspective is whether whatever Sartre meant by nothingness (*néant*) can reasonably be interpreted as the lack of any constitutive properties, beyond those by which it is defined, as purely intendable and nothing more. *Qua* intensional identity conditions, they will be those minimal constitutive properties by which nothing or nothingness is defined as *N*, rather than as any other property associated with any other intended object, non-*N*.

The mischievous philosophical pun, 'By "*néant*" Sartre meant *nothing*', depends precisely on a difference in two senses which Sartre could be said to have 'meant *nothing*'. These have already been singled out as the quantificational or negative existential and intensional predicational interpretations of 'intending' and 'aboutness'. On the strength of the argument above, we consider expressions in which nothing(ness) is at least by grammatical parity the intended object and constitutive property of some thinkers' thoughts. Nothing(ness) in the peculiar nature of the case is at once intended object and the constitutive property of being nothing, also called nothingness.

The existence-presuppositional existential and negative existential quantificational route for interpreting Sartre's study of being in relation to *néant,* rightly translated as nothing *or* nothingness, is unpromising. Assume thought *T*, two-place intending relation *I*, and *N*-nothing(ness) as previously explained. Then the quantificational interpretation of Sartre's *néant* meaning nothing is to say $\exists x[Tx \wedge \neg\exists y[Ixy]]$. This postulates a thought that does not intend anything to which reference can be made or true predication attached, in blatant contradiction of intentionality thesis (IT). The intensional interpretation of the category surpasses quantificational apparatus by adding a predicate '*N*' to represent nothing or nothingness, in full expression as *N*-nothing(ness), and defined as having no other constitutive properties than intendability. With *N* as the intended object constitutive property of being intendable and nothing more, we can regiment talk about Sartre's *néant* meaning an intended object of his phenomenological reflections on the concept of being in relation to non-being, $\exists x\exists y[Tx \wedge Ny \wedge Ixy]$.

The advantage of the negative existential quantificational interpretation, $\exists x[Tx \wedge \neg\exists y[Ixy]]$, is that we know exactly what it is saying, provided we know what a thought is and what it is for a thought to intend an intended object, and we understand the basics of the classical functional calculus or predicate-quantificational logic. The disadvantage is that it contradicts intentionality thesis

(IT) that every thought intends an intended object. Otherwise, we do not speak of thoughts. The fun here appears to be at Sartre's expense, that his philosophical writings actually are not about anything at all, that he was literally scribbling all the time ostensibly about *néant*, without expressing any genuine intentions, any intendings of intended objects. Although the joke is actually on classical logic for its clumsy limitations in dealing with grammatical constructions in which nothing or nothingness plays the role of intended object. The demand is better met by introducing a limiting concept or constitutive property of being nothing or having nothingness, as facilitated most accommodatingly in Meinongian object theory.

All is still not rosy if we flee from the negative existential interpretation of Sartre's intending *néant* to the further shore of the intensional interpretation, outfitting an analysis of a constitutive property *N*, also nominalized as an intended object of thoughts like Sartre's, in $\exists x \exists y[Tx \wedge Ny \wedge Ixy]$. This relieves negation and the classical quantifiers of the burden of explaining how it is that Sartre thought and wrote about nothing. The price to be paid is that we then need to define *N*, to say exactly what is meant by *néant*. If we want to know what Sartre meant by *néant*, schematized as *N* or N_s, then I am afraid that to find out we must read a rather long book and poke about in a mountain of supplementary secondary philosophical literature.

Many will choose to do so. A neo-Meinongian adopting the analysis proposed here can be sure without haunting the library that whatever of substance Sartre tries to say about nothing or nothingness it must go beyond the so-being of nothing(ness) as an intended object of any thought, of being intendable and nothing more. If the analysis is correct, then Sartre must be understood as writing about the phenomenology of his own thoughts ostensibly about *néant*, or *néant* intended in a very different technical philosophical sense than nothing or nothingness, rather than *N* as defined for a neo-Meinongian account of thinking about nothing. If Sartre tries to color in the concept of nothing or nothingness with constitutive properties extending beyond bare intendability, then from a neo-Meinongian perspective he is trying to say something more than can intelligibly be expressed about nothing, or more likely speaking of something potentially highly interesting, but anyway other than nothingness.

The formalizations, $\exists x[Tx \wedge \neg \exists y[Ixy]]$ and $\exists x \exists y[Tx \wedge Ny \wedge Ixy]$, are adequate as far as they go for their respective interpretation strategies, provided only that we allow *N*-nothing(ness) as a limiting case into a Meinongian semantic referential domain, subsuming while exceeding the logic's ontology. Making this turn already marks a radical departure from the classical logic negative existentials interpretation of Sartre's *néant*. *N* is a pure constitutive-property bare intended object that serves as the intended object (and indeed the only choice) of thoughts about the concept of *N*. What else, constitutively, attributively speaking, could nothing or nothingness *be*? This is a merely momentarily absurd-appearing question, which can also be understood more charitably and meaningfully to ask: To what kind of nonexistent intended object could nothing or nothingness possibly belong? The answer is given by the above explanation, with key parts of the reasoning formalized in both

classical and intended object theoretical predicate-quantificational logics, involving similar semantic structures supported by different but classically conservative existence-presuppositional referential semantic domains.

9.11 Nothing Never Nothings. It Does Nothing of the Sort.

Can we achieve what we have now suggested must be provided in an adequate applied intensional logic of the aboutness relation holding between at least some thoughts and intended objects, if not the fully general (IT)?

A domain of intended objects, as we read them directly and explicitly out of linguistic expressions and descriptions of the projected contents of all logically possible thoughts, includes all and only the objects that we can possibly think about or refer to, independently of their ontic status. Wherever these properties are constitutive of any other intendable object, they are in any case constitutive of themselves, which is only to say self-identical. The domain must also contain whatever objects are intended when we wonder anything about the concept of nothing or nothingness, or about *N*-nothing(ness), defined as proposed. As a consequence, we include *N* in the logic's ontically neutral intensionally identity conditional semantic referential domain. *N* is exactly what it is and not another intended object, and no other intended object is *N*. *N*, therefore, satisfies the minimally necessary and sufficient identity conditional requirements for being an intended object, although it happens also to be a constitutive property.

We can think and express thoughts about *N*, because we can intend exactly that object by virtue of its being the only intended object with no constitutive property other than the constitutive property of being intendable. The fact that we cannot through any scientific or dialectical channel conclude anything concrete concerning the nature, essence, or concept of *N*, other than the exceedingly thin facts that it is self-identical, identical to *N*, to being intendable and nothing more, an intendable or ideally logically possibly intended and otherwise uncharacterized object, is no limitation on our knowledge. *N*-nothing(ness) is so defined as to admit no other distinguishing constitutive property than the trivial property of being intendable, an ideally minimally intended object, and nothing more. Thereby, Nothing Nothings, and Nothing nothings, but nothing does not Nothing.

Already in understanding the immediately preceding passage of ostensibly sensible if somewhat dizzying philosophical prose, we will have *de facto* made *N* the intended object of our thought, as much as if we had struggled through all of Sartre's revisionary Heideggerian café revelations. By the time we get to the end of the sentence, merely in grasping the meaning of the expression, we will already have ourselves made *N* the intended object of our thoughts, even if we do not yet agree as to what kind of intended object *N*, as a distinct object of thought, can and should be understood nonparadoxically to be. Or, better, perhaps, how *N* is to be defined, as a matter of its (minimal) meta-logical meta-semantic properties as pure intendability, with no further qualifications. *N* is a limiting case intended object, like 0 in the number series, with which *N*-nothing(ness) shares several similarities.

We know at least that a sentence is about N, as a specific intendable object, whatever intendable object such thoughts may finally actually be thought to intend. We also know that there is uniquely absolutely nothing substantive or otherwise constitutively distinguishing about the property of being or having constitutive property N, nothing to be discovered about the nature, essence, or concept of N, beyond the fact that, remarkably, unlike every other intendable object, it has only the constitutive property of being intendable, of meeting minimal self-identity conditions for singular reference, of being identical to itself, and in this case to N, $=N$, $\lambda x[x = \mathrm{N}]$. N is in this regard the intensionally most impoverished intendable object, whereas in contrast M representing the maximally impossible object is the most excessive.

The Taj Mahal and the number π are ranged between the constitutive property predication extremes of N and M. At the thin end of the spectrum, representing the skimpy properties of most nonexistent intendables, there are fictional objects, like Sherlock Holmes and Anna Karenina, and theoretically nonexistent objects like the ideal gas, ideal pendulum, moving projectile unimpeded by impressed forces, the round square or greatest prime number. There are all the more intensionally interesting intended objects in this kind of inventory for theory and inventive fancy, once we get to this fruitful part of the object theory referential domain. The objects themselves must be limited somehow, or there can be no check against a mistaken domain comprehension principle. While in an intensional logic there is no other boundary than the intendable objects at opposite ends of a spectrum of combinations, possessing respectively the least and the greatest logically possible number of distinct constitutive properties in their respective so-beings. Intensional identity conditions permit individuating reference to the admittedly weird but still assumable constitutive property N, which is all we are supposing is needed in order for N to be an intended object, for certain thoughts to be about nothing or nothingness, N-nothing(ness).

The main conclusion of these deliberations has been to show that nothing or nothingness, N-nothing(ness), which, for convenience, we have collectively designated N, is an intendable object of thought. Indeed, it is the one and only intendable object that is only that, intendable and nothing more. It is something we can think about and refer to in thought and language in a variety of contexts, after we filter off ostensible references to nothing and nothingness that are paraphrastically eliminable by judicious use of negative existentials and similar logical devices. There is accordingly nothing more to be known about N than that it is or has the solely constitutive (C) property of being intendable as intended object N. More than this is already implied by the definition of the concept of N as that which has no other constitutive properties than that of being self-identical, of being or having constitutive property N, where, as previously observed, N is an exceptional nonexistent property, $N(N) \wedge \neg E!N$.

There is of logical necessity nothing more to discover about the nature, essence or concept of N. Only that it trivially constitutively is or has the intendable constitutive property of N, $=N$, $\lambda x[x = \mathrm{N}]$. It is nothing more than being intendable as a particular intended object distinct from any other. We can avoid wasting energy trying to fathom the definition or deeper meaning of nothing or nothingness analytically or phenomenologically, as Sartre purports to do. The concept, as its intensional identity conditions have been explained, is precisely that of having nothing more ever to

discover within its constitutive nature whatsoever to disclose than its meager implied intendability. This in turn is to say only the minimally intendable object's individuality, its satisfying intensional Leibnizian self-identity conditions, being self-identical, being itself and having only property *N*. If we truly have additional constitutive properties to attribute to *N*, then we cannot be referring to the same intended object *N*. There is analytically nothing more to know about *N* than the fact that it is or has only the single individuating constitutive property *N*. Intended object *N* can withhold no further secrets of its nature, for by definition it has none.

All properties belonging to an intended object's so-being need not be essential to its identity. If *S* thinks about or otherwise intends *N*, then *N* has the converse intentional property of being thought about or intended by *S*. The extrinsic accidental property of being intended by *S* can then be included in the intended object's so-being without entering into the object's minimal identity conditions. The alternative is to categorize all converse intentional properties as extraconstitutive. Then we face identity problems for such putatively intended objects in Meinongian *Außersein* as the fictional detective's receipt of both an intended and another distinct unintended message. If there is no further information available in the story as to the content or authors of the messages, then they can only be distinguished by virtue of their opposed converse intentional properties of being or having been intended or unintended for the detective to read. The fact that *Sosein*(intended message) $\neq$ *Sosein*(unintended message) means that the converse intentional properties of being intended or unintended are constitutive of the two fictional messages the fictional detective receives in this heuristic application.

How else are they to be distinguished? The identical structure results if we consider the so-being of *N* (-nothing(ness)) versus that of *N*-thought-about-by-*S*. As should be expected, *Sosein*(*N*) $\neq$ *Sosein*(*N*-thought-about-by-*S*). The latter is another more specific thing, since there is otherwise no logical requirement that *N* be thought about by *S*, even if in fact *N* is thought about by *S*. It is essential to any intended object that it be intendable, Mally's unapprehended object for the moment aside. It is accidental and extrinsic to the object in satisfying its self-identity conditions, however, that it be apprehended or otherwise intended in fact by particular thinking subjects S_1, S_2, etc. Excluding the category of converse intentional property from the so-being of every intended object is too extreme, as the detective intercepting an intended and unintended message shows. The point is that in order for *S* to think about *N* and not about something other than *N*, intrinsic identity conditions for *N* must already be secured, independently of *S* only thereafter being able to think about the theoretically identified intended object *N*. Appeals to extrinsic accidental converse intentional properties as constitutive of appositely designated intended objects on a heuristic basis are not generally invoked in explaining the identity conditions in thinking about such intended objects as *N*. They are rallied if at all only in specifying and drawing inferences from the identity conditions of such challenging fabrications as *N*-thought-about-by-*S*, in which the extrinsic accidental intending of *N* by a particular intending subject is built by free assumption into the so-being of another object distinct from *N*.

Chapter 10
Tarski's Quantificational Semantics and Meinongian Object Theory Domains

10.1 Model Sets and Intended Objects

Tarski's model set theoretical analysis of logical truth presupposes a reduction principle, according to which, if a universally quantified sentence is true, then all of its instances are logically true. John Etchemendy, in a recent critique, rejects the reduction principle on the basis of intuitive counterexamples. He proposes a philosophical diagnosis of what he sees as the failure of Tarski's account due to its commitment to the principle. Etchemendy's objections to the reduction principle are avoided when Tarski's quantificational criterion of logical truth is applied to a Meinongian referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent objects, rather than to an ontology or extensional domain of existent objects only. The conclusion is not that Tarski intended a Meinongian object theory domain for his analysis of logical truth, but that Etchemendy's criticisms inadvertently show this to be its proper semantic application.

10.2 Tarski's Analysis of Logical Truth

The idea of Tarski's model set theoretical analysis of the concept of logical truth is ordinary (nonlogical) truth or satisfaction-preservation under substitution of all nonlogical terms in a sentence. If S is a sentence to be evaluated for logical truth in language L, then S' is a sentence function obtained from S by replacing all nonlogical terms in S by corresponding variable terms for objects, properties, connections, and operations. The logical terms if any in S are held fixed in S', but all other terms are permitted to vary. Then S is said to be logically true if and only if S' is satisfaction-preserving on all sequences of objects in appropriate satisfaction domains for the variables in S'. This in turn means that S is logically true if and only if all the sentences obtained from sentence function S' by resubstituting names,

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_10

predicates, connectives, and operators for corresponding variables in S' from the entire available satisfaction domains in each category produces only sentences true in L. The logical truth of S in this way is equated with the ordinary truth of the universal closure of S' in $\forall v_1 \ldots \forall v_n[S']$.[1]

As an illustration, consider the sentence 'Napoléon is Corsican'. The sentence contains no logical terms to be fixed, but only variables. Its corresponding sentence function is simply ϕx. The universal closure of the sentence in $\forall\phi\forall x[\phi x]$, *modulo* the (null) fixed set of logical terms, is evidently not true or satisfaction-preserving. The single counterexample, 'Cleopatra is Danish' suffices to prove the point. Tarski's criterion rightly entails that the sentence, even if true, is not *logically* true. Now consider the sentence, 'Either Napoléon is Corsican or it is not the case that Napoléon is Corsican'. Here the set of fixed terms is not empty, but contains the propositional connectives for disjunction and negation. The corresponding sentence function, *modulo* the set of fixed logical terms, is $\phi x \vee \neg\phi x$, where universal closure of the sentence function is $\forall\phi\forall x[\phi x \vee \neg\phi x]$. This sentence is true or satisfaction-preserving on all category-restricted substitution sequences from all satisfaction domains, which gives the correct evaluation of the tautology under Tarski's analysis as logically true.

Tarski's model set theoretical semantics provides an interesting analysis of the concept of logical truth in terms of the ordinary truth or satisfaction-preservation of universal quantifications. It gives correct results in many instances. The question is whether it holds in every case.

10.3 Counterexamples in Etchemendy's Critique

Etchemendy in *The Concept of Logical Consequence* mounts an extensive criticism of Tarski's analysis. He offers this preliminary exposition:

> Suppose we applied Tarski's account to a language containing names, truth-functional connectives, and the following three predicates: 'is a man', 'is a bachelor', and 'is a senator'. Suppose further that we included in [the designated set of fixed terms] all expressions except names. Thus, for example, we should equate the logical truth of
>
> (11) Leslie is a senator → Leslie is a man
> with the ordinary truth or falsity of
> (12) $\forall x$[x is a senator → x is a man].
> Similarly, the logical truth of
> (13) Leslie is a bachelor → Leslie is a man
> would be tied to the ordinary truth of
> (14) $\forall x$[x is a bachelor → x is a man].

[1] See Etchemendy 1990, 95–124.

> Notice that this application of Tarski's account would have a quite reasonable extension. Indeed, the only sentences that would be declared logically true are those—like (13)—that are true solely by virtue of meaning. All others, for example (11), would not come out logically true, thanks to the falsity of their corresponding generalizations. (Etchemendy 1990, 125–6)

The difficulty, despite its predominantly satisfying extension in these applications of Tarski's analysis, according to Etchemendy, is that the falsehood of (12), by which (11) is excluded from the category of logical truths, is purely fortuitous. The world just happens to be such that there are female as well as male senators in the United States Congress. This variation within the satisfaction domain is itself logically contingent, and as such insufficient, on pain of modal fallacy, to support *logical* truths, where associated universal closures merely happen to be true.

Etchemendy's counterexample appears fundamentally flawed. It misapplies Tarski's analysis by allowing such nonlogical terms as the predicates 'is a man', 'is a bachelor', and 'is a senator' into the set of fixed terms relative to which sentence functions of variable and fixed logical terms are determined. If Tarski's restriction of the fixed set exclusively to logical terms is not observed, then the ordinary truth or falsehood of associated universal closures of a sentence function provides no definite criterion of logical truth. From this standpoint, it is unsurprising that there should be counterexamples in which Tarski's analysis appears not to coincide with the intuitive extension of logical truths. In any such misapplication, the restrictions whereby it would constitute a criterion specifically of logical truth are deliberately relaxed.[2]

If Tarski's explicit restriction of fixed to logical terms is observed, then the results for sentences (11) and (13) are strikingly different than those Etchemendy derives. Under the correct interpretation of Tarski's criterion, Etchemendy is wrong both in thinking that (11) is at most fortuitously excluded from the category of logical truths, and that (13) is correctly evaluated by Tarski's criterion as a logical truth. The sentence functions and universal closures of sentence functions associated with sentences (11) and (13), *modulo* the designated set of fixed logical terms consisting of the 'if-then' material conditional ('→'), are in these cases instead:

$$\phi x \rightarrow \psi x$$
$$\forall \phi \forall \psi \forall x [\phi x \rightarrow \psi x]$$

[2] Tarski 1956 [1936], 416–7: 'One of the concepts which can be defined in terms of the concept of satisfaction is the concept of *model*. Let us assume that in the language we are considering certain variables correspond to every *extra-logical constant*, and in such a way that every sentence becomes a sentential function if the constants in it are replaced by the corresponding variables. Let L be any class of sentences. We replace all *extra-logical constants* which occur in the sentences belonging to L by corresponding variables, like constants being replaced by like variables, and unlike by unlike. In this way we obtain a class L' of sentential functions. An arbitrary sequence of objects which satisfies every sentential function of the class L' will be called a *model* or *realization of the class L of sentences*. . .' [selected emphases added].

The universal closure of sentence functions common to sentences (11) and (13) with fixed term set restricted to logical terms is obviously not true or satisfaction-preserving on all sequences from the appropriate satisfaction domains. The generalization is not an ordinary truth, so that neither sentence (11) nor (13) is a logical truth by correct application of Tarski's criterion. This, arguably, is precisely the conclusion the analysis of the sentences should imply.

First, concerning sentence (11), the ordinary falsehood of the universal closure $\forall\phi\forall\psi\forall x[\phi x \rightarrow \psi x]$, as opposed to $\forall x[x \text{ is a senator} \rightarrow x \text{ is a man}]$, is by no means the fortuitous result of contingent variation in the respective satisfaction domains for predicates and names. It holds because it is not true that any object has any property conditionally on having any other. The contents of the predicates 'is a senator' and 'is a man' have been abstracted away, as Tarski requires, to determine whether the truth of the sentence depends only on its logical structure. The evaluation of the sentence as other than a logical truth is not happenstance, depending on the accidental constitution of the world, but obtains for the good solid reason that arbitrary properties are not logically conditionally possessed by arbitrary objects.

Second, sentence (13), 'If Leslie is a bachelor, then Leslie is a man', is also correctly classified by the proper application of Tarski's criterion as other than a logical truth, contrary to Etchemendy's assumption. The truth of (13) is analytic or conceptual. This categorization is importantly different from the logical truth of sentences like 'Either Napoléon is Corsican or it is not the case that Napoléon is Corsican', or 'If Leslie is a bachelor, then Leslie is a bachelor'. Etchemendy unsystematically confuses these two types of necessary truths. If substantive concept terms along with logical terms or predicates are fixed in adducing variable term sentence functions from sentences when (mis-) applying Tarski's analysis, then the criterion will identify conceptual and logical truths mixed together. Since conceptual analysis is different from logical analysis, and since not all necessary truths are specifically logical, but may be independent of their logical structures, it is inappropriate to test Tarski's method by counterexamples involving variable term sentence functions and their universal closures generated from sentences *modulo* fixed term sets that contain nonlogical terms, such as conceptually or analytically related predicates.

If this countercriticism of Etchemendy is sound, then Etchemendy's counterexamples do not threaten the correct application of Tarski's analysis of logical truth. Etchemendy tries to offset objections of the sort by raising difficulties about the characterization of logical terms, and their distinction from extralogical terms.[3]

[3] The difficulties of distinguishing between logical and extralogical terms are considerable, and I do not mean to downplay the problems involved. For purposes of my countercriticism of Etchemendy's attack on Tarski, however, I have no need to offer an exact criterion. Where there is a potential for serious controversy about the classification of a term, as with the identity sign, I have, for the sake of argument, granted Etchemendy's claim that the term is logical, as affording his counterexamples the maximum benefit of doubt. Etchemendy 1990, 111–24. See also his 1988, 69: 'However, as long as the quantifiers are treated as logical constants, Tarski's analysis always leaves the domain of quantification fixed. Because of this, sentences like (15) $[(\exists x)(\exists y)(x \neq y)]$

These problems are also anticipated by Tarski, who in any case does not authorize a wholescale breakdown of the distinction by which predicates like 'is a senator', 'is a bachelor', and 'is a man', might come to be fixed for purposes of determining sentence functions and their universal closures, in applying Tarski's quantificational model set theoretical analysis of logical truth.[4] The grey area between logical and extralogical terms to which Etchemendy's more interesting counterexamples call attention, of which Tarski was also aware, primarily includes identity and the existential quantifier, when these are interpreted as having substantive import.

10.4 Reduction Principle for Tarski's Quantificational Criterion

Etchemendy traces his dissatisfaction with Tarski's analysis to a presupposition he calls the *reduction principle*. Etchemendy maintains:

> It should by now be apparent that a quantificational account of logical truth is based on a . . . principle . . . [that is] at first glance . . . surprising. The principle is this. . .
>
> If a universally quantified sentence is *true*, then all of its instances are *logically true*. I will call [this] the *reduction* principle. (Etchemendy 1990, 98)

Tarski's commitment to the reduction principle is understood by Etchemendy as the source of the appeal of Tarski's model set theoretical analysis of the concept of logical truth, without which the theory would lose interest. Etchemendy continues:

> Indeed, the substantial technical and mathematical attraction of Tarski's account derives directly from [the reduction principle]. For, assuming his analysis is right, it is this principle that allows the direct application of well-known techniques for defining *truth* to the task of defining *logical* truth. (Etchemendy 1990, 99)

If Etchemendy's exposition is correct, then the reduction principle is the key to Tarski's theory of logical truth. It provides the bridge linking the ordinary truth of

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will come out logically true on Tarski's account . . . This [is] simply because on the present selection of logical constants, there are no nonlogical constants in the sentence to replace with variables. Thus, such sentences are logically true just in case they happen to be true; true, of course, on the intended interpretation.'

[4] Tarski 1956, 418–20: 'Underlying our whole construction is the division of all terms of the language discussed into logical and extra-logical. This division is certainly not quite arbitrary. If, for example, we were to include among the extra-logical signs the implication sign, or the universal quantifier, then our definition of the concept of consequence would lead to results which obviously contradict ordinary usage . . . Perhaps it will be possible to find important objective arguments which will enable us to justify the traditional boundary between logical and extra-logical expressions. But I also consider it to be quite possible that investigations will bring no positive results in this direction, so that we shall be compelled to regard such concepts as "logical consequence", "analytical statement", and "tautology" as relative concepts which must, on each occasion, be related to a definite, although in greater or less degree arbitrary, division of terms into logical and extra-logical.'

universal closures with the more elusive concept of logical truth. It is noteworthy that Etchemendy does not attribute the reduction principle to Tarski by reference to explicit statements in Tarski's writings, but presents it instead as a requirement that must be accepted if there is to be a connection between ordinary and logical truth via quantification in Tarski's logic. It is a principle to which Etchemendy believes Tarski is committed, whether Tarski is aware of it or not.

Etchemendy arrives at his conclusion by considering and rejecting as inadequate two weaker formulations that might otherwise be thought to carry the reduction of logical to ordinary truth. This is good if less than decisive justification for ascribing the reduction principle to Tarski as Etchemendy does, especially if no better alternative is available. Etchemendy's argument leaves open the possibility that there may yet be grounds for withdrawing the attribution to Tarski's theory. For present purposes, it is assumed that Etchemendy is correct to interpret Tarski's analysis of logical truth as presupposing some version of the reduction principle. If this is a legitimate assessment of the background requirements of Tarski's account, then the reduction principle shows that Tarski's theory shares the fate of the quantificational semantics on which it is built and on which it logically depends.[5]

[5] Sher 1991, 45–52, critically examines Tarski's definition of logical consequence independently of Etchemendy's reduction principle attribution. She comes close to recognizing the principle, when she writes, 45: 'DEFINITION MC The sentence *X* is a *material consequence* of the sentences of the class *K* iff at least one sentence of *K* is false or *X* is true. Tarski's statement first seemed to me clear and obvious. However, on second thought I found it somewhat puzzling. How could *all* material consequences of a hypothetical first-order logic λ become logical consequences?' What Etchemendy regards as a false presupposition of Tarski's theory, Sher, in modified form, considers as a potentially false conclusion. Sher blocks the objection that in some model for λ (4) (There are exactly two things) follows as a Tarskian logical consequence from the contingently false (2) (There is exactly one thing). She argues that for Tarski there is a model for λ with a universe of cardinality α for arbitrary α. Sher concludes, 45–6: 'Thus in particular λ has a model with exactly one individual. It is therefore not true that in every model in which (2) is true, (4) is true too. Hence, according to Tarski's definition, (4) is not a logical consequence of (2).' Although this defense is not directed against an objection that explicitly invokes the reduction principle, it clearly addresses the same concern about overgeneration of logical consequence that Etchemendy summarizes by attributing the principle to Tarski. Sher's solution involving Tarski's thesis of the unlimited cardinalities of models for formal languages by itself moreover appears inadequate when applied to some of Etchemendy's counterexamples. Consider the dilemma Etchemendy builds around the claim that for Tarski either $\exists x \exists y (x \neq y)$ or $\neg \exists x \exists y (x \neq y)$ must be true in *any* λ (regardless of the size of its model's domains), but that Tarski's account overgenerates the specifically *logical* consequences of λ if *either* formula is true. The problem goes to the heart of the present discussion, where the issue in avoiding intuitive objections to Tarski's theory of logical consequence is not merely the *cardinality* of a model's domains vis-à-vis the population of the actual world, but rather its *constitution* by exclusively existent or existent and nonexistent objects.

10.5 Logical and Extralogical Terms, Vacuous and Nonvacuous Closure

The counterexamples Etchemendy needs to refute Tarski's analysis must be more convincing than those considered. Not any contingently true substantive generalization will do, but only closures of sentence functions, as Tarski explicitly requires, in which all nonlogical terms of the sentence to be evaluated are made variable, and all logical terms held fixed. Etchemendy proposes several problems of this kind, of which the following is representative. He writes:

> This is what happens . . . when we hold fixed the interpretation of both the identity predicate and the quantifiers. For then we find the following sentences among the relevant closures:
>
> $$[\exists x \exists y (x \neq y)]$$
> $$[\neg \exists x \exists y (x \neq y)]$$
>
> Since both of these make substantive claims, the account will overgenerate if either comes out true. But since one or the other of them must be true, the account is sure to make a faulty assessment. (Etchemendy 1990, 131)

If the existential quantifier and identity predicate are logical terms, then fixing them as nonvariable terms in determining the associated sentence functions of these sentences for purposes of applying Tarski's criterion leaves nothing variable at all. The sentences are selected to contain nothing but logical terms that nevertheless make a substantive assertion about contingent matters in the world. The closures of sentence functions abstracted in this way are identical to the associated sentences themselves, and are therefore vacuous. At least one of the sentences must be true, and whether it is the first or second depends entirely, not on necessities of logical structure, but on happenstance contingencies in the actual world. If the world is pluralistic, if there happen to exist at least two objects, then the (vacuous) closure of the sentence function obtained in the specified way from the first sentence is true. This Tarski-qualifies the first sentence as logically true, and its negation in the second sentence as logically false. If the world is monistic, as in a Parmenidean or Spinozistic metaphysics, then the second sentence Tarski-qualifies as logically true, and the first as logically false. Since, intuitively, neither sentence is logically true or logically false, but depends for its truth on how the world happens to be, Tarski's quantificational analysis of logical truth seems extensionally inadequate in either case, overgenerating the extension of logical truths.

The categorization of the identity predicate is more problematic than Etchemendy admits. It is significant that a logically more austere counterexample cannot be given. The best that might be tried is to begin with the existential $\exists x Fx$, produce the sentence function $\exists x[\phi x]$, and then the universal closure $\forall \phi \exists x [\phi x]$. This, however, is no counterexample to Tarski's analysis. It falsely asserts that something has every property. As an ordinary falsehood, it Tarski-disqualifies the sentence $\exists x Fx$ as other than a logical truth, just as it should. Russell, in the *Principia Mathematica*, proposed that the substantive assertion of the contents of

the universal class might be managed by class membership notation and identity as $(\hat{x})(x = x)$, which brings in the identity predicate (Russell 1927, 216 (*24.01)). Wittgenstein, in the *Tractatus* 5.5352, criticizes a similar attempt, '. . .to express 'There are no things' by '$\neg(\exists x).x = x$'.'[6] The identity predicate, unlike the existential quantifier, is less unquestionably a *purely* logical term, as the concept might be explained.[7] The vacuous closure of sentences containing nothing but logical terms includes Etchemendy's most convincing counterexamples. These remain

[6] Wittgenstein 1922, 5.5351, similarly rejects the (substantive) definition of (something, p's being a) 'proposition' in Russell 1903, 15, as '*p implies p*'. We could as well say equivalently, $\forall p[p$ is a proposition $\leftrightarrow [p \rightarrow p]]$, or, for that matter, '$p \leftrightarrow p$'. A proposition p is anything that can imply or be implied. It is anything to which a truth function can relate among any choice of such objects, relating to itself in the simplest and logically most foundational case in the implicational tautology, by which Russell tries to define the concept of proposition. The trouble is that we are then assuming that something is a proposition just in case it can be the argument of a truth function, whereas the domain and range of truth functions, such as Russell's 'implies', are defined over what must then be a predetermined set of propositions. We must have propositions in order to define truth functions, so how can we turn exclusively to truth functions in order to define the concept of a proposition? To put the problem another way, for Russell in 1903, in order to define the concept of a proposition, we must invoke the concept of implication; whereas implication is defined as a formal semantic relation between truth-value-bearing propositions. Russell in 1927 takes the concept of proposition as primitive, and the earlier definition of 1903 is not followed. See Tarski 1986, for an attempt to generalize principles for identifying logical terms from the formalization of a geometrical theorem.

[7] In his later 1986, Tarski understood identity and the existential quantifier as purely logical 'notions', according to the invariance under the domain-reflexive one-one transformation (function) criterion. The argument here, without entering into the necessary morass of details, seems questionable. Tarski refers to an elegant result he achieved in 1936 in collaboration with Lindenbaum, but which considers only the *Principia Mathematica* calculus of (existent) 'individuals'. Invariance arguably is not guaranteed for transformations involving non-(existent entity)-designating terms, at least for the standard extensionally interpreted 'existential' quantifier, if not also for the identity predicate or functor, and hence not for what is *logically* the truly widest class of transformations. It appears again that Tarski's later criterion for the logical-extralogical term distinction, as a prerequisite for trouble-free analysis of logical consequence, works properly only if invariance under all transformations obtains for a Meinongian semantic domain of existent and nonexistent objects. Otherwise, as Etchemendy complains, Tarski's criterion merely fortuitously gives correct results for contingently or accidentally populated domains, such as the domain of individuals. Tarski does not notice the problem because he does not consider transformations for formal languages with non-(existent entity)-designating singular terms. The difficulty surfaces in another guise, when Tarski writes, 1986, 152: 'Are set-theoretical notions logical notions or not? Again, since it is known that all usual set-theoretical notions can be defined in terms of one, the notion of belonging, or the membership relation, the final form of our question is whether the membership relation is a logical one in the sense of my suggestion. The answer will seem disappointing. For we can develop set theory, the theory of the membership relation, in such a way that the answer to this question is affirmative, or we can proceed in such a way that the answer is negative. So the answer is: "As you wish"!' Since identity and the existential quantifier are also definable in terms of set theoretical membership, it should follow by parity of reasoning that the status of these terms or 'notions' as logical or extralogical is equally ambivalent, confirming the suspicions of informal inquiry into their standard meanings. See Stoll 1979 [1963], 26 and 196. A less formal definition is found, for example, in Quigley 1970, 2, as an axiom of elementary set theory, '$A = B$ *iff* (for all z, z M A iff z M B) [M $= \in$]'.

disputable if they depend on fixing such terms as the identity predicate that may be more properly metaphysical than purely logical.[8]

10.6 Etchemendy's Philosophical Objections to the Reduction Principle

The deeper significance of Tarski's reduction principle is explained by Etchemendy in this language: '. . .if the quantificational account is correct, what it achieves is a truly remarkable reduction of obscure notions to mathematically tractable ones' (Etchemendy 1990, 99). Far from believing that Tarski's theory is correct, Etchemendy assails the reduction principle as the underlying defect in its structure responsible for the application's extensional inadequacies.

Etchemendy prefaces his philosophical objections to the reduction principle with these general observations:

> I will not spend much time discussing the abstract acceptability of [the reduction] principle. Unadorned and unmodified, its implausibility could hardly be more apparent. Our natural inclination is to reject the principle out of hand, to reject it for a very simple reason: universal generalizations have no particular claim to logical truth; they, like any sentences, can be true by mere happenstance. And when such a sentence just happens to be true, there is no guarantee that its instances will be *logically* true. Some might, but then again some might not. (Etchemendy 1990, 99)

The objection is that the ordinary truth of a universal generalization such as 'All men are mortal', intuitively does not confer logical truth or necessity on its instances. This is obvious when we consider such instances as 'If Socrates is a man, then Socrates is mortal', 'If Xenophon is a man, then Xenophon is mortal'. These implications are true, but not logically true, if the universal generalization from which they derive is true. There is no logical inconsistency in their negations, no logical impossibility, for example, in Xenophon's being an immortal man. That a true universal closure implies only true instances, on the other hand, is true, but insufficient to uphold Tarski's quantificational analysis of the concept of logical truth.

[8] My understanding of the role of logical constants in Tarskian semantics agrees in important respects with Sher's 1991 rationale, especially Chap. 3, 36–66, 'To Be a Logical Term'. See also McCarthy 1981. I am uncertain about the material adequacy of Sher's analysis, in light of the difficulty in Tarski's 1986 characterization of logical notions observed in preceding note 7. Sher writes, 1991, 63: 'In the lecture 'What are Logical Notions?' Tarski proposed a definition of 'logical term' that is coextensional with [my] condition (E).' Condition (E) is Sher's general characterization of formality as invariance under isomorphic structures, and an essential component of her criterion for logical constants in a first-order logic. According to Tarski's definition, Sher maintains, '. . .the truth functional connectives, standard quantifiers, and identity are logical terms. . .'

Etchemendy offers this further diagnosis of the invalidity in Tarski's reduction principle. By this limitation, no implications can acquire stronger logical properties than the sentences from which they are deduced.

> The problem with the reduction principle is that the mere truth of a universal generalization can, in general, guarantee nothing more than the truth of its instances. It cannot guarantee that the instances will have any of the distinctive features, whether modal or epistemic or semantic, ordinarily thought to set logical truths apart from common, run-of-the-mill truths. Of course, if the generalization itself is *logically* true, then the instances will be logically true as well . . . But if the generalization is not logically true—if it is, say, a historical truth, or truth of physics—then the instances will presumably be just as historical or arithmetical or physical. (Etchemendy 1990, 99–100)

The modal confusion that appears transparently in Tarski's reduction principle is taken by Etchemendy as a sign of what is wrong at every level in Tarski's analysis of the concept of logical truth. There is a correlation in Etchemendy's counterexamples between modal invalidity in the reduction principle and the mere logical contingency of variation within the world that is unable to uphold the logical necessity of logical truths even when their associated universal closures happen to be true, or to account for a sentence's being other than a logical truth when associated universal closures happen to be false. Etchemendy continues:

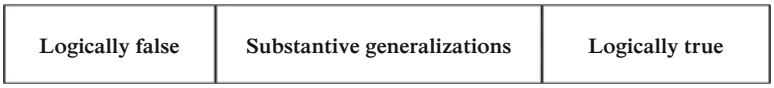
> When we equate the *logical* truth of a sentence with the *ordinary* truth of a universal generalization of which it is an instance, we risk an account whose output is influenced by facts of an entirely 'extralogical' sort. Clearly, the question of whether the sentence
>
> (1) If Leslie was president then Leslie was a man is a logical truth does not depend on the sorts of historical facts that determine the truth or falsehood of the generalization
> (2) $\forall x$[if x was president then x was a man].
>
> As it happens, (2) is true, and so any account that equates the logical truth of (1) with the simple truth of (2) will mistakenly declare the former logically true. But of course the basic problem with the account would remain even if (2) happened to be false. In that case the account would issue the right assessment of (1), but certainly not because it coincides with our ordinary understanding of logical truth, or even offers a reliable test for that property. (Etchemendy 1990, 107)

There are in principle two ways in which an analysis can fail its extensional adequacy requirement. It is defective if it overgenerates or undergenerates the set of items that have the property it is supposed to analyze, or for which it is supposed to provide a criterion. The danger for Tarski's analysis is not undergenerating logical truths, provided that logical terms are at least not excluded from the set of fixed terms used to abstract sentence functions from sentences. Whether Tarski's analysis overgenerates logical truths or generates a precisely correct extension depends, as Etchemendy indicates, on whether the only true universal closures are also logically true.

Some universal closures of sentence functions associated with evaluated sentences are logically true, others are logically false, while the remainder are substantive generalizations like those Etchemendy mentions as belonging, for example, to history, arithmetic, or physics. These, unlike tautologies and logical

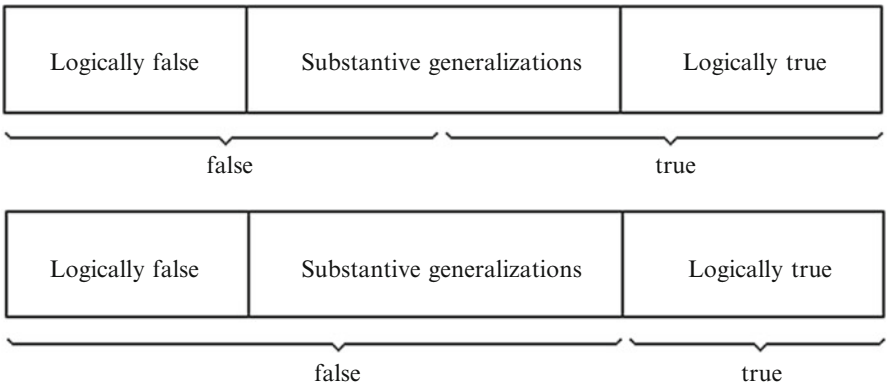
inconsistencies, make substantive assertions about contingent states of affairs. Etchemendy (1990, 129) graphically presents a spectrum of semantic values for associated closures:

Associated Closures



It is only if a universal closure happens to be logically true, that its instances will also share in this property and turn out to be logical truths, in accidental agreement with Tarski's reduction principle. Logical falsehoods are automatically excluded by Tarski's criterion, since associated closures that are false in any sense do not yield logical truths. Among substantive generalizations, some are contingently true and others contingently false. The mere contingent truth of substantive generalizations in these universal closures is inadequate on pain of modal fallacy to imply the logical truth of their instances, as the reduction principle requires. Etchemendy summarizes the objection with these diagrams and accompanying explanations:

> [Whether the only true closures are also logically true] will just depend on the world, on exactly the substantive issues expressed by the generalizations. It might depend on whether there are any women senators, or on whether there are any transitive, irreflexive relations without minimal elements. It might depend on whether the universe is finite or on whether there are uncountable cardinals smaller than the continuum. These are the sorts of substantive claims that will appear among the associated closures.



> Now, in some cases we may be fortunate; if the relevant portions of the world are sufficiently varied, if none of the substantive generalizations come out true, then the account will not issue any faulty declarations of logical truth. For the only sentences that will be logically true will then be instances of *generalizations* that are logically true, and these instances will . . . be logically true as well. (Etchemendy 1990, 129–30)

Etchemendy rightly notes that while extensional inadequacy condemns an analysis of logical truth, happenstance extensional adequacy does nothing to confirm it. He remarks that the world may fortuitously compensate for a faulty analysis by making the extensions of logical truths coincide only accidentally with those guaranteed by the analysis. He claims: 'In these cases, but only in these cases, Tarski's definition will yield a reasonable assortment of logical truths. But we succeed here not because [the reduction principle] is correct, however modified, or because we have chosen the right "logical constants". Our success is due to [the closure principle], and simple good fortune' (130).

Etchemendy considers two ways in which Tarski's theory might be strengthened to avoid the modal invalidity of deriving as instances the logical truth of sentences from the ordinary truth of universal closures of associated sentence functions. He concludes that neither method is satisfactory. The details of these alternatives are not immediately important. They involve attempts to relativize logical truths under the reduction principle to more restricted sets of fixed terms than Etchemendy first allows, ultimately, to logical terms (as, indeed, Tarski requires). Etchemendy finds these 'amendments' of the reduction principle unacceptable, primarily because he regards the distinction between logical and extralogical terms as too slippery, leading to what he refers to as the 'myth of the logical constant' (107–35). With no other acceptable revisions of the reduction principle available, Etchemendy concludes that there is no satisfactory way to redeem the reduction principle from modal invalidity, and hence, since Tarski's quantificational model set theoretical analysis of the concept of logical truth presupposes the reduction principle, no way for it to avoid counterexamples.

10.7 Contingency and Variation in Meinongian and Extensional Semantic Domains

'When we apply Tarski's account to an arbitrary language,' Etchemendy writes, 'there is no way to guarantee that it will be extensionally correct' (Etchemendy 1990, 130). Certainly, if Etchemendy's counterexamples to the extensional adequacy of Tarski's criterion are accepted, then he has shown that the analysis does not apply to all languages. Etchemendy has particularly in mind the objection that Tarski's criterion is materially or extensionally inadequate for languages rich enough to uphold the counterexamples, and appears to work only in simplified, truncated, and, for that reason, uninteresting, sign systems.

Etchemendy's criticisms do not hold for expressively rich languages with Meinongian semantics. To see this, consider that Etchemendy's most convincing counterexamples to Tarski's analysis involve constructions supposedly out of purely logical terms, all of which must be held as nonvariable or fixed terms when vacuously abstracting sentence functions and advancing their universal closures, and where these are interpreted as making contingent substantive

assertions about the world. The very idea that logical terms alone could be used to do this should raise doubts, and the suspicious role of the identity predicate in these alleged counterexamples has already been noticed. For the sake of argument, we may grant that identity is a logical term to be fixed as nonvariable in applying Tarski's criterion. Then it is the existential quantifier in sentences like $\exists x \exists y[x \neq y]$ and $\exists x[x = x]$ that is responsible for the substantive assertions about the world which they are supposed to express. The existential quantifier, as standardly extensionally understood, says that there *exists* something that has this or that property, quality, or relation. This extensional semantic interpretation is the origin of putatively substantive claims made about the existence of things in the world in Etchemendy's best counterexamples, including the world's metaphysical monism or pluralism. In Meinongian semantics, the 'existential' quantifier has no ontic or existential import, in the sense of expressing the contingent existence of objects in the world. It merely indicates the membership in the logic's referential semantic domain of an existent *or* nonexistent object with the specified property, quality, or relation.

Meinongian logics of various types have now appeared. They have reached an impressive level of sophistication as competitive alternatives to more traditional extensional systems (see *inter alia* Lambert 1983; Parsons 1980; Routley 1980). Without explaining their formalisms in detail, it is enough to see intuitively that in Meinongian as opposed to extensional logics, there is a comprehension principle by which the semantic domain of a language is populated by whatever objects can freely be associated with any constitutive property, quality, or relation. It is in this way that free assumption brings into the Meinongian referential semantic domain such scandalous nonexistent objects as the golden mountain and round square. The comprehension principle functions abstractly by combinatorial arrangement of constitutive properties defining associated objects, rather than by occurrent psychological episodes in which properties are grouped together in thought as constitutive of particular existent or nonexistent objects. The objects of a Meinongian semantic domain, in this sense, are mind-independent, and logics with such domains are nonpsychologistic. The objects in a Meinongian semantics, unlike the contingently existent objects over which variables bound by quantifiers in the semantics of standard extensional logics range, necessarily belong to the logic's domain. Although some objects are someworlds existent and someworlds nonexistent, all Meinongian objects occur as existent or nonexistent in a uniform population in a unitary Meinongian semantic domain that holds for each and every logically possible world.

The implications of these features of Meinongian semantics for Etchemendy's criticisms of Tarski's analysis of logical truth are obvious. The vacuous universal closure of sentence functions associated with the sentence $\exists x \exists y[x \neq y]$ is an ordinary truth in Meinongian semantics. There, as opposed to its interpretation in extensional semantics, it has sufficient logical force to hold as an intuitive logical truth, as Tarski's analysis implies. The reason is that in a Meinongian semantic domain, there is necessarily an unlimited plurality of existent and nonexistent objects guaranteed by the theory's liberal comprehension principle. The negation,

$\neg\exists x\exists y[x \neq y]$, for opposite reasons, is logically false, and receives the appropriate Tarski-disqualification as other than a logical truth. The result is that Etchemendy's best counterexamples are ineffective against Tarski's analysis of logical truth, when applied to Meinongian languages, or to any language interpreted by Meinongian semantics. This is because in Meinongian logic, unlike traditional extensional quantificational logics, the existential quantifier makes no substantive assertion about the contingent existence of entities in the world, but indicates only logically necessary domain membership.

To assert substantive existence claims in Meinongian logic requires the introduction of a special extralogical existence predicate. It permits the counterparts of Etchemendy's counterexample sentences in a Meinongian framework to have the form:

$$\exists x\exists y[E!x \wedge E!y \wedge x \neq y]$$
$$\neg\exists x\exists y[E!x \wedge E!y \wedge x \neq y]$$

These sentences are logically contingent, but are also properly evaluated as such by the proper application of Tarski's criterion, since the predicate '$E!$' is clearly extralogical. The predicate enters as a variable term when sentence functions and universal closures are nonvacuously abstracted from associated sentences. The sentence functions, *modulo* the fixed set of logical terms, including quantifiers, negation, conjunction, and (for the sake of argument) nonidentity, are:

$$\exists x\exists y[\phi x \wedge \phi y \wedge x \neq y]$$
$$\neg\exists x\exists y[\phi x \wedge \phi y \wedge x \neq y]$$

The associated universal closures in turn appear as:

$$\forall\phi\exists x\exists y[\phi x \wedge \phi y \wedge x \neq y]$$
$$\forall\phi\neg\exists x\exists y[\phi x \wedge \phi y \wedge x \neq y]$$

These, finally, far from being ordinary truths, are obviously false. Hence, Tarski's analysis implies the intuitively correct evaluation that neither of the original sentences is logically true.

The ontically neutral Meinongian interpretation of quantification effectively avoids Etchemendy's most threatening counterexamples. What then of Etchemendy's philosophical objections to the modal fallacy of the reduction principle as the basis of Tarski's analysis? This seems to justify the expectation that there must be counterexamples to its (nonfortuitous) extensional adequacy. The ontic neutrality of Meinongian semantics again provides a defense. Etchemendy's criticism of the reduction principle, like his best counterexamples to Tarski's criterion, are ineffective in consideration of Meinongian languages and languages interpreted by Meinongian object theory referential semantic domains. At most, Etchemendy's objections concern classical extensional semantics limited exclusively to extensional existential quantifications ranging over existent entities only.

Etchemendy believes that the reduction principle commits a modal fallacy. The ordinary truth of a universal closure does not validly imply and so cannot guarantee the logical truth of any of its instances, unless the closure itself happens to be logically true. The problem cases are those indicated in the second of Etchemendy's three box diagrams, where Tarski's analysis appears to overgenerate the legitimate extension of logical truths. The difficulty is avoided only in the third diagram, if the ordinary truths of all closures coincide exactly with the set of all logical truths. This does not occur when Tarski's analysis is applied to classical existence-presuppositional referentially extensional logics. In Meinongian systems, there is guaranteed to be a precise coincidence of ordinary truth closures with logical truths. The reason is that, in Meinongian logic, the only ordinary true universal closures are also necessarily true. This follows from the Meinongian comprehension principle, which logically provides every possible combination of diversity and variation of properties among existent and nonexistent objects throughout all subdomains in the logic's referential semantics. Since it is these objects that quantification ranges over in universal closures, it is certain that closures of sentence functions of associated sentences that are not logical truths will turn out to be ordinary falsehoods in Meinongian semantics. This approach entirely avoids Etchemendy's criticisms of Tarski's criterion for Meinongian systems, provided that all and only logical terms are held fixed when abstracting variable term sentence functions.

The easiest way to appreciate the difference Meinongian semantics makes for Etchemendy's counterexamples is in terms of problem cases intended to show that Tarski's criterion only appears to work if the world happens to contain sufficient diversity. A good example is Etchemendy's illustration involving female US senators, as a counterexample establishing the fortuitous falsehood of the closure considered in Etchemendy's proposition (12), $\forall x[x \text{ is a senator} \rightarrow x \text{ is a man}]$. The richness of the world, in Etchemendy's view, happens to compensate for the defects of Tarski's analysis, seen explicitly in the accidental satisfaction of the reduction principle, producing the right extension for the wrong irrelevant reasons. In a Meinongian theory, the comprehension principle logically guarantees that the referential semantic domain contains the diversity and variation of properties among existent and nonexistent objects needed to make the universal closure of sentence functions associated with any sentence other than a logical truth an ordinary falsehood.

Indeed, Meinongian semantic domains are logically guaranteed to contain every freely assumable combination of constitutive properties among existent or nonexistent objects, including male and female senators, married and unmarried male and female senators, golden mountain male senators, round square female senators, and so on, without limitation. The consequence is that the implied variation in a Meinongian semantic domain of existent and nonexistent objects necessarily entails only the ordinary falsehood of any and all substantive generalizations. The Meinongian domain is a logically reliable repository of counterexamples to all substantive generalizations. The only universal generalizations it allows are therefore closures of sentence functions abstracted from associated logically true

sentences. The coincidence of logical truths and the ordinary truth of universal closures under Tarski's criterion is logically guaranteed in Meinongian systems, as in Etchemendy's third box diagram. The reason is that in Meinongian logic there is every logically possible diversity, combination, and variation of properties among existent or nonexistent objects in the domain, taken as a whole, provided by the liberal comprehension principle of free assumption, so that few universal, and no substantive generalizations, turn out to be true. There is no need to rely on a fortuitous and logically contingent plurality and diversity in the world to make universal closures false in Meinongian semantics when their instantiations are not logical truths.

10.8 Meinongian Object Theory as the Proper Application of Tarskian Quantificational Semantics

The fact that Etchemendy's counterexamples to Tarski's analysis and philosophical critique of the reduction principle are ineffective in Meinongian contexts says something interesting about the application of Tarski's criterion. It suggests that Meinongian semantics, as opposed to more classical existence-presuppositional referentially extensional interpretations, may be the proper application to which Tarski's quantificational model set theoretical semantics is ideally suited.

Etchemendy argues that his counterexamples to the reduction principle and the extensional adequacy of Tarski's criterion are symptomatic of a deep failure in Tarski's analysis that discredits it even when extensional coincidence fortuitously occurs through accidental compensations due to contingent diversity and variation among existent entities in the extensional domain. The avoidance of Etchemendy's counterexamples in Meinongian semantics is by no means fortuitous, since it follows logically from the logically guaranteed plurality, diversity, and variation among the properties of existent and nonexistent objects in Meinongian domains, in a way that is entirely independent of the contingencies of actual existence and nonexistence.

The Meinongian defense of Tarski's quantificational analysis of the concept of logical truth against Etchemendy's objections is not disassociated from, but all of a piece with, the Meinongian rationale sustaining Tarski's reduction principle. The implication of Etchemendy's critique of Tarski, accordingly, is not that Tarski's analysis is faulty, but that it belongs most naturally in the framework of a Meinongian semantics of existent and nonexistent objects. This does not mean that Tarski intended such an application, nor that he meant his semantics to be anything but purely and classically extensional. It indicates, nonetheless, as Etchemendy's criticisms inadvertently imply, that Tarskian and Meinongian semantics in this unexpected way are mutually supportive if not interimplicative.

10.9 Non-Meinongian Revision of Tarki's Reduction Principle

A consideration of Meinongian semantics as an alternative context of application for Tarski's analysis of logical truth, whether acceptable or not, points toward the following non-Meinongian revision of Tarski's reduction principle. It provides an alternative method of avoiding Etchemendy's philosophical objections and counterexamples involving extensional inadequacy. This may be a more welcome possibility for those who, despite renewed interest in Meinongian systems in the aftermath of Russell's supposedly devastating refutations, cannot abide the idea of a Meinongian logic of existent and nonexistent objects (Russell 1905a; Smith 1985, 1988).

The proposal is to modify the reduction principle in a third way that Etchemendy does not consider, by restricting the ordinary truth of universal closures more specifically to the ordinary truth of *nonvacuous* universal closures of sentences containing at least some nonlogical terms. The revised principle states:

> If a nonvacuously universally quantified sentence (obtained by universal closure of a sentence function containing at least some nonlogical terms, in which all and only nonlogical terms are variable) is *true*, then all of its instances are *logically true*.

The proposal avoids Etchemendy's counterexamples without fortuitous compensation by appeal to the real world's contingent diversity, and the variation among the properties of its entities. As in the Meinongian solution, it avoids overgeneration in the legitimate extension of logical truths, to soothe Etchemedy's concerns, because of the logically guaranteed constructive properties of nonvacuous universal closures.

It is only the vacuous closures of sentence functions, in which all terms are logical and held fixed by Tarski's criterion, that constitute Etchemendy's most convincing counterexamples. For in these, there are no variables left over to be bound by closure. The revision rules out such cases, on the basis of purely logical or syntactical features of closures, provided that agreement is (stipulatively or otherwise) reached on the distinction between logical and extralogical terms. The extensional adequacy of Tarski's criterion is thereby restored, arguably in just the way it was intended. Etchemendy's objections to the original reduction principle as lacking an adequate ultimate logical foundation are also neatly, economically, circumvented.

The disadvantage of the non-Meinongian revision of the reduction principle, in comparison with a Meinongian application of the original reduction principle, is that in Meinongian semantics the nonvacuity of universal closures of sentence functions of all and only nonlogical variable terms is automatic. It is justified in every instance, as a consequence of the Meinongian nonsubstantive ontically neutral interpretation of the quantifiers, by which they do not assert mere contingent truths. The non-Meinongian alternative is less attractive, in that it superimposes nonvacuity in a more *ad hoc* way, as a theory-saving device to preserve Tarski's analysis from Etchemendy's philosophical objections.

Chapter 11
Reflections on Mally's Heresy

11.1 Mally's Heresy

A recent dispute about the formalization of Meinongian object theory, involving dual modes of predication or univocal predication, with a distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, is examined in historical and philosophical perspective. Counterexamples to a previous attempt to reduce dual modes to univocal predication under the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction are met by a revised reduction, supporting the conclusion that the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction is conceptually more basic than dual modes of predication. An argument to show that in principle no reduction or intertranslation from one distinction idiom to the other can succeed is refuted. The formalization of Meinongian object theory has followed two distinct paths. There have been attempts to develop Meinongian logic and semantics from the standpoint of Mally's 1912 distinction between *dual modes of predication*, for what might loosely be called different ways of having properties. Meinong did not accept Mally's dual modes of predication, but based his object theory semantics on another distinction, also attributed to Mally, between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties.

Edward N. Zalta (1983, 1988) has advanced two formulations of an intensional logic of existent and abstract objects, based on Mally's dual modes of predication distinction, between what he designates as exemplification of properties by both abstract and existent objects, and the encoding and exemplification of properties by abstract objects. This theory, along with W. J. Rapaport (1978) hints at a similar system in 'Meinongian Theories and a Russellian Paradox', were principal targets of my previous critique, 'Mally's Heresy and the Logic of Meinong's Object Theory' (Jacquette 1989a). Zalta's subsequent essay, 'On Mally's Alleged Heresy: A Reply' (1992), responds to my objections in two ways, presenting counterexamples to a reduction of dual modes of predication to the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction which I had proposed, and offering general semantic considerations against the likely success of any such reduction, aimed

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
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especially at Kit Fine's thesis that there is a correspondence between the two kinds of distinction, in his 'Critical Review of Parsons' *Nonexistent Objects*' (Fine 1984).

As interest in Meinongian logic and object theory semantics develops, it is important to explore the historical and logical aspects of Mally's two distinctions in detail. Alternative approaches to formalizations of *Gegenstandstheorie* presented by this choice of distinctions has emerged as one of the main points of division between philosophers and logicians currently working in the field. I am compelled to reaffirm my judgment that Mally's dual modes of predication represents what I shall continue to designate a *heresy* from an historical and ideological standpoint in Meinongian object theory. Because I agree with some of Zalta's challenges to my original reduction principles transforming dual modes of predication statements into equivalent constitutive-extraconstitutive formulations, I substitute an improved reduction that is meant to avoid Zalta's objections to my earlier analysis. Then I examine Zalta's generalized 'in principle' criticisms of efforts to reduce dual modes of predication to constitutive (C) and extraconstitutive (XC) predications. My conclusion in part is that Zalta's argument is refuted by the amended reduction I offer. Beyond this, Zalta's global disparagement of reduction strategies can be shown to depend on an inordinately restrictive sense of reduction, which is overcome by a more precise explanation of the kind of reduction essayed both in my and Fine's proposed translations. Zalta is right to reject my original reduction, but there is another equivalence in the same spirit and with the same motivation available that supports criticism of dual modes of predication theory as not only historically non-Meinongian, but conceptually derivative from the (C)-(XC) distinction. The argument indicates that the proper direction for Meinongian, as opposed to Mallyan, logic and semantics, is rather toward the constitutive-extraconstitutive (C)-(XC) property distinction.

11.2 Overview of Zalta's Distinction

In *Abstract Objects: An Introduction to Axiomatic Metaphysics*, and *Intensional Logic and the Metaphysics of Intentionality*, Zalta articulates a typed intensional logic with restricted abstraction, based on a distinction between the *exemplification* of properties by ordinary existent and abstract objects, and the *encoding* of properties by abstract objects.

The distinction is introduced to symbolize an intuitive difference between the way in which existent objects have properties, and the way in which abstract objects typically have properties. It is tempting to say, as partial justification for Zalta's distinction, that although the so-called golden funeral mask of Agamemnon is really golden, Berkeley's and Hume's imaginary golden mountain is golden *in some sense*, but not *really* golden, not golden in the full-blooded sense of an existent golden object like the mask, whether or more surely not it is Agamemnon's.

Zalta maintains that: 'At the crux of both the foundations and the theory proper stands the distinction between *exemplifying* and *encoding* a property' (Zalta 1988, 15). The distinction is given this intuitive account:

> The natural way of explaining this difference [between real and fictional detectives] is to say that fictional detectives don't have the property of being a detective in quite the same way that real ones do. Real detectives exemplify the property, whereas fictional detectives do not. We shall say that the latter encode the property, however. Things that exemplify the property of being a detective exist, have a location in space and time. . ., and so on, whereas things that just encode the property of being a detective are abstract and do not exemplify any of these characteristics. They might exemplify these properties according to their respective stories, but this is not the same as exemplifying them simpliciter. (Zalta 1988, 17)

If we share Zalta's insight that there may be a logically important difference in the way spatiotemporally existent versus abstract objects can possess or have properties attributed to them, then we might begin with a more intuitive distinction before introducing the syntactical apparatus for his distinction between exemplification and encoding. Informally, the difference between the two modes of predication for existent and abstract objects can be marked by a neutral index for a distinction in the ordinary language copula, in a way Zalta does not explicitly consider, as proposed in Chap. 5:

(1) Existent or abstract object *a* is^1 *F* (*a really is* or *really has* property *F*)
(2) Abstract object *b* is^2 *F* (*b* 'is' or 'has' *in some sense* but *is not really* and *does not really have* property *F*)

Zalta formalizes the exemplification and encoding of properties in what amounts to his version of the distinction in (1)–(2) as follows:

> To say that $x_1,\ldots,x_n$ *exemplify* F^n, we use the standard atomic formula: $F^n x_1 \ldots x_n$. To say that *x encodes* F^1, we use a second kind of atomic formula: xF^1. Consequently, the distinction between *x exemplifies F* and *x encodes F* is represented by the distinction between the two formulas *Fx* and *xF* (when there is no potential for ambiguity, the superscripts on the relation terms are omitted). (Zalta 1983, 6–14, 1988, 20)

11.3 Historical Roots of Meinongian Logic

There is no historical ground for attributing to Meinong the dual modes of predication theory. Meinong did not accept a dual modes of predication distinction like Mally's or Zalta's, and there is reason to think, from his unnuanced categorical formulations of the independence thesis of *Sosein* (so-being, being thus-and-so), from *Sein* (being), that he would have regarded any such distinction as contradicting the underlying object theory thesis that intended objects simply *have*, universally, and in one and the same univocal sense as existent entities, the constitutive properties truly predicated of them, regardless of their ontic status.

Zalta in his historical remarks does nothing to dispute this received account. He mentions, correctly, as he has in previous writings, that both the dual modes of

predication and (C)-(XC) property distinctions derive from suggestions by Mally. Although Mally originated both the dual modes of predication and (C)-(XC) property distinctions, it obviously does not follow from the fact that Meinong accepted one that he therefore accepted the other, especially when refashioned as Zalta's technical distinction between encoding and exemplification. In lieu of corroborating textual or historical evidence, and in view of the fact that dual modes of predication contradicts central tenets of Meinong's semantics, there is no better reason to attribute the distinction to Meinong or to describe a logic based on Mally's dual modes of predication as specifically *Meinongian*, than there is to attribute Wittgenstein's saying-showing distinction to Russell. It remains appropriate to regard Mally's dual modes of predication distinction transposed into Zalta's encoding-exemplification distinction as a heresy in Meinongian logic and semantics.

This assessment should come as no surprise. There are many respects in which Zalta's logic of abstract objects fails to agree even with the main lines of Meinong's object theory. Most significant is the fact that Zalta's abstract objects, unlike Meinong's extraontic objects, though *nonexistent*, in Zalta's technical term for objects excluded from the spatiotemporal part of the ontology, nevertheless have *being*. They are in particular what Meinong would designate as *subsistent objects*, like mathematical entities or Plato's abstract Forms or Ideas in a realist ontology, Bolzano's *Sätze an sich* or Frege's abstract thoughts, propositional thought contents, or *Gedanken*. Meinong, on the contrary, emphatically denies that all intended objects have being (1904a). Zalta, accordingly, does not offer a logic specifically of Meinongian, but more approximately of Platonic-Fregean, objects. Zalta's desire to align his theory with Meinong's is seen among other ways in his attempts to argue that Meinong would not have needed to include beingless objects in his extraontology (Zalta 1988, 135–43).

Surely this is too far strained. For Meinong, there are beingless objects that are incomplete, like the golden mountain, or both incomplete and impossible, like the round square. These intended objects of thought are incomplete or impossible precisely because their *Soseine* are either lacking or have both some property or/and its complement. Zalta, on the contrary, holds that all objects have being in that all have complete and consistent complements of *exemplified* properties, though, indeed, in the case of abstract 'nonexistent' objects, he allows that their *encoded* properties may be incomplete or incompatible. This difference alone, regarding the inclusion or exclusion of beingless objects from the semantic domain, makes it pointless to discuss Zalta's intensional theory of quasi-Platonic-Fregean objects as a specifically *Meinongian* theory, and places Zalta's system outside the fold of genuine Meinongian referential and predicational semantics.

11.4 Dual Modes of Predication and Constitutive-Extraconstitutive Properties

That Mally's dual modes of predication distinction is heretical *qua* Meinongian, relative to Meinong's orthodox object theory, constitutes at most an historical, not a theoretical objection to Zalta's logic. Heresies can be true.[1] There are nevertheless substantive criticisms to be raised against Zalta's dual modes of predication, even as a satisfactory basis for non-Meinongian abstract object theory. To show some of the disadvantages of Zalta's dual modes of predication or exemplification-encoding distinction in comparison with Meinong's distinction between (C) and (XC) properties, criticisms are confined to two central problems:

(i) The indefiniteness of application of Zalta's distinction between properties encoded or exemplified by abstract objects.
(ii) The unsoundness of Zalta's identity criteria for abstract (and ordinary) objects under the dual modes of predication distinction.

11.5 Encoding-Exemplification Ambiguities

Zalta stipulates that while ordinary objects cannot encode properties, abstract objects both encode and exemplify properties, in some instances encoding and exemplifying the very same properties. The nonexistent round square encodes the property of nonexistence, by virtue of its description, according to Zalta's theory, but also exemplifies the property of nonexistence, by virtue of being abstract. Zalta's logic deliberately offers no general principle for determining when an abstract object encodes or exemplifies a property. He extends this liberty to the account when he writes:

> . . .a question arises as to what properties [abstract] A-objects exemplify. Strictly speaking, the theory doesn't say (other than the property of being non-ordinary). For the most part, we can rely on our intuitions of ordinary properties, such as being non-round, being non-red, etc. A-objects also exemplify intentional properties and relations, such as being thought about (by so and so), being searched for, etc. These intuitions serve well for most purposes, but there may be occasions where we might want to disregard some of them, in return for theoretical benefits. Since the theory is neutral about what properties A-objects exemplify, we are free, from the standpoint of the theory, to decide this according to theoretical need. (Zalta 1988, 30–1)

This makes the question whether an object encodes or exemplifies a property depend in part on *ad hoc* decisions taken on a case-by-case basis. However, it is hard to see how such a fundamental semantic distinction could possibly be a matter

[1] Jacquette (1989b, 4), takes note of Zalta's acknowledgement (1983, xi–xii), that the dual modes of predication distinction is Mallyan rather than Meinongian, and provides the basis for an alternative object theory different from Meinong's.

of decision. Surely abstract objects encode or exemplify properties independently of the contingent existence or nonexistence of decision-makers. This should especially be true in Zalta's ontology, where the existence of any ordinary object, including persons or minds capable of semantic theorizing, is supposed to be logically contingent. The absolute and determinate exemplification or encoding of properties by existent and abstract objects should be guaranteed, if, for no other reason, because abstract objects by Zalta's identity criteria are individuated only by the properties they alternatively exemplify or encode.

That the distinction between encoding and exemplification suffers from a lack of definite application criteria can be seen in another problem encountered by Zalta's theory, concerning the encoding of properties by ordinary or existent objects. Zalta's axioms strictly prohibit the encoding of properties by an existent object:

AXIOM 2. ('NO-CODER') : $E!x \rightarrow \neg(\exists F)xF$ (Zalta 1983, 33)

Principle 1

Ordinary individuals necessarily and always fail to encode properties ['$\blacksquare f$' is the modal temporal operator '*Always f*'].

$(\forall x)\,(O!x \rightarrow \blacksquare\neg(\exists F)xF)$ (Zalta 1988, 19).

The requirement is clear enough, although no attempt at philosophical justification is offered. Why are ordinary nonabstract objects precluded from encoding? Consider the existent object Napoléon Bonaparte. As an ordinary object, he exemplifies the properties truly predicable of him in the real world. Napoléon is also what Parsons (1980, 51–60) calls an *immigrant fictional object*, checking into a world of fiction from the real world, in, among other sources, Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. Why, then, does Zalta not allow that Napoléon, like abstract objects, both exemplifies and encodes properties, exemplifying real world properties as an existent, and encoding the properties Tolstoy attributes to him as an abstract fictional character imported into an historical fiction?

Obviously, any such proposal contradicts 'NO-CODER' and the thesis that Zalta in his later exposition calls 'Principle 1'. The philosophical question is, why are these principles in place, what is supposed to justify them, and what more fundamental semantic truths are they meant to express? Zalta has a different solution to problems about the ontology of real world characters in fiction. He allows, because NO-CODER and Principle 1 forbid ordinary existent objects from encoding properties, that Napoléon *exemplifies* the properties Tolstoy attributes to him *in the story* (Zalta 1988, 123–7). I am not at all sure what this means. The point of my objection is not that Zalta has no provision for dealing with these semantic phenomena, but rather that there appears to be no solid conceptual foundation for his particular choice of solution. It appears simpler and more natural to allow that existent ordinary objects such as Napoléon, like abstract nonexistent objects, can either inclusively exemplify or encode their constitutive Leibnizian self-identifying properties.

The indefiniteness and ambiguity that Zalta allows in the application of the dual modes of predication or encoding-exemplification distinction may suggest that Zalta has not so much identified an interesting semantic difference between two ways in which objects have properties, but gerrymanders the stereotopic left-side/right-side predicate syntax more or less arbitrarily to impose order on a set of problems that arise when we attempt to make true predications of nonexistent objects. This is not so much a real distinction as a place for a distinction, a way in which the desired semantic distinction might be formulated, if only a satisfactory philosophical basis were found. The ontic and semantic distance between Zalta's intensional logic of abstract objects and Meinong's object theory could not be greater. Which is not at all to withdraw admiration from Zalta's logic. The interest is more in the fact that it is really Zalta's logic, rather than an interpretation of Meinong's object theory, based on an idea of Mally's to which Meinong as far as anyone seems to know, never assented. It is only to say that Zalta's logic is more the logic of Platonic and Fregean abstract entities than of Meinongian beingless intended objects, that are neither actual nor abstract, but ontically homeless. Without comprehending a referential semantic domain of nonexistent objects that are not actual, physical, or spatiotemporal dynamic intended objects, but altogether beingless, an intensional logic, whatever its brilliance, cannot accurately be considered Meinongian. Abstract objects are semantically as well-behaved as physical objects. Nonexistent Meinongian objects, many critics have assumed, are less so. Anyway, Zalta offers a semantics of nonexistents only in the attenuated and specialized technical sense of *abstracta*, and not of Meinongian incomplete and impossible nonexistent intended objects.

The distinction between (C) and (XC) properties does not share this limitation, but embodies an intuitive division between properties that constitute or make an object the object it is, and those that do not, but supervene instead on the object's constitutive properties. The distinction as such, and as previously remarked, goes back at least as far as Kant's refutation of the Descartes-Leibniz ontological proof for the existence of God in Kant's argument about the hundred gold Thalers. There is a perfectly clearcut criterion for the application of the distinction between (C) and (XC) properties, based on the fact that objects intuitively can be incomplete for any (C) property, neither possessing the property nor its complement in their constituting so-being, whereas extraconstitutive predications to Meinongian objects, including incomplete and even impossible objects, are classically bivalent. The two kinds of properties are distinguished by satisfying one or the other of the following conditions, where non-P is the complement of P, and the shriek '!' in 'P!' (adapted from standard notation for real existence in 'E!') distinguishes extraconstitutive from constitutive predicates in formal definitions (C) and (XC).

11.6 Identity Problems for Zalta Objects

The identity conditions Zalta gives for existent and abstract objects are furthermore unsound. For existent objects (Zalta 1992, 60), he requires:

$$E!x \,\&\, E!y \rightarrow [x = y \rightarrow \forall F[Fx \leftrightarrow Fy]]$$

This is an unrestricted application of Leibniz's identity of indiscernibles and indiscernibility of identicals. The principle is false if the range of properties for higher-order universal quantification includes the previously mentioned category of converse intentional properties (Chisholm 1982b). In that case, despite their pretheoretical identity, the existent object Mark Twain turns out to be nonidentical to the existent object Samuel Clemens, if one has the converse intentional (relational) property of being believed by someone (not necessarily existent) to be the author of *The Prince and the Pauper* [λz *a* believes *z* is the author of *The Prince and the Pauper*], (in Zalta's abstraction notation), and the other does not.

The same is true of Zalta's (1992, 61) parallel identity principle for abstract nonexistent objects:

$$A!x \wedge A!y \rightarrow [x = y \leftrightarrow \forall F[xF \leftrightarrow yF]]$$

Here a counterexample obtains if, for example, $F = [\lambda z$ *a* believes *z* is an alien from the doomed planet Krypton], *x* is Superman, *y* is Clark Kent, and *a* is Lois Lane.

There are ways to restrict Leibniz's Law so that it avoids these embarrassments. In object theory logics, the standard method, as in Parsons' *Nonexistent Objects* (Parsons 1980, 23–4, 44–8) is to treat converse intentional properties, which Parsons calls simply 'intentional', as extraconstitutive, extranuclear, as Parsons prefers to say, making it possible to limit Leibniz's Law along with Meinong's independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis exclusively to constitutive properties. This solution is obviously unavailable to Zalta, who rejects the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction in favor of dual modes of predication.

If Zalta is to correct his identity principles for existent and abstract objects within the encoding-exemplification distinction, he might introduce a distinction of comparable power within the dual modes structure. Such a strategy plainly goes against the grain of Zalta's approach, forcing him to introduce the very distinction he is trying to avoid. Alternatively, Zalta might distinguish between different kinds of identity, allowing unrestricted equivalences to stand for one kind of identity, and restricting the principle to exclude converse intentional properties in giving conditions for another sense of identity, holding for existent and dynamic and abstract objects. The second course is recommended in distinguishing between conceptual, referential, and extensional identity, in the context of providing a Fregean solution to the paradox of analysis, having first concluded that converse intentional properties are constitutive rather than extraconstitutive. The definitions advanced here

presuppose Meinong's (C)-(XC) property distinction, and are unintelligible without it. To achieve equivalent effect, Zalta would need to define the distinction between converse intentional and non-converse-intentional properties in some other intuitive way. Even if such an analysis can be given in his logic, the application is certain to be formally indefinite, since the encoding-exemplification distinction on which it rests is also indefinite and *ad hoc* in application, established without fixed criteria on a case-by-case basis, according to the user's understanding of theoretical need. This might be acceptable in other areas, but in formulating adequate identity conditions for abstract and ordinary objects, and thereby establishing the semantic domain of Zalta's intensional logic, the limitation appears critical.

11.7 Amended Reduction of Zalta's Distinction

Zalta has no trouble showing that my first proposal to reduce the dual modes of predication to the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction falls victim to counterexamples, and even that it is embroiled in inconsistency (Zalta 1992, 62–5). While true, the observation does nothing to obviate the conclusion that Zalta's distinction remains reducible to the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction in another way by an improved reduction principle, though not conversely (Jacquette 1989b, 5–6). This in turn implies, as originally claimed, that the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction is more fundamental than the dual modes of predication or encoding-exemplification distinction.

The reduction I now offer has this form. Extraconstitutive existence is symbolized by '$E!$', as always, in accord with the exclamation or 'shriek' convention for distinguishing extraconstitutive from constitutive properties explained above. Property F is constitutive and $G!$ is extraconstitutive, by virtue of satisfying respectively conditions (C) and (XC). Where reference to a constitutive *or* extraconstitutive property indifferently is intended, the predicate encloses the exclamation mark in parentheses, $F(!)$. Let $A(F^n(!), x_1 \ldots x_n) =_{df}$ 'property $F^n(!)$ is *attributed to the nature or so-being* (*Sosein*) of $x_1 \ldots x_n$'. A is thereby designated a constitutive both-and assumable converse intentional property of other predications. The attribution of a (C) or (XC) property to an object can then be understood, either as the abstract true or false mind-independent association of an object with a totality of (C) properties in the object's self-identity conditions, or as the true or false occurrent attribution in thought of (C) or (XC) properties to the object. Theory Z is Zalta's intensional logic, and the connective '$\mathrm{r}\!\rightarrow$' is relevant entailment as Zalta introduces it (Zalta 1988, 124–5; Zalta uses a special arrow with a letter r superscript rider). Then we have the following reduction schemata:

Zalta-Encoding —

$$\forall x_1 \left[x_1 F^1 \leftrightarrow \left[\neg E! x_1 \wedge A\left(F^1(!), x_1\right) \right] \right]$$

Zalta-Exemplification —

$$\forall x_1 \ldots \forall x_n [F^n x_1 \ldots x_n \leftrightarrow [F^n! x_1 \ldots x_n \vee [\mathrm{Zr} \rightarrow F^n! x_1 \ldots x_n]]] \quad (n \geq 0)$$

The idea of the reduction is that, in the case of encoding, an object Zalta-encodes a property if and only if the object does not exist (for Zalta implying that it is abstract), but has the (constitutive or extraconstitutive) property (abstractly or psychologically) attributed to its nature (*Sosein*, *Sein*-independent so-being). In the case of exemplification, an (ordered *n*-ary set of) object(s) Zalta-exemplifies a property if and only if either the property is extraconstitutive, and is univocally predicated of the objects, or, Zalta's theory (or an extension thereof) relevantly entails that the objects univocally exemplify property. We thereby provide the flexibility that Zalta permits in his theory, applying the dual modes distinction, especially in determining the exemplification of properties by abstract objects, according, as he says, to theoretical need. The reduction for both parts of Zalta's distinction involves only the univocal predication mode of property exemplification, and formalizes the intuition that when Zalta makes reference to an object encoding a property he means by this the (true or false, mind-independent or occurrent psychological) attribution of a property to an object's nature.[2]

The equivalences should avoid Zalta's criticisms of my previous attempt at reduction. Zalta had rightly objected to my use of a *Sosein* function applied to a sequence of (as opposed to individual) objects. The above analysis, unlike the first version, dispenses with the *Sosein* function entirely. It *allows* a constitutive converse intentional attribution of properties to the nature or *Soseine* of objects $x_1 \ldots x_n$, but only in accommodating of *n*-ary relational properties. Second, and more importantly, the new equivalences do not mistakenly presuppose that abstract objects encode only and cannot also exemplify properties, nor, in other words, that objects need to exist in order to exemplify certain properties, such as existence. Zalta distinguishes this as a shriek '!' or *E*! property, like his *A*! for abstract and *O*! for ordinary objects. The ! device is disconcertingly reminiscent of the proposed notation for the distinction between constitutive (nonshriek) and extraconstitutive (shriek) properties Zalta wants to replace with dual modes of predication.[3] If Zalta needs such a distinction, then it might be said that he has not done away with the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction after all, but superadds to it dual modes of predication. If object theory is adequately formalized by means of the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction without dual modes of predica-

[2] Note that (obviously) $A(F^1!,o_1) \notin F^1!o_1$, which corresponds to Zalta's (implied) $o_1 F^1! \notin F^1!o_1$ (for $F^1! = E!, A!, O!$).

[3] For brevity sake, I have omitted counterpart reduction schemata for Rapaport's (1978) distinction between constituency and exemplification of properties by 'Meinongian' objects.

tion, and if Zalta's theory is also committed to some application of the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction, then his approach may be disapproved as falling under the theoretical economy principle of Ockham's Razor, multiplying entities beyond explanatory necessity.

Finally, Zalta takes issue with my previous use of the set membership predicate (or functor) '$\in$', arguing by dilemma that if it is a new primitive predication form (for which I believe there is no evidence in my discussion), then a version of dual predication modes may after all insinuate itself in my use of the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction. If it is an ordinary predication form (as it was intended to be), Zalta contends, then the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction is less 'metaphysically pure' than Zalta's own dual modes of predication distinction. Zalta's Mallayan dual modes of predication incorporates no set theoretical apparatus, and is actually inconsistent with the axioms of standard set theory.[4] I am uncertain whether set membership or mathematical concepts are metaphysically more 'impure' than logical concepts. An advocate of set theoretical reductionism might with equal justice maintain the exact opposite, as far as I can immediately see. The amended reduction proposal, in any event, removes Zalta's original grounds for objection altogether by eliminating the set membership operator.

11.8 Fine's Correspondence Argument and Zalta's General Countercriticism of Reduction Strategies

Zalta raises interesting questions about the sense in which my first analysis is supposed to offer a *reduction* of dual modes of predication to the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction. I think these remarks also apply, rightly or wrongly, to the revised reduction I have proposed, and so should now be addressed in considering his general countercriticisms of reduction strategies. Zalta directs these more specifically at Fine's argument, which is similar in spirit to and may be thought to offer a rationale for my attempts at analysis. Fine concludes that it should be possible to translate Mallyan dual modes predications into Meinongian constitutive-extraconstitutive predications, and conversely.

I shall not try to defend Fine's 'translation' thesis, in part because I share some of Zalta's reservations about whether a complete translation in the usual sense is possible between encoding-exemplification predication modes and constitutive-extraconstitutive property theories, given their disparate metaphysical

[4] The inconsistency of Zalta's abstract object theory with set theory was maintained by C. Anthony Anderson in his commentary on Zalta's (1988), at an Author-Meets-Critics session of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association, Portland, OR, March 28, 1992, in an appendix to notes distributed at his talk, titled 'Proof that Zalta's System is Inconsistent With Set Theory'. Zalta embraces this conclusion with pleasure. Why not welcome an intensional dual predication modes logic that contradicts set theory, and avoids all its other problems?

commitments. By explaining more exactly what I mean by a *reduction* of Zalta's dual modes of predication distinction to the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction, I hope to answer Zalta's objections about the implausibility in principle of providing an adequate reduction or translation of dual modes of predication to constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. I shall additionally try to defend Fine's conclusion insofar as it agrees with my insights about the possibility of conceptually reducing Zalta's Mallyan theory to a historically more faithful version of Meinong's. The latter will be seen to involve univocal or one mode predication of categorically distinguished constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, in place of equivocal dual modes of predication. One easily imagines Meinong as a philosopher who would prefer to avoid equivocation in the semantics even and especially of ordinary language, where the key to thought is often to be found, but which provides no syntactical device like the stereotopic argument places left and right of a predicate, as in Zalta's formal representation of a distinction between, respectively, encoding and exemplification.

What might be expected of a reduction of Zalta's distinction to Meinong's is an extensionally or materially adequate alternative formulation from within the resources of the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction, and in particular in terms of the constitutive property of property *attribution*, the attributing of properties to an object's nature or so-being, that picks out all and only the same predications as Zalta's encoding and exemplification distinction, but without appeal to dual modes of predication. If the reduction is successful, then it brings about an ontic reduction in the usual sense of the relevant factors in object theory formalizations, in the number of predication modes, from Zalta's two to one. The analysis in turn requires a distinction of two special categories of properties, constitutive and extraconstitutive, with which Zalta's theory may not (or may also) be burdened. The properties themselves, unlike the distinct modes of predication in Zalta's semantics, are part of the theory in either case, and as such are available for classifications and subdivisions by various categories, including the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction.

Zalta thinks that no reduction strategy can succeed for any of these object theory logics, '. . .because the metaphysical pictures embodied by the language of each approach are just incommensurable' (Zalta 1992, 65). The best counterproof is delivery of a satisfactory reduction, one that works, which Zalta offers no general argument to rule out. If the amended reduction I have proposed is adequate, then *a fortiori* there can be no remaining dispute about its possibility. More can still be said about the matter, because Zalta mentions particular difficulties that are unproblematic for the proposed reduction. Thus, Zalta rightly recounts that for the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction, $E!$-existence is an extraconstitutive property that cannot belong (even if it is attributed) to the so-being or nature constitutive of any abstract 'nonexistent' object:

> By contrast, the property of existence *may* be part of the nature of an object on the two modes approach. . .For example, on the two copula approach, it is part of the nature of Sherlock Holmes that he exists. The theory asserts that existence is a property that Holmes encodes, since he is attributed existence in the novels. But it does not follow that Holmes

> exemplifies existence. By contrast, extranuclear existence is not part of the nature of Holmes on the nuclear/extranuclear approach. (Zalta 1992, 65–6)

After considering several ways in which the constitutive-extraconstitutive approach might try unsuccessfully to accommodate dual modes encoding attributions of existence to the nature of a nonexistent or abstract object, Zalta concludes:

> This suggests that there is an important sense in which the two languages are just incommensurable. They organize the world in such fundamentally different ways that it makes little sense to try to translate one to the other. The above facts demonstrate that the two-way translation between the languages of the two approaches offered by Kit Fine does not work. (Zalta 1992, 66)

Zalta underestimates the reductive power of a constitutive-extraconstitutive predication semantics. He does not dispute Holmes' nonexistence, but on the dual modes approach, a nonexistent object can have the property of existence *encoded* in its nature, which necessarily it does not *exemplify*. This is puzzling in itself, since it may appear that even if encoded existence only is part of Holme's *nature* or *essence*, then Holmes must *in some sense* exist.

There looms a Descartes-Leibniz-type 'ontological' argument for the necessary existence (in some sense) of many more objects than God, including nonexistents like Holmes, if (extraconstitutive) properties such as real existence can belong to an object's nature, essence intensional self-identity property cluster or so-being. Zalta will likely remind us here that Holmes merely encodes and does not exemplify existence, and so does not *really* exist. However, this means that Holmes is supposed to be real in some innocuous encoded sense, but not *really* real, even if he encodes in his nature or essence the property of being really real. I am by no means satisfied with these consequences, but I will not pursue my disagreement beyond noting that much of what Zalta is forced by his distinction to say in this connection compromises basic intuitions about essence, existence, and reality.

Zalta is surely right to insist that the attribution of existence to a nonexistent, say, fictional, object, ought to be accounted for by an adequate Meinongian predication theory. The reduction indicates how this is to be done under the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction. The reduction implies that where Zalta would encode existence (or any extraconstitutive property) to an object, the constitutive-extraconstitutive theory entails that the object does not exist, but has the property attributed to its nature. This, after all, is the most Arthur Conan Doyle can do, (falsely) attributing existence to Holmes' nature. The attribution of existence, as opposed to existence itself, is something that can belong to Holmes' *Sosein* on the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction, provided that, as I believe, the converse intentional property of attributing a constitutive or extraconstitutive property to an intended object is itself constitutive rather than extraconstitutive. Zalta, in explaining the concept of encoding, makes it clear that for an abstract object to encode a property is no more than for it to have the property attributed to its nature or essence, paradigmatically as when an author like Doyle

attributes what John Woods in *The Logic of Fiction* calls a 'sayso' property to a nonexistent object of literary invention like Holmes, in some cases more abstractly or mind-independently of actual acts of attribution by contingently existent psychological agents (Woods 2009 [1974]).

With respect to Parsons' application of Meinong's concept of watered-down extraconstitutive properties including existence to nuclear counterparts (which I do not accept, except heuristically, as germane to the best revisionary Meinongian logic and semantics), Zalta argues:

> Even if we were to analyze the encoding claim that xF by the claim that $F^N x$ [for the watered-down nuclear version of existence], and analyze the exemplification claim that Fx by the claim that $F^E x$, we wouldn't get a theorem that corresponds to:
>
> $$\exists x \exists F(xF \wedge Fx). \qquad \text{(C)}$$
>
> The closest that a nuclear/extranuclear theorist could come to this is:
>
> $$\exists x \exists F^N \exists F^E \left(F^N x \wedge F^E x \wedge F^N = w\left[F^E\right]\right).$$
>
> But, of course, this does not capture the significance of (C), for though $F^N = w[F^E]$, it is never the case that $F^N = F^E$ on Parsons's view. This nuclear/extranuclear approach cannot express the idea that one and the same property is both a part of the nature of an object x and at the same time an extranuclear property that x exemplifies. (Zalta 1992, 66)

It must be observed that Zalta's example contradicts and is strictly forbidden by his own theory. If F is the property of *existence*, then no object in Zalta's semantic domain can possibly both exemplify and encode F. If the object exemplifies existence, then it exists; but if it is existent, then it is restricted by Zalta's NO-CODER and Principle 1 from encoding any properties. If the object is abstract, then by definition it is nonexistent. Hence, although the object may encode existence, reassuringly, it cannot on pain of contradiction exemplify existence. The objection does not run deep, though it discredits this particular example, since Zalta's point can be made instead by letting F stand for nonexistence rather than existence, an extraconstitutive property in Meinong's theory, but one that can be both encoded and exemplified in Zalta's.

Zalta's inductive criticism of this particular imaginary attempt at translation is clearly not enough to refute the approach generally. Zalta does not anticipate the following reduction, which is not committed to the watering-down of extraconstitutive to constitutive property counterparts, in accord with my revised reduction schema.

$$\exists x \exists F[xF \wedge Fx] \leftrightarrow \exists x \exists F![A(F!x) \wedge F!x]$$

This is simpler and more elegant than the equivalence Zalta refutes. The advantage of the reduction, which Zalta may find gratifying, is that, although the equivalence makes use of the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction, it

is the same (extraconstitutive nonexistence) property that the object is said to exemplify and to have attributed to its nature or *Sosein*.

Zalta assumes that any reduction based on the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction will simply divide up the encoding and exemplification equivalents, one as constitutive and the other as extraconstitutive. This, unfortunately for Zalta, is not true. The constitutive-extraconstitutive meta-semantic property distinction is more flexible and resourceful than Zalta seems to appreciate. There appears nothing objectionable about judiciously reducing Zalta's encoding-exemplifying to Meinong's constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction. This is true especially in light of the problems Zalta identifies in the version of the proposal he attacks. It seems reasonable to conclude that the equivalence effects a materially adequate translation from dual modes of predication to univocal predication under the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction. If this implication is correct, then my evaluation of the constitutive-extraconstitutive property distinction as more fundamental than the dual encoding-exemplification predication modes distinction remains intact, and, with due qualification, Fine's intertranslatability thesis is vindicated against Zalta's criticisms.

Chapter 12
Virtual Relations and Meinongian Abstractions

12.1 Ontology Game

The metaphysics of relations is decided by an *ontology game*. It is a game with an impressive history. The play begins with the Presocratics, but gains prominence especially in Plato's theory of Forms and Aristotle's concept of the inherence of secondary substances in primary substances.[1] Again, a similar dispute arises in the medieval period in the realism-nominalism debate, in the empiricist repudiation of the rationalist notion of abstract general ideas during the Enlightenment, and more recently in investigations of ontological commitment to universals by Russell, Quine, Goodman, Armstrong, Wolterstorff, and others.[2]

That there are game-like features in attempts to determine the ontology of relations is apparent in the interchange between opposing views. Each participant sometimes taking turns adopts the role of player, spectator, referee, and self-appointed rules committee. Those engaged in disputes about the ontic status of relations can be seen as following a limited set of procedures, on the basis of which they win or lose ground against one another, with nothing to decide the truth of the matter except successful or unsuccessful performance according to the evolving rules. More so than in other areas of philosophical disagreement, in problems about the ontology of *abstracta*, there seem to be goals and strategies, and a concept of

[1] See Ross 1961, for an excellent discussion of Plato's theory and Aristotle's criticisms. Plato's formulation of the 'secret doctrine' of Protagoras in *Theaetetus* 152c–153d, reverses the usual reduction of relations to qualities by holding that qualities do not obtain absolutely, but only in relation to a perceiver. Aristotle, *Categories* 7.

[2] An informative account of the medieval dispute over the ontology of properties and relations is presented by Carré 1946 and Henninger 1989. See Berkeley 1949–1958b, a, *Three Dialogues*, *Works*, II, 192-4; *A Treatise on the Principles of Human Knowledge*, *Works*, II, 29-45. Hume 1975, 154-5; 1978, 17. See also Armstrong 1978, Vol, 2. Loux, ed. 1970. Wolterstorff 1970.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_12

winning, in which one ontological position emerges as victorious over its opponents, often on such quasi-aesthetic theory-building grounds as comparative simplicity, economy, or more basic explanatory fecundity. The questions whether there are relations as opposed to relational properties, whether properties or relations are universals as opposed to particulars, and whether if properties or relations are universals they are existent, subsistent, or have some other ontic status, are among the main stakes for which some versions of the ontology game are played. To call this philosophical activity a game, moreover, by no means detracts from its philosophical seriousness or importance.

It is inevitable, perhaps, that ontological issues about abstract entities should be determined on the basis of gamesmanship. There is arguably no empirically verifiable fact of the matter that would settle any of these questions about the ontic status of properties, relations, and other abstract ontology candidates. The ontology game is successfully played by the metaphysician who offers an ontic categorization of the parts of speech in terms of which scientific theories are constructed. To be successful, the categorization must best accommodate and make sense of the truths these theories are believed to convey, with the best compromise of the sometimes conflicting constraints of ontological economy and explanatory simplicity. There is a hierarchy of different levels of strategy at which the ontology game is played. It is possible to favor one set of ontic categorizations over another at the lowest level of play by offering an interpretation at a higher level of what scientific theories are to be included for consideration, what scientific facts are really expressed by accepted scientific theories, what is to count as doing justice to the facts expressed by accepted scientific theories, and what is to count as ontological economy or explanatory simplicity. All of these aspects of the problem are relevant to the metaphysics of relations, and all are up for grabs by philosophical inventiveness in the ontology game.

12.2 Russell's Argument for Relations as Universals

We can see the ontology game masterfully played by Russell in his efforts to prove the existence of universals. There is a compact statement of his realist position in his book, *The Problems of Philosophy*. In Chap. IX, 'The World of Universals', Russell begins by claiming that a proof for the existence of universals must establish the existence of relations rather than qualities:

> As a matter of fact, if any one were anxious to deny altogether that there are such things as universals, we should find that we cannot strictly prove that there are such entities as *qualities*, i.e. the universals represented by adjectives and substantives, whereas we can prove that there must be *relations*, i.e. the sort of universals generally represented by verbs and prepositions. (Russell 1912a, 95)

Russell then offers a two-part argument. If we try to do without universal qualities, we must do so by nominalizing resemblances as holding between multiple particulars. To do this, in turn, is to recognize universal resemblance relations, so that despite ourselves the nominalization of qualities on the basis of shared similarities commits us to the existence of relations as universals. Russell then opens the floodgates, concluding that, having admitted relations as universals, the advantage of explanatory simplicity outweighs that of ontological economy obtained by barring other universal relations and qualities from ontology. The heart of Russell's proof is this:

> If we wish to avoid the universals *whiteness* and *triangularity*, we shall choose some particular patch of white or some particular triangle, and say that anything is white or a triangle if it has the right sort of resemblance to our chosen particular. But then the resemblance required will have to be a universal. Since there are many white things, the resemblance must hold between many pairs of particular white things; and this is the characteristic of a universal. It will be useless to say that there is a different resemblance for each pair, for then we shall have to say that these resemblances resemble each other, and thus at last we shall be forced to admit resemblance as a universal. The relation of resemblance, therefore, must be a true universal. And having been forced to admit this universal, we find that it is no longer worth while to invent difficult and implausible theories to avoid the admission of such universals as whiteness and triangularity. (Russell 1912a, 96–7)

To further emphasize the importance of the existence of relations as the thin edge of the wedge that opens ontology to universals generally, Russell links his criticism of the ineffectiveness of quality nominalism in avoiding universals altogether to what he perceives as the failure of Berkeley's and Hume's strategy to eliminate abstract general ideas. He adds:

> Berkeley and Hume failed to perceive this refutation of their rejection of 'abstract ideas', because, like their adversaries, they only thought of *qualities*, and altogether ignored *relations* as universals. We have therefore here another respect in which the rationalists appear to have been in the right as against the empiricists, although, owing to the neglect or denial of relations, the deductions made by rationalists were, if anything, more apt to be mistaken than those made by empiricists. (Russell 1912a, 97)

Russell's proof trades crucially on some unexamined metaphysically controversial presuppositions. He takes it for granted that there is a real distinction between qualities and relations, so that although qualities in principle are dispensable in playing the ontology game, resemblance relations are not. Instead, he argues, resemblance relations are brought back in a self-defeating manner by the very effort to do without universal qualities. Russell also takes it as a matter of course that qualities and relations as universals can only explain the meaning of substantives, adjectives, prepositions, and verbs, if universals exist, subsist, or have some kind of real abstract or nonspatiotemporal being.

So many philosophical problems are raised by Russell's argument, that it is worthwhile, because of its historical and tactical importance in the relations ontology game, to examine these two implicit assumptions in Russell's proof more

critically in detail. This critical discussion sets the stage for the sketch of an alternative ontically neutral neo-Meinongian model of what shall be referred to as *virtual relations*.[3]

12.3 Relations and Relational Properties

If relations as universals were not needed at least in trying to explain away qualities as universals, Russell believes, there could be no proof of the existence of universals. This commits him to a sharp distinction between qualities and relations.

There are many variations in technical terminology for the development of ontology. Perhaps the most common way of speaking about properties is to divide them into unary *qualities*, in which a property predicate with a single argument place attaches to a single occurrence of a single object term, and *n*-ary *relations* ($n \geq 2$), in which a property predicate with at least two argument places holds between at least two terms or occurrences of a term for an object or objects. Alternatively, properties and qualities are sometimes equated as distinct from relations.

The point by either convention is that quality properties hold of one object only, while reflexive relations hold between an object and itself, and otherwise all other relations relate two or more distinct objects. The clause by which the number of occurrences of terms is used to distinguish qualities or properties from relations allows identity among other genuine relations to be expressed as holding between an object and itself. The distinction between quality or property and relation is thus characterized by their distinct linguistic, including formal logical, expressions, and in particular by the number of argument places for object terms required of their complete and correct expressions. Qualities or properties are formulated by attaching a one-argument predicate term to no more than a single object term; relations in their formulation require more-than-one-argument predicate terms to be attached to a corresponding number of occurrences of object terms.

Russell's opening play in the round of the ontology game he describes shares in the benefits and risks that generally attend efforts to draw ontic conclusions from evidence of established linguistic practice. Here the difficulty is that predicate terms requiring more-than-one-argument-place (hereafter, *n*-ary predicate terms, $n \geq 2$) are not an essential feature of some languages, but can be reduced in every ostensible application by devices well-known to Russell to one-argument place

[3] Russell's pronouncements about the British empiricists having ignored the theory of relations in favor of concepts of qualities are misleading in the extreme. To consider just Hume's *Treatise*, there is such an extensive treatment of the concept that the analytical index for 'Relation' in the Nidditch edition runs to two full pages in small print. It is worth remarking that Hume's rejection of universals is not directed exclusively toward unary qualities or properties, but toward '*abstract* or *general* ideas', without further qualification (Hume 1978, 17). It is at least conceivable that Hume regarded the distinction between qualities and relations as superficial, and therefore subsumable and subject to the same criticisms under the same category. Meinong wrote his *Habilitationsschrift* at the University of Vienna, the *Hume-Studien I, II*, respectively on Hume's nominalism and theory of relations. See *supra* Chap. 8, note 7; Barber 1970, 1971.

(hereafter, unary) predicate terms. This is accomplished in certain formalisms, including Russell's in the second edition of *Principia Mathematica,* by *abstraction* principles.[4] The same effect can be reproduced without special symbolic operators in ordinary languages. Here is an informal example. Consider the unary predication of a quality or property to a single object, Albrecht is German, and the *n*-ary predication of a putative relation to two distinct objects designated by two distinct object terms, Albrecht is taller than Beatrice. The putative relational predication is reducible even in ordinary discourse to the unary predication of a more complexly formulated quality or property to a single object. This occurs when we say for example, observing the distinction between relations and relational properties, that Albrecht has the quality or property of being-taller-than-Beatrice, or, less euphonically, of being Beatrice-taller, and that Beatrice has the quality or property of being-shorter-than-Albrecht, or of being Albrecht-shorter.

The same counterplay in the ontology game can obviously be made for any relation whatsoever. Paradox-contravening restrictions are sometimes imposed on the inferences validly derivable from certain diagonal constructions familiar to mathematical logicians that can be formulated by this procedure, like the self-applicational unary Liar-predication, being-false-of-itself.[5] For Russell's argument in support of the existence of relations as universals, the implications are clear. If it is true, as Russell maintains, that there is no decisive proof for the existence of unary qualities or properties as universals, but only at least in the first instance of *n*-ary relations, if the argument for the existence of *n*-ary relations rests on the linguistic evidence of the distinction between unary quality or property and *n*-ary relation predications, and if the linguistic distinction between unary quality or property and *n*-ary relation predications is superficial, so that any *n*-ary relation predication is reducible to a unary property or quality relation, then there is equally no decisive proof for the existence of unary qualities or properties as universals, and hence no decisive proof for the existence of universals.

To make the objection more concrete, consider its implications for Russell's argument. The proof states that if we apply Berkeley's and Hume's nominalist elimination of abstract general entities from ontology in favor of shared individual similarities, then we must regard every instance of a quality or property nominally as belonging to a single category, by virtue of resemblances holding between particulars. The resemblances to which we must appeal are then ineliminable relations that add universals irreducibly to the ontology. If we have white triangle A and white triangle B, both are white triangles, according to Berkeley and Hume,

[4] Russell and Whitehead 1927 make use of a similar reductive device, Part I, Section D, 'The Logic of Relations', in the theory *30 of descriptive functions. The classic theory of λ-abstraction is offered by Church 1941.

[5] If we begin with the abstract, $Z = \lambda x[\neg xx]$, and the abstraction equivalence principle $\forall y[\lambda x[\ldots x\ldots]y \leftrightarrow (\ldots y\ldots)]$ holds, then from $ZZ \vee \neg ZZ$, it follows that $ZZ \wedge \neg ZZ$. To avoid diagonalizations of this kind, and forestall logical paradox without invoking type theory, restrictions of various kinds are sometimes placed on abstraction equivalence. I present several ways of constructing diagonalizations within the constraints of simple type theory in Jacquette 2004c, 2010a, 234–47, 2013a.

because they resemble one another sufficiently in the color and shape sensations they produce in observers to merit a common nominalization of these particular features. This is a reductive move in the ontology game. Russell now counters that the resemblance between the particular whiteness of particular A and the particular whiteness of particular B is a universal relation that is also instantiated by white triangle C, so that the higher-order resemblance between A and B is also universally instantiated by A and C and B and C.

It might be objected from the outset that there might be differences in the precise way in which A resembles B, B resembles C, and A resembles C. The resemblances might also be individual rather than universal, just as the whiteness or triangularity of A need be the very same as the whiteness or triangularity of B or the whiteness or triangularity of C. If we look, we may be able to discover differences in their resemblances. Indeed, if A has a slightly different shade or hue of whiteness, and a different triangularity than B or C (milk, eggshell, Attic white; scalene, isoceles, obtuse), then the resemblances between these three objects should also be proportionately different. Hence, though the three particulars resemble each other, they do not resemble each other in precisely the same way, but each in somewhat different particular ways. Wittgenstein in *Philosophical Investigations* speaks in this connection of family resemblances, where common essences are not available to explain unequivocally shared predications of properties to intended objects. To see this, we need only recall that resemblances among contingently existent things are intransitive. If A resembles B in some predicationally relevant respect, and B resembles C, etc., and Y resembles Z, it does not follow that A resembles Z in that same predicationally relevant respect. The minor differences between particulars can be amplified successively in tiny increments over sufficient distances until the first element in the series no longer relevantly resembles sufficiently distal elements.

Must the still higher-order resemblance between different particular resemblances be universal, as Russell concludes? Why not allow an indeterminate ascent of different particular resemblances among different particular resemblances? Russell seems to think that his regress of particular resemblance relations will wear us out after two or three steps, and we will have to admit that there are universal relations. There seems nevertheless to be no reason why the regress cannot continue indefinitely without involving universal relations at any stage. Russell's argument is invalid. Not only do we not need to postulate universals on the basis of his proof, but it is better not to. The world is much more particular than the simplifying, unifying, categorizing thought by which we try to capture its nature. If our concept is that the degree of resemblance between particulars is sensitive to the similarity or difference between resemblant particulars, then if the particulars at the origin of the hierarchy are not precisely identical, the differences between them should ripple from the *inferiora* bottom of the resemblance hierarchy throughout to their *superiora* elaborations at the tip, never once permitting an exact identity of resemblances among anything but *per impossibile* exactly identical particulars (Meinong 1899).

Instead of positing the resemblances between A, B, and C, as universal *n*-ary relations, they might rather be understood reductively in the way just explained, as particular unary qualities attaching singularly to A, B, and C. Rather than saying

that universal relation R holds between A, B, and C, or even between A and B, A and C, and B and C, we can say that particular A has the particular unary quality of resembling-B, and the distinct particular unary quality of resembling-C. Similarly for particular B's having the particular unary quality of resembling-A, and the particular unary quality of resembling-C, and the particular C's having the particular unary quality of resembling-A and the distinct particular unary quality of resembling-B. Trumping Russell's ontology game strategy, we streamline commitment to existent entities further than he anticipates by rejecting his linguistic justification for positing resemblance relations as distinct from qualities, which he claims are eliminable.

We should expect that resemblances between contingently existent things will not be precisely identical, and hence not universal. This does not prevent us from speaking of them for convenience in loose and popular expression as identical, or of multiple sets of particulars as being resemblant in the very same way. There are too many differences and kinds of differences among contingent entities for selections of more than two of them to resemble each other identically. The resemblances between necessary, ideal or abstract entities in contrast with the physical, dynamic, spatiotemporal, might be precisely identical, and hence universal. Resemblances between ideal or abstract entities nevertheless cannot be advanced without begging the question against critics like Berkeley and Hume, who, consistently with the principles of their radical empiricism uncompromisingly oppose the existence of any abstract general ideas or entities. Russell quite reasonably proposes to open the entrance to universals useful in explanations generally only after he has proved the existence of relations as universals. Unless or until the first part of his argument succeeds, he has no basis for admitting abstract entities into a preferred ontology. The result is that in either case we are not forced to accept Russell's argument for the existence of universal *n*-ary relations, which he claims is the only possible proof for the existence of universals (Russell 1912a, 95).

12.4 Reference to and Existence of Relations

There is another vulnerable presupposition in Russell's argument. Russell assumes that only existent objects can be referred to or enter into true explanations. To speak of irreducible relations for Russell is automatically to be committed to their existence. At least some universals exist, according to his view, if we must refer to universal resemblance relations in order to explain qualities as nominalizations of resemblances among particulars.

The idea that reference entails existence is characteristic of an extensionalist semantics. Russell, after the publication in 1905 of 'On Denoting', was well-entrenched in extensionalism and what has been called Russell's being-predication thesis. The theory of names as incomplete symbols to be replaced by definite descriptions, and the analysis of definite descriptions in terms of a triad of conditions including existence, uniqueness, and predication, leaves no possibility for referring to nonexistent objects by name or description. This position marks

Russell's rejection of Meinong's object theory, in which reference to and true predication of properties to existent as well as nonexistent objects is authorized by an intensionalist Leibnizian combinatorial referential semantic domain comprehension principle. Thought is free to assume whatever it likes, and thereby to intend existent spatiotemporal or abstract objects, and contingently nonexistent and even ontically impossible objects, including the golden mountain and round square. Meinong holds that we can think about and refer in thought and language to nonexistent intended objects, just as we can think about and refer linguistically to golden entities and mountains that happen to exist, like the so-called mask of Agamemnon and Mt. Aetna. The golden mountain for Meinong is truly golden and a mountain, and the round square truly round and square. It is precisely because the round square is both round and square, that the round square cannot exist, but is a metaphysically impossible Meinongian object. How else is the object's nonexistence to be explained?

The criticism of Russell's argument for the existence of relations as universals need not involve a full-scale defense of a Meinongian referentially intensionalist as opposed to a Russellian existence-presuppositional extensionalist semantics of reference and true predication. It should be enough to indicate that Russell's proof is indecisive if there is at least one coherent semantic theory that permits reference to and true predication of constitutive and extraconstitutive properties alike to existent and nonexistent objects. It does not follow logically from the mere fact that we may find it necessary or expedient to refer to *n*-ary relations, such as universal resemblances, as opposed to unary qualities or properties, that therefore universal resemblances exist, subsist, or in any other sense have *being*. If a nonextensionalist account of reference and true predication is at least logically possible, it follows immediately that we can refer to and truly predicate properties even of universal relations, including *n*-ary resemblance relations, without implying that universal resemblance or any other relations *exist*. Russell's argument is inconclusive if there is no contradiction in the proposition that nonexistent *n*-ary resemblance relations can be referred to and truly have whatever properties are needed for the nominalist elimination of universal unary qualities.

The criticism of Russell's argument is bolstered by objections to the adequacy of his rejection of Meinong's object theory, and of the theory of definite descriptions which he offers as an alternative extensionist semantic theory of reference and true predication. Philosophy already features philosophical attacks against Russell's theory of definite descriptions as unsatisfactory on its own terms, as well as sophisticated efforts to advance Meinongian logics and semantics that contradict Russell's theory of definite descriptions (Smith 1985; Griffin 1986; Perszyk 1993). If it is at least logically possible for either one of these projects to succeed against the extreme existence-presuppositional extensionalism of Russell's theory of definite descriptions, or in promoting a Meinongian intensionalist theory in which reference and true predication of properties to nonexistent intended objects are permitted, then Russell's proof for the existence of universal relations is immediately rendered logically invalid.

This is not the place for further detail beyond that found in Chaps. 4, 5, and 6. Suffice it to say that Russell's theory of definite descriptions fails in application to true predications of properties like being mythological to definitely described objects like the flying horse. The theory requires that the flying horse exist in order to have the property of being mythological truly predicated of it. The recent resurgence of interest in Meinongian logic and semantics testifies at least to the perception on the part of a number of competent logicians that a Meinongian theory in which reference to and true predication of properties to nonexistent objects is not only logically possible, but semantically powerfully motivated and supported. This proposition in turn implies that Russell's argument for the existence of relations as universals proves, not that relations as universals necessarily belong to an ontology of existent abstract entities, but at most that the nominalist attempt to do away with unary qualities commits metaphysics to referring to and truly predicating properties of existent or nonexistent universal relations, that may either belong to an ontology of existent abstract entities or to the Meinongian extraontology.

If an alternative to Russell's extreme extensionalist theory of reference and predication is available, as appears to be the case, we cannot validly infer the existence of abstract relations as universals from the mere fact, even supposing it to be true, that in certain theoretical contexts we must refer and truly predicate properties of universal relations. For all that Russell says in playing the ontology game, we can do without universal relations entirely. There are at least these two possibilities. We can limit ourselves exclusively to particular unary qualities, or we can allow ourselves the luxury of beingless unary qualities and *n*-ary relations, to which, as Meinongian intended objects, we can nevertheless refer as distinct intended objects of true constitutive property predications in a metaphysics of qualities and relations.

12.5 Ontic Neutrality and Epistemic Limitations

It is convenient to think and speak of relations. The reduction strategy by which *n*-ary relations are reduced to unary relational qualities or properties is cumbersome. Arguably, though, it is no more unwieldy than many similar kinds of reductions in linguistic philosophy and philosophical logic, including Russell's analysis of definite descriptions, and some of Quine's paraphrastic analyses of putatively nonexistent intended objects to predicates, like the quality Pegasizes or property of Pegasizing. If we can say what we need to say about the properties of things without formulations involving ineliminable and irreducible *n*-ary relational predicates, then we can take advantage of the convenience of expressing some properties by means of *n*-ary relation terms, without thereby incurring ontological commitment to relations as existent abstract universal entities.

The ontology game is won by presenting a satisfactory account of the metaphysics of property attributions that, among available alternatives, maximizes both ontic economy and explanatory simplicity and fecundity. As the game is often played, a

referentially extensionalist semantics is presupposed, as in Russell's argument for the existence of relations as universals. Russell finds it necessary to include reference to relations, even in the attempt to eliminate reference to qualities, taking it completely for granted all along that reference to relations implies their existence. Both parts of Russell's proof have been shown to be inconclusive. We have seen that *n*-ary relations need not be posited in addition to unary qualities or properties. If Russell is right in asserting that there is no decisive proof for the existence of unary qualities or properties, then there is no decisive proof of the existence of any universals whatsoever. Furthermore, the referentially extensionalist presupposition of Russell's argument is subject to dispute by virtue of the conceivability of an intensionalist nonextensionalist semantics for the reference and true predication of properties to nonexistent objects. From this standpoint, even if Russell had soundly demonstrated the need to include reference and true predication of properties to *n*-ary relations as universals, it still would not follow that relations must be admitted as existent entities into a logic's ontology. Relations might instead be nonexistent intended objects to which reference and true predication of properties, such as relating resemblant white triangles A, B, and C, are nevertheless possible. In a nonextensionalist semantic framework, the need to refer to and truly predicate properties of an object does not imply the object's being, dynamic or abstract existence.

To trump Russell's move in the ontology game, it is necessary to offer something more positive by way of an alternative account of relations. What is proposed is an innovation in ontology game strategy, whereby the basic goals of the game are seen as best satisfied by the most comprehensive ontically neutral metaphysics of relations. For this purpose, the concept of *virtual relations* is introduced. Virtual relations are mind-independent potential intended objects that serve all the referential and predicational, and therefore all the same explanatory functions, as actual universal relations existing in an ontology assumed as the existence-presuppositional extensionalist referential semantic domain. The only difference between virtual and actual relations is in their respective ontological categorizations. Virtual relations, unlike actual and actually instantiated relations, need not be regarded as existent or nonexistent, but, in the language of some of the object theorists of the turn of the century, they can be understood instead as pure potential intended objects, satisfying intensional property-related self-identity conditions beyond being and non-being.

The justification for this ontic bracketing of relations is epistemic. We have, as Hume emphasized with respect to causal relations, no direct knowledge of the being or non-being of relations. We do not see, hear, touch, smell, or taste relations themselves, although perceiving things can enable us to judge experientially what relations are instantiated. Our empirical knowledge is limited only to particulars and their particular instantiated properties, that in other philosophical systems are modes or tropes. We come to accept or reject the existence of such putative abstract entities as relations on philosophical grounds only as they are determined to be necessary or unnecessary according to the most successful performances in the relations ontology game. The ontology game depends on factors other than those

that can straightforwardly be understood as revealing the nature of reality, such as balancing or negotiating a compromise between incommensurable preferences for ontic economy over explanatory simplicity, versus explanatory simplicity over ontic economy. Hence, it may be preferable simply to avoid ontic commitment wherever reference and true predication are needed for explanation, but there is no direct epistemic criterion for a referent and predication subject's being or non-being.

This seems to be precisely the situation encountered in the case of the ontic status of relations. Relations are desirable referents and predication subjects, because of the simplicity of explanation they afford in accounting for the metaphysics of entities and states of affairs in the world. They are considered to be among what are sometimes distinguished as an object's intrinsic and extrinsic interconnections. We need not accept relations into the preferred ontology of existent abstract entities in order to refer to and predicate properties of relations. By allowing virtual rather than actual relations to do the same explanatory work in metaphysics, we gain significant ontological economy at no sacrifice of explanatory adequacy or simplicity. To appreciate the advantages ontic neutrality confers on virtual relations, we now outline the basic principles of this alternative Meinongian ontology game strategy.

12.6 Virtual Relations as Ontically Neutral Intended Objects

The idea of a virtual relation is to have available a referent that does all the work of traditional existent or subsistent relations, but for which ontic commitment is unnecessary. The object theory developed by Meinong and his students provides the concepts needed for an analysis of this kind.

First, we recognize, not an ontology, but a semantic domain or extraontology, consisting of mind-independent potential intended objects. The domain engulfs the ontology, since it includes all and only ideally intended objects in its ontically neutral comprehension principle. Objects of thought generally can be regarded as pure objects, or objects as they are in themselves, in the non-Kantian sense by which objects to be included in the semantic domain are identified and individuated on the basis of their constitutive properties, regardless of their ontic status.

To complete the picture, it is necessary only to show that we can accomplish everything ordinarily required of relations belonging to traditional ontological categories by virtual relations, considered as pure ontically neutral intended objects. This is relatively easy to do, once we have broken the hold of existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist semantic presuppositions generally. Those who cannot do so will not be able to appreciate the logical and semantic attractions of an ontically neutral Meinongian object theory. What do relations do for us? It seems reasonable to conclude that relations primarily organize

information about the instantiated properties of particular objects in natural or convenient ways, cutting nature at its joints, as Plato says in his dialogue, *Timaeus*. Such a purpose is equally served by existence or virtual relations, provided only that virtual relations can be referred to and have properties truly predicated of them. Consider the case of two objects, A and B. A is shorter than B. It is tempting to suppose that if virtual relations in their purity are ontically neutral, then there is no real fact of the matter about the relative heights of A and B. However, this is not so. A is 2 m tall, and B is 2.2 m tall. That we shall suppose is a truth about the world. We do not add to or subtract from this basic fact, conveniently represented in the description of A as shorter than B, by saying that the relation shorter than or the shortness of A relative to B exists, subsists, or has being. Then, neither do we add to or subtract from the facts of the matter by treating relations as ontically neutral pure intended objects, beyond being and non-being.

The application of virtual relations as an ontology game strategy raises an interesting difficulty. Is it cheating, or does it unfairly bypass the goal for which the ontology game is played, to introduce virtual relations? The ontology game, in applications inspired by Russell, is supposed to determine within certain constraints whether or not relations exist. Virtual relations deliberately leave this question open as ontically neutral, with the effect, a critic might complain, of avoiding rather than solving the problem. One reply to this objection is to argue that if ontic neutrality is not permitted as an acceptable solution to the problems posed by the theory of relations, then the purpose of the ontology game may be too narrowly circumscribed. The ontic neutrality afforded by virtual relations can also be defended without further apology as directly addressing the main point of the ontology game. This is the task of giving an adequate account of relations or other *abstracta*, by which the parts of speech are metaphysically categorized, that best makes sense of the truths of scientific theories while maximizing ontological economy and explanatory simplicity. Replacing the existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist account of actual relations with an intensionalist theory of ontically neutral virtual relations fully accomplishes this purpose.

Can external relations, such as the spatial relations among physical objects theorized by a relativistic physics, be adequately explained as nonexistent Meinongian objects? If relations generally do not exist, how can a relativistic physics hold true or even make literally meaningful sense? There are several factors that should not be confused. If a relativistic physics is true, then it is true that there are spatial relations between physical objects. Relativistic or any other kind of physics will not tell us what relations are, so the mere fact that it is true that there are spatial relations holding between physical objects, on which everyone can agree, does not by itself imply that spatial relations are real. It need only imply that certain kinds of measurements of distances between and other dimensional properties of real dynamic physical objects in space and time can be made.

Space is something real, in that case, even if it is theoretically reducible to a dimensional distribution of centers of mass. Centers of mass are themselves often said to be fictional, despite their role even in classical Newtonian physics. They are some among many idealizations in the natural sciences, and particularly in

scientific law, indicating that not everything of explanatory import in a scientific theory need refer to something existent. Whether the relations holding between physical objects moving in space and time need themselves be anything real is perhaps a metaphysical red herring. If the relevant relations between physical objects for a relativistic physics are primarily distance, velocity, acceleration, and the like, are mathematical functions, then in a Platonic realist account of abstract entities relations are not 'real' physical things anyway. If to speak of a 'real' physical relation between real physical entities or ideal nonexistent centers of mass of real physical entities is to speak of these mathematical relations between measurements of various properties exemplified by physical objects, then a Meinongian theory of relations preserves all the advantages of a realistic metaphysics of abstract entities with none of the unwanted ontic commitments.

That a physical object's center of mass is so far away from the center of mass of another physical object at a specific time is then a presumed objective fact of the physical world. That distance as a relation should additionally be an existent entity seems strained. An object A is located a certain distance from another object B. The distance between them is expressed as no more than a numerical difference along a uniform metric, and is not a third object C, existent, nonexistent, or otherwise. The relation of there being such a metric distance between A and B is a relation, but considered only as a numerical value in physical theory, the relation need not exist in order for the theory as a whole to meet all its scientific explanatory obligations.

Relations understood in this way can be referred to and individuated from one another. The relation of tallness is distinct from the relation of being older than, and causation is different than siblinghood. The properties predicated of relations in all our explanations are also fully satisfied by virtual relations. The virtual relation of being taller than has the property of holding between A with respect to B, of being a relation involving relative height, of being the complement of the relation being shorter than, and so on. There is nothing that we can truly say about the extraontological properties of actual relations that we cannot also truly say about virtual relations. Since the ontic status of relations is epistemically undecidable on empirical grounds, encouraging doxastic agnosticism about the existence of universals, and we can make do metaphysically without existent relations, provided we accept an ontically neutral intensionalist semantic framework, in which virtual relations can be posited as existence-independent pure intended objects, there is nothing to be gained in playing the ontology game by maintaining a Fregean-Russellian existence-presuppositional referential extensionalism, in which relations must actually exist in the ontology in order to be referred to as the intended objects of true constitutive property predications. Virtual relations serve all the same explanatory purposes as actual relations, and do so moreover without assuming avoidable epistemically jointly insupportable ontic commitments.

Chapter 13
Truth and Fiction in Lewis's Critique of Meinongian Semantics

13.1 Semantics of Fiction

In 'Truth in Fiction' (1983), David Lewis raises four objections to a Meinongian semantics of fiction. Lewis does not deny that a Meinongian logic of fiction could be made to work, but identifies disadvantages in Meinongian semantics as a reason for recommending his own modal logical alternative.

Lewis's essay first appeared in 1978, and is republished in his *Philosophical Papers*, to which he has added a series of 'Postscripts to "Truth in Fiction"' (1983). Lewis indicates his continued commitment to his original critique of Meinongian semantics and his analysis of modal story-contexting, while offering only minor modifications to the original analysis and exploring its further implications. The questions Lewis raises about the interpretation of fiction are as pertinent to philosophical semantics today as when he first presented his results.

A Meinongian semantics is a theory that explains the meaning of sentences without ontological prejudice (Lewis refers to Parsons 1974, 1975). A Meinongian theory analyzes the meaning of the sentence '*a* is *F*' in the same way and by reference to the same semantic principles, regardless of whether or not *a* happens to exist. Meinongian semantic domains admit existent and nonexistent objects, including objects ostensibly referred to in fiction, and permit reference and true predication of constitutive properties to existent and nonexistent objects alike. A Meinongian theory interprets the sentence 'Sherlock Holmes is a detective' as true, on the grounds that what we mean by the putative proper name 'Sherlock Holmes' is a nonexistent

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
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object described in Doyle's fiction that truly has the same property of being a detective in the same way and in the same sense as an existent detective.[1]

Lewis proposes an alternative to Meinong's object theory that considers the truth of a sentence in a work of fiction only within an explicit story-context. He explains truth in fiction by (selectively) prefixing (most) problematic sentences with the operator, 'In such-and-such fiction. . .'. 'Sherlock Holmes is a detective', for example, on Lewis's analysis, becomes, 'In the Sherlock Holmes' stories, Sherlock Holmes is a detective'. This is by no means a trivial transformation, but one that reduces the meaning of sentences ostensibly about fictional intended objects to facts about works of fiction. It does not follow logically or analytically that Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories is a detective, since logically the stories might have described Sherlock Holmes as being something other than a detective. Nor is it a contradiction, but an ordinary falsehood, if someone were to maintain that Sherlock Holmes was a nasty Edwardian villain. The effect of Lewis's proposal is to relocate the truth conditions for a sentence in or about fiction from the immediate content of the sentence to the fictional context in which the sentence appears or to which it applies. The advantage he sees in modal story-contexting is that it avoids the need for a reference domain of nonexistent Meinongian objects.

13.2 Lewis's Challenge to Meinong

Why not be a Meinongian? What is so bad about nonexistence? Why is it undesirable to refer to nonexistent objects, and why should it be a problem for nonexistent objects to have properties just as existent objects do? How does it help to explain the possession of a property by an existent object to say that the object exists?

Lewis's modal story-contexting of truth in fiction is in some ways simpler, but in other ways more complex, than the Meinongian theory he criticizes. It is simpler in excluding nonexistent objects. It entails further complications of its own, by requiring a distinction between the semantics for sentences about existent objects, as opposed to sentences ostensibly about nonexistent objects, where a Meinongian theory offers a unified ontically neutral account to explain the meaning of sentences regardless of whatever objects happen to actually exist or not exist. If a sentence says that an existent intended object is nonexistent, or the reverse, then, unless we

[1] A more precise and thereby necessarily narrower characterization of the story-telling context, in light of the author's many imitators, and the occurrence of Holmes in multiple story-telling contexts, can be written as, 'In the stories and novellas of Doyle, Holmes is a detective'. There is no obvious reason to limit story-telling context from above or below, allowing more general inclusion of related writings beyond those the author actually composed or even contemplated, such as 'In all of world literature at any time now or in the future, Holmes is a detective', and more specific and to that extent potentially uninteresting but nevertheless semantically valuable contexting of propositions to the very sentence of a work of fiction in which the proposition is expressed, as in 'In the ninth sentence of Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*, Sherlock Holmes is a detective'.

sense equivocation, the sentence can be disregarded in sound reasoning, because it will be logically necessarily false. Lewis's theory is also made more complicated by positing modal semantic structures of fictional worlds inhabited by objects that do not actually exist.[2] To choose between a Meinongian or Lewis-style semantics of fiction, we must therefore come to terms with conflicting intuitions about potentially incommensurable aesthetic and philosophical values that might cause us to prefer one explanatorily comparable semantic theory over another. If Lewis, as he admits, has no knockdown objections to offer against a Meinongian theory of fiction, then the preferability of Lewis-style modal story-contexting over a Meinongian semantics strongly depends on whether Lewis has successfully uncovered any significant disadvantages in Meinongian semantics as compared with modal story-contexting. Lewis accordingly considers four problems in a Meinongian logic of fiction:

- The problem of distinguishing properties predicated of nonexistent Meinongian objects versus existent entities, and hence of distinguishing the referents of predications involving existent entities from predications involving nonexistent Meinongian objects.
- The problem of distinguishing a multiplicity of otherwise individually indistinguishable indefinitely numbered nonexistent Meinongian objects posited in a work of fiction by means of a nonspecific term of plural reference in the absence of adequate identity conditions.
- The problem of restricting the range of quantifiers in comparing the properties of nonexistent Meinongian objects with the properties of existent entities, transfictionally, from one work of fiction to another, and, ultimately, to other nonexistent Meinongian objects, in other works of fiction.
- The problem of interpreting inferences about the properties of nonexistent Meinongian objects in a work of fiction, especially in conjunction with true propositions about the properties of existent objects that may also be mentioned in the story.

The objections are related, and in different ways call attention to the same underlying skepticism about whether properties can reasonably be attributed to the nonexistent objects described in a work of fiction. All four objections can be answered or refuted, thereby blunting Lewis's charge that a Meinongian semantics is at a theoretical disadvantage in comparison with modal story-contexting. A comparison of Meinongian object theory semantics with Lewis-style modal story-

[2] Lewis 1983, 264: 'As a first approximation, we might consider exactly those worlds where the plot of the fiction is enacted, where a course of events takes place that matches the story. What is true in the Sherlock Holmes stories would then be what is true at all of those possible worlds where there are characters who have the attributes, stand in the relations, and do the deed that are ascribed in the stories to Holmes, Watson, and the rest. (Whether these characters would then *be* Holmes, Watson, and the rest is a vexed question that we must soon consider.)' Lewis provides a more detailed explanation of the modal apparatus for the interpretation of his story-contexting prefixes in his Analyses 0,1,2.

contexting shows that the two are not incompatible. By itself, moreover, without Meinongian object theory, Lewis's proposal is subject to equally powerful counter-criticisms. Lewis-style story-contexting needs to be properly combined with a Meinongian semantics of fiction in order to avoid Lewis's objections to Meinongian object theory, and to avoid Meinongian objections to Lewis's story-context-prefixing.

13.3 Real and Fictional Objects and Properties

Lewis's first objection depends on a peculiar definition of Meinongian semantics. Lewis describes a Meinongian theory of fiction as one that interprets 'Holmes wears a silk top hat' and 'Nixon wears a silk top hat' as completely on a par, taking descriptions of fictional characters at face value as having the same subject-predicate form. 'The only difference,' Lewis claims, 'would be that the subject terms "Holmes" and "Nixon" have referents of radically different sorts: one a fictional character, the other a real-life person of flesh and blood' (Lewis 1983, 261). Lewis rejects this way of contrasting real and fictional objects. He asks:

> For one thing, is there not some perfectly good sense in which Holmes, like Nixon, *is* a real-life person of flesh and blood? There are stories about the exploits of super-heroes from other planets, hobbits, fires and storms, vaporous intelligences, and other non-persons. But what a mistake it would be to class the Holmes stories with these! Unlike Clark Kent et al., Sherlock Holmes is just a person—a person of flesh and blood, a being in the very same category as Nixon. (Lewis 1983, 261–2)

Meinongians can and should regard Sherlock Holmes, despite being a fictional character, as much as a flesh and blood human being as Richard Nixon. Lewis does not further explain what he means by a Meinongian semantics. It is central to Meinong's object theory that nonexistent objects have whatever same constitutive properties they may have in the same sense as existent entities, regardless of their ontic status. The existence or nonextistence of an object is something else again. To be or not to be is not always the question. The situation is comparable to that in which you need to know whether a number is even or odd, regardless of whether or not the wisest metaphysicians can come to agree about whether or not numbers exist.

A nonexistent object, in a Meinongian semantics, can be a detective, a winged horse, or anything else that thought might freely intend. Sherlock Holmes for a Meinongian, although as much flesh and blood as Richard Nixon, unlike Nixon, does not have real actually existent flesh and blood. No more than, for example, Holmes's left eye is a real actually existent eye, or his violin a real actually existent violin. The fact that Holmes is as much flesh and blood as Richard Nixon is no embarrassment to Meinongian object theory.

Lewis distinguishes between the ontic categories of the referents of 'Sherlock Holmes' and 'Richard Nixon' by saying that Holmes is 'a fictional character', whereas Nixon is 'a real life person of flesh and blood'. This is partly true and partly false. There is indeed a difference in the ontic status of the referents of the

proper names 'Sherlock Holmes' and 'Richard Nixon'. It is true to say that Holmes is fictional, and true to say that Nixon by contrast is 'a real life person'. What is not true to say is that Nixon by contrast with Holmes is a 'person of flesh and blood'. Lewis rightly argues that it would be a mistake to say that Holmes is something other than 'a person of flesh and blood, a being in the very same category as Nixon' (Lewis 1983, 262). A Meinongian logic of fiction is not required to say that Holmes is *not* made of flesh and blood, and Meinongians will more typically insist that Holmes, despite being a fictional nonexistent Meinongian object, is as much flesh and blood as Richard Nixon during his lifetime was, and as far as that general predication of constitutive properties extends. It is not as though Holmes is a robot in the stories, or a fantasy of his ostensible chronicler Watson. In the Doyle stories, Holmes is a flesh and blood human being, just as Nixon was in real life and in the actual world.

Thus, Lewis's first problem disappears. If we take Lewis's insight a few steps further, we might ask about a work of fiction in which the author declares in all sincerity that Holmes is an actually existent entity or real-life being. What are we to say then about the properties and ontic status of Holmes? Existence, unlike the property of being a detective or playing the violin, is not a property that authors can freely bestow on their fictional creations by spinning their imaginative narratives. Meinong's object theory accordingly applies the distinction we have designated between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. Constitutive properties, we must not tire of reminding ourselves, are those like being red or round, made of flesh and blood, being a detective or playing the violin, that can be had by existent or nonexistent Meinongian objects without prejudging their ontological status. Extraconstitutive properties by contrast are those like being real, existent, subsistent, complete, necessary, or unreal, nonexistent, nonsubsistent, nonexistent, incomplete or impossible, that cannot be truly or falsely predicated of an object without prejudging or expressing a definite commitment concerning the object's ontological status. Constitutive ontically neutral properties can be freely truly predicated of objects, as when a novelist or mythmaker dreams up nonexistent fictional objects like Holmes with the constitutive property of being a detective, smoking a pipe, shooting cocaine, or playing the violin. Extraconstitutive ontically commital properties cannot be freely truly predicated of intended objects by any willful act of imagination. Thought can intend an object independently of its ontic status, but cannot thereby bestow on an intended object any particular ontic status as existent or nonexistent, in those or other words. A work of fiction, as a result, in which an author maintains that Holmes truly exists does not truly predicate existence of Holmes. By contrast, if an author says that Holmes is a detective, then, in a Meinongian semantics, Holmes truly is a detective.

The difference, properly applied, between ontically neutral constitutive properties and ontically committal extraconstitutive properties solves many problems in Meinongian semantics. It absorbs the difficulty Lewis mentions, along with strengthened versions like Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain and existent round square, and Lewis's insufficiently disambiguated problem of the real-life flesh and blood Holmes. We must only distinguish between the properties a

Meinongian semantics regards as freely truly attributable to existent or nonexistent objects, and those that are not freely truly attributable, because they have the special function in logic and language of truly or falsely attributing definite ontic status to an existent or nonexistent object. To the extent that Lewis fails to observe these Meinongian distinctions, his first criticism of Meinongian semantics is misdirected.

13.4 Indefinitely Numbered Fictional Objects

Lewis's second objection to Meinongian interpretations of fiction is logically more interesting. He considers a work of fiction in which an indefinitely numbered 'chorus' of fictional relatives is said to attend a fictional character:

> We can truly say that Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., is attended by a chorus of his sisters and his cousins and his aunts. To make this true, it seems that the domain of fictional characters must contain not only Sir Joseph himself, but also plenty of fictional sisters and cousins and aunts. But how many—five dozen, perhaps? No, for we cannot truly say that the chorus numbers five dozen exactly. We cannot truly say anything exact about its size. Then do we perhaps have a fictional chorus, but no fictional members of this chorus and hence no number of members? No, for we can truly say some things about the size. We are told that the sisters and cousins, even without the aunts, number in dozens. (Lewis 1983, 262)

A chorus, as judged against certain background information in a given cultural context, according to Lewis, does not contain exactly 60 members, but, as the unnamed story maintains, at least some dozens of sisters and cousins. What might a Meinongian theory of fiction say about predications involving indefinitely numbered nonexistent objects? Does Meinongian semantics run afoul of the difficulties Lewis mentions in this objection?

The property of numerability need not be essentially different from other kinds of constitutive properties like being red or round, a detective, or a flesh and blood person. We similarly do not know the exact height or weight of Sherlock Holmes from the stories, nor how many nonexistent cells or molecules Holmes has in his nonexistent flesh and blood. A fictional nonexistent Meinongian object in a Meinongian semantics is incomplete with respect to many, perhaps infinitely many, constitutive properties and property complements. If a chorus in fiction does not need to be all male or all female or any particular distribution of genders, why should it have to have any particular number of members?

A Meinongian in desperation might hold that the example Lewis describes involves an impossible Meinongian object, like the round square. If to be a chorus consisting of no definite number of members is judged somehow to be a *contradictio in adjecto*, then the chorus that attends Sir Joseph Porter is not obviously but nonetheless implicitly impossible. However, impossible as well as possible nonexistent Meinongian objects can be freely posited by the author of a work of fiction. The defender of a Meinongian semantics need not go so far in this direction to solve Lewis's problem. There are several choices. A Meinongian can interpret the indefiniteness of the number of chorus members mentioned in a work

of fiction in much the same way as the incomplete information in a historical report of actual facts no longer subject to verification, about the actual number of real members in a real chorus at a certain place and time. In both cases, we can assume that there must be a definite number of chorus members, even if we do not know what that number is, and must somehow live with the uncertainty.

The difference is that in the case of the real chorus there is a definite true answer to the question of how many persons were in the chorus, that we can no longer discover, while in the work of fiction there is no definite true answer. Again, this is not a problem unique to the indefinite numbering of fictional objects in Meinongian semantics. There is similarly no definite true answer to the question of Holmes's eye color or the precise number of hairs on his head, even though we are probably right to affirm that if Holmes has eyes, then he has some definite eye color, and if he is hirsute, then he has some definite large number of hairs. What, then, is the special difficulty for a Meinongian semantics about an indefinitely numbered fictional chorus?

13.5 Definitely Numbered Indistinguishable Fictional Objects

While a Meinongian can take Lewis's second problem in stride as easily as the first, Lewis's remarks suggest another potentially more damaging criticism. The objection is developed by Jacek Pasniczek from Lewis's problem of ten magic rings. Pasniczek writes:

> David Lewis has raised an objection against the Meinongian approach to fiction which is known as the problem of 'ten magic rings'. This problem appears when one tries to treat fictional objects as Meinongian objects. Suppose we have a very short story: 'There exist ten magic rings'. So this story posits ten objects and each of them is constituted by the same properties: being magic, being a ring. Since Meinongian objects constituted by the same properties are simply identical, actually there is exactly one *magic ring*. And there seems to be no satisfactory solution to the problem within the orthodox Meinongian theory. (Pasniczek 1998, 165)

The problem of ten magic rings is not the same as, but rather the flipside of, Lewis's problem of the chorus. Instead of positing an indefinite number of chorus members about which additional information is forthcoming collectively and individually for at least some of the members of the fictional group, Lewis's problem of ten magic rings posits a definite number of fictional objects about which no further information is available. The difficulty is making sense of the assumption that there are exactly ten numerically distinct such objects, when all we are told is that they all share the minimally constitutive properties of being magic and being rings, and are given no further basis for distinguishing them. Pasniczek's solution is to consider the ten magic rings of the story as a single Meinongian object, with the constitutive properties of being magic, rings, and ten or tenfold in number. He argues that:

> [A]ccording to this analysis, *being ten* is an internal property of the *M*-object. Paradoxically enough, there is one *M*-object *ten magic rings* although there are ten magic rings in the sense that [10,*M*,*Rg*] possesses, besides the properties being magic and being golden [sic; rings] the property of being *ten*. (Pasniczek 1998, 165)

I find Pasniczek's solution ingenious but implausible. The problem is not in regarding ten or being tenfold in number as a constitutive property. The difficulty is that of collapsing ten magic rings, which are putatively ten distinct fictional objects, into one. Pasniczek says that paradoxically there are still supposed to be ten magic rings. However, it is unclear how this can be so, when comprehension for a Meinongian referential semantic domain standardly identifies an individual Meinongian object for each distinct constitutive property cluster or so-being. The paradox is only in Pasniczek's analysis, which we need not accept. It will not do to interpret the magic rings as a unitary Meinongian object that further has the constitutive property of being tenfold or consisting of precisely ten individuals. The idea may be acceptable as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough, if it is also supposed to uphold the true proposition that the story is about ten distinct albeit indistinguishable magic rings (Pasniczek 1998, 166).

As before, there are several possibilities. A Meinongian might interpret a work of fiction that without further ado posits ten magic rings as introducing ten impossible objects that are supposed to be distinct while lacking any basis for being distinct. How different is this from an author's free assumption of a round square, or, perhaps, a perpetual motion machine? Such a proposal seems as desperate and unnatural here as it does in trying to solve Lewis's problem of the indefinitely numbered chorus. There is, fortunately, a better alternative. An analogy with the limitations of an incomplete but factual historical account is again instructive. Imagine that we discover a scrap of parchment of no known provenance on which is recorded only that 'Five guests came to dinner'. If this is a true statement about real guests at a real dinner, we know only that on some occasion there were five dinner guests, but we do not know who they were, and we have no further information by which to distinguish them one from another or from their presumed host. They are five dinner guests, and that is that—just as in Pasniczek's story there are ten magic rings with nothing more to say for themselves. What, then, is the semantic problem? If the report on the parchment is true, then there were five distinct individuals who in fact had further distinguishing constitutive properties, now lost to time. The same cannot be said of the ten magic rings. By hypothesis, there is no fact of the matter to distinguish the ten rings even in principle, and there is no freely assumed information about the rings contained within the story by which they might be distinguished. Nevertheless, it is supposed to be true of the magic rings of the story that they are ten in number.

There is an intuitively more satisfying solution. A Meinongian theory applies the same requirements for reference and true predication of constitutive properties to existent and nonexistent objects alike, regardless of their ontic status. This makes it appropriate to continue the above analogy with the incomplete historical report of the five dinner guests in understanding what a Meinongian should say about the problem of ten magic rings. In the historical report, five unidentified dinner guests

are said to have attended an unidentified dinner party. We naturally assume that there is a pool of candidate persons living at the time, any five of whom might have been the dinner guests. In the ten magic rings story, we can similarly draw limited general conclusions about the rings without being able to distinguish the rings as individuals. When the historical report states only that there were five dinner guests, we interpret its truth as meaning that there were five candidates from the pool, any of whom with additional relevant information might in principle be distinguished from any other, but who as things stand are practically indistinguishable by virtue of all having only the commonly shared property of having been among five dinner guests.

The same is true in the fictional case, where the pool of candidate intended objects satisfying the description of being one of the ten magic rings is incomparably larger and more comprehensive. There is an extensive pool of candidate magic rings with additional constitutive properties, by virtue of which all are distinguished from one another, and any ten of which could be the ten supposedly distinct but otherwise undistinguished magic rings. To give only a hint of the possibilities, the ten magic rings mentioned in the story might be, but of course are not said to be, and so are not actually or cannot be known definitely to be, the red magic ring, the blue magic ring, the yellow magic ring, and so on. The story of ten red magic rings by parity can be interpreted as about the ruby red magic ring, the garnet red magic ring, the bloodstone red magic ring, and so on. When the author writes only of the ten magic rings or ten red magic rings, the author incompletely mentions the properties of a number of distinct and therefore distinguishable though undistinguished fictional Meinongian objects, just as the fragmentary report, in speaking only of five dinner guests, says something true if there are five individuals from the pool of candidates who were in fact the mystery dinner guests. The fragmentary historical report does not specify which these are in the same way that the work of fiction does not specify which of the pool of candidate distinct incomplete fictional Meinongian magic rings are the particular ten magic rings mentioned in the story. In the real world, by contrast with the objects and situations described in fiction, we assume that there exist definite answers to questions about the individuation of existent entities, even if from a practical standpoint we cannot always discover what differences obtain. This is part of what makes ten magic rings fictional and the five dinner guests by hypothesis real, it is part of what distinguishes fact from fiction. Consider what happens to the truth conditions but not the meaning of the dinner guest sentence on the further assumption that the parchment was in fact, though never to be rediscovered historically as such, a note toward the writing of a fictional story about five dinner guests and nothing more was ever imagined about who they were, where they had dinner, or what else happened to them.

The problem of the ten magic rings is an instance of the incompleteness of many nonexistent Meinongian objects. If a Meinongian refers to the golden mountain, it is similarly unclear whether what is intended is the 18 karat or the 24 karat golden mountain. Incomplete objects by virtue of being incomplete always have unspecified constitutive properties by which they could be but are not actually distinguished from any desired plurality of identically characterized incomplete

nonexistent Meinongian objects. Where incomplete Meinongian objects are concerned, there is always something more to add. By itself, this is not a defect, but an advantage, of a Meinongian semantics. It enables a Meinongian to explain reference and true predication of constitutive properties to nonexistent as well as existent objects in a simple unified theory that makes intuitive sense of the truths we are willing to attribute to objects in works of fiction as well as to objects that are supposed to exist in science and mathematics, conforming to the surface grammar of larger parts of colloquial discourse, and the like.

We may meaningfully refer to nonexistent objects that are falsely assumed to exist, even if in some instances some of these intended objects of scientific theory are afterward rejected as nonexistent. The honor roll includes, among many others, phlogiston, vortices, the planet Vulcan, Hegel's squaring of the circle, and Frege's reduction of mathematics to logic. Nor is the situation so unique that we require a special example like the problem of the ten magic rings in order to consider the implications of a Meinongian semantics of fiction. If all we are told is that Sherlock Holmes plucks two hairs from his left eyebrow, then we know only that he has plucked two distinct hairs, that he has a left eyebrow, and so on, but, due to insufficient background information, we cannot distinguish one plucked eyebrow hair from the other. This frequently happens in fiction, and it is no help but only an unjustified complication to invoke, as Lewis does, a logically possible world where counterpart Holmes actually exists and his counterpart eyebrow hairs have a full complement of constitutive properties whereby they are distinguishable as unique individual entities. There seems to be no more decisive objection to a Meinongian logic of fiction in Lewis's problem of ten magic rings than in his original statement of the second objection.[3]

13.6 Quantifier Restrictions in Meinongian Semantics

The third objection in Lewis's discussion concerns the legitimate scope of quantifiers in Meinongian semantics. Lewis maintains that:

> The Meinongian should not suppose that the quantifiers in descriptions of fictional characters range over all the things he thinks there are, both fictional and non-fictional; but he may not find it easy to say just how the ranges of quantification are to be restricted. Consider whether we can truly say that Holmes was more intelligent than anyone else, before or since. It is certainly appropriate to compare him with some fictional characters, such as Mycroft and Watson; but not with others, such as Poirot or 'Slapstick' Libby. It may be appropriate to compare him with some non-fictional characters, such as Newton and Darwin; but probably not with others, such as Conan Doyle or Frank Ramsey. 'More intelligent than anyone else' meant something like 'more intelligent than anyone else in the world of Sherlock Holmes.' The inhabitants of this 'world' are drawn partly from the

[3] Jacquette 2000b.

> fictional side of the Meinongian domain and partly from the non-fictional side, exhausting neither. (Lewis 1983, 262)

The disadvantage that is supposed to accrue to a Meinongian theory of fiction in light of this objection is difficult to understand. I have to strain even to grasp let alone sympathize with the problem Lewis seems to have in mind. Why should it be harder in principle to judge whether Holmes was more intelligent than Einstein as opposed to whether Darwin was more intelligent than Einstein? Comparative intelligence is as elusive a concept to define or apply to existent entities as it is in the case of fictional Meinongian objects.

Lewis argues that we can meaningfully compare Holmes's intelligence with Watson's, apparently since they inhabit the same fictional 'world'. We can do the same for persons who are either mentioned explicitly in particular stories, or who, like Newton and Darwin, belong to the real world historical background against which the Sherlock Holmes stories are written and interpreted. Judging from Lewis's examples, we supposedly cannot compare the properties of fictional objects from different works of fiction, nor achronistically with respect to real world persons who lived after the events of the Sherlock Holmes stories are supposed to have occurred. But why not? What is the logical difficulty in trying to decide whether Herculé Poirot was smarter than Sherlock Holmes, or the opposite, on the basis of how the two fictional detectives handled their respective fictional investigations, or how they might most reasonably be projected to handle a hypothetical mystery to be solved. Why can we not compare their respective abilities on the basis of the accomplishments attributed to them in their respective stories, together with whatever we can infer about the degree and kind of intelligence required for those kinds of achievements?

Lewis does not explain his reason for thinking that the two kinds of cases are different. The problem of judging the comparative intelligence of Holmes and Poirot seems no more intractable in principle, just because Holmes and Poirot thus far do not happen to have appeared together in the same story, than it would be if someone were now to include them as interacting in the same work of fiction, and would have to decide which of them, if either, could more plausibly be portrayed as more astute. The fact that no single story has been written in which Holmes and Poirot match wits seems no more an obstacle to comparing their intelligences than trying to do so in the case of existent persons who never interacted in life because they lived many years apart. It would be no mean feat, but not impossible in similar vein, to determine as in trying to determine whether Julius Caesar was smarter than Napoléon Bonaparte, or the reverse. Of course, arguing, or, rather, stipulating, as Lewis does, that there is an important difference in whether or not an individual occupies the same fictional world as another, or in a world up to a certain point in time of which the author of the fiction or the author's characters could be cognizant, fits neatly into Lewis's alternative modal story-

contexting semantics of truth in fiction. We are not driven to Lewis's approach anyway by this particular criticism of Meinong's object theory.[4]

Lewis's objection about the range of quantifiers in a Meinongian semantics of fictional objects is inconclusive. He considers the sentence, 'Sherlock Holmes is more intelligent than *anyone* else, before or since' (Lewis 1983, 262). He recognizes that to interpret this quantified sentence in Meinongian semantics, 'The inhabitants of this "world" are drawn partly from the fictional side of the Meinongian domain and partly from the non-fictional side, exhausting neither' (Lewis 1983, 262). This is perfectly true, but unproblematic. A Meinongian theory of fiction can quantify univocally over all objects generally, both existent and nonexistent. Or, it can restrict quantification more precisely to all or some existent or nonexistent Meinongian objects, both generally and as referred to in all or some definite stories, or in all or some definite historical periods, geographical or cultural milieux. The formal logical devices by means of which such quantification can be achieved are similar to those found in classical logic. They include unrestricted quantification over conditionally restricted subsets of the logic's domain, and restricted quantification. A Meinongian semantics permits all of the desired limitations in quantifiers ranging over the Meinongian model of existent and nonexistent objects. The theory allows fiction makers and interpreters to express complicated properties and comparisons of properties among real and fictional intended objects.

13.7 Inferences for Meinongian and Existent Objects

The fourth and final objection in Lewis's critique calls attention to problems in drawing inferences about fictional objects from their properties as described within a work of fiction, especially in conjunction with background facts about the real world. Lewis considers a single example:

> Finally, the Meinongian must tell us why truths about fictional characters are cut off, sometimes though not always, from the consequences they ought to imply. We can truly say that Holmes lived at 212B Baker Street. I have been told that the only building at 221B Baker Street, then or now, was a bank. It does not follow, and certainly is not true, that Holmes lived in a bank. (Lewis 1983, 262)

It is true in one sense that the inference from the proposition that Holmes lived at 221B Baker Street, London, and that the only building that has ever been at 221B Baker Street, London, in the actual world is a bank, that, therefore, Holmes lived in a bank, is deductively invalid. Lewis wants to fix the problem by prefixing these

[4] If we want to be able to say that Holmes is taller than Poirot, given their absolute heights as described in their separate stories but in no single combined story, then isolating these facts in distinct logically possible worlds does not help. There will of a logically possible world in which both characters exist, but these will not be part of any Lewis-style modal analysis of the works of fiction in which Holmes and Poirot are featured. The problem is related to Lewis's counterexample sentence 6. A related criticism of Lewis's story-contexting is discussed by Kastin 1993. Also Lamarque 1987.

propositions with the special modal qualifier, 'In such and such a fiction. . .', which explicitly invalidates the inference. He continues:

> The way of the Meinongian is hard, and in this paper I shall explore a simpler alternative. Let us not take our descriptions of fictional characters at face value, but instead let us regard them as abbreviations for longer sentences beginning with an operator 'In such-and-such fiction. . .' Such a phrase is an intensional operator that may be prefixed to a sentence ϕ to form a new sentence. But then the prefixed operator may be dropped by way of abbreviation, leaving us with what sounds like the original sentence ϕ but differs from it in sense. / Thus, if I say that Holmes liked to show off, you will take it that I have asserted an abbreviated version of the true sentence 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes liked to show off.' As for the embedded sentence 'Holmes liked to show off,' taken by itself with the prefixed operator neither explicitly present nor tacitly understood, we may abandon it to the common fate of subject-predicate sentences with denotationless subject terms: automatic falsity or lack of truth value, according to taste. (Lewis 1983, 262)

My reaction to the fallacy of Holmes living in a bank at 221B Baker Street, London, is rather different than Lewis's. I drive contextualization inward to distinguish an equivocation in the reference to 221B Baker Street, London, in the true fictional predication that has Holmes living there as opposed to the true historical predication of the bank's actual location. As I understand these intended objects in a Meinongian semantics, they are not identical, but are only misleadingly equivocally designated by the same term, '221B Baker Street, London'. The problem is widespread in Meinongian semantics. The first step in understanding the difficulty is to recognize its commonplace occurrences. Napoléon is the name of a real emperor of France, and of a fictional character in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. The fact that both are designated by the proper name 'Napoléon', by itself, signifies nothing logically, no more than the fact that several persons in the real world can all be named 'John Smith' or 'Mary Smith'. Tolstoy naturally takes advantage of many of the facts he assumes his readers know about the actual Napoléon in creating a fictional Napoléon that bears important points of resemblance with the real article. The situation promotes equivocation, but does not create undue confusion whether or not we try to interpret Tolstoy's fiction in Meinongian object theory semantics.[5]

[5] Lewis acknowledges the semantic complications entailed by historical fiction, when he writes, 1983, 273–4: 'I have said that truth in fiction is the joint product of two sources: the explicit content of the fiction, and a background consisting either of the facts about our world (Analysis 1) or of the beliefs overt in the community of origin (Analysis 2). Perhaps there is a third source which also contributes: carry-over from other truth in fiction. There are two cases: intra-fictional and inter-fictional.' Lewis's Analysis 1 and Analysis 2 offer rigorous formulations of modal story-contexting semantics. He explains, 1983, 270, 273: 'ANALYSIS 1: *A sentence of the form "In the fiction* f*,* ϕ*" is non-vacuously true iff some world where* f *is told as known fact and* ϕ *is true differs less from our actual world, on balance, than does any world where* f *is told as known fact and* ϕ *is not true. It is vacuously true iff there are no possible worlds where* f *is told as known fact* . . . ANALYSIS 2: *A sentence of the form "In the fiction* f*,* ϕ*" is non-vacuously true iff, whenever* w *is one of the collective belief worlds of the community of origin of* f*, then some world where* f *is told as known fact and* ϕ *is true differs less from the world* w*, on balance, than does any world where* f *is told as known fact and* ϕ *is not true. It is vacuously true iff there are no possible worlds where* f *is told as known fact*.' Parsons 1980, 51–60, 182–9, similarly distinguishes between 'native' and 'imported' fictional objects.

A problem is not solved by showing that it is frequently encountered. To say so only leaves more loose ends to fasten. At least it can be said that Lewis has not uncovered a new previously unrecognized implication of Meinongian semantics. Meinongians have long advocated the need to distinguish between real and nonexistent objects that may go by the same name, and that may even share a significant percentage of their constitutive properties in common. A disambiguation of equivocal references in and out of fiction is needed in order to avoid the kinds of invalid inference that Lewis exposes in his fourth criticism of a Meinongian semantics of fiction. There are at least two different ways of story-contexting a true sentence about a fictional object: Lewis's external or *de dicto* method, and an internal or *de 're'* method. We can distinguish the two ideas in this way:

- Lewis-style external *de dicto* story-contextualization:

  In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Sherlock Holmes lives in London at 221B Baker Street.

- Meinongian internal *de 're'* story-contextualization:

  Sherlock Holmes, in the Sherlock Holmes stories, lives in London at 221B Baker Street.

It is important to recognize that the *de 're'* external story-contextualization does not necessarily attach directly to an actually existent real world *res* or *res extensa*, but to an intended object generally irrespective of its ontic status. The difference in the two modes of story-contextualization is most dramatically explicated as a distinction by which Lewis-style external *de dicto* story-context-prefixing qualifies the truth of the entire sentence expressing a predication in fiction, and thereby of the predication of a property to a fictional object. By contrast, internal *de 're'* story-contextualization allows the univocal predication of disambiguated constitutive properties related to the real world or to a fictional world's existent or nonexistent objects, including fictional Meinongian objects. The troublesome inference in Lewis's fourth objection is equally blocked by either external *de dicto* or internal *de 're'* method of story-contextualization. We cannot validly infer that Holmes lived in a bank in real life or in the Sherlock Holmes stories, from the assumption that Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories lived in London at 221B Baker Street, and that 221B Baker Street, London, in real life, has always been a bank. Internal *de* '*re*' story-contextualization, unlike external *de dicto* story-contextualization, serves only to clarify the exact identity of a relevant fictional object such as Sherlock Holmes, London, or 221B Baker Street, London, as the one belonging to a certain work of fiction.

Interestingly, we *do* exactly the same thing to determine the truth or falsehood of the sentence 'Sherlock Holmes is a detective', regardless of whether we accept a Meinongian semantics or Lewis-style modal story-contexting. We must read Doyle's stories, or search our memories to recall the properties attributed to Holmes, such as the property of being a detective. Meinongians say that the sentence is true because Holmes, a nonexistent object, by the author's free assumption in writing the stories, is created as an intended fictional object with the property of being a detective, as truly and in the same sense as any real detective. Lewis

concludes that the sentence is true because it is true that the Doyle stories say that Holmes is a detective. The meaning of the sentence in a work of fiction is interpreted by Lewis in a modal structure of nonactual logically possible worlds in which fictional objects exist and truly have the properties predicated of them in particular works of fiction.

What happens if I perversely write a story about Holmes in which I deny that Holmes is a detective, or that he lived in London at 221B Baker Street, at the same time denouncing all the earlier Holmes stories as false? In one sense, I am free to do so. My impact on the presumptive story context of the Holmes stories is nevertheless likely to be negligible at best. If I am sufficiently clever and lucky, I might be able to change the content of the Holmes stories. It will take much more than merely penning a single sentence. I may need to develop an entire interesting story or novel-length work that justifies itself as a literary creation on its own merits in addition to reversing some of the constitutive properties Holmes has acquired in what by contrast must be recognized as the canonical Holmes stories sources.

At the very least, I would need to embed the sentence in a discussion of a thought experiment in a philosophical article that over time occasioned enough discussion to have the denials of properties Holmes shares in the other stories become an accepted part of the larger Sherlock Holmes story context. This could happen, but not easily and not likely. The Holmes who is a London detective residing at 221B Baker Street is relatively safe at least from my efforts to undo his well-established identity. Ironically, the less known a fictional character is, the more insulated the intended object is from character-transforming sequels, spinoffs, parodies, and philosophical thought experiments. In the event that my perverse story should become sufficiently entrenched in the popular consciousness, or recognized as necessary to include in canonical Holmes story-contextualizations, there would still be good reason to distinguish Holmes in what had previously been the canonical story context in which Holmes is a detective living in London at 221B Baker Street from Holmes in my perverse story context, where he is not a detective and does not live in London at 221B Baker Street. If necessary to avoid confusion in semantic analysis, a theorist could but hopefully will never need to go so far as to write:

- Sherlock Holmes in the non-Jacquette Sherlock Holmes stories is a London detective living at 221B Baker Street.
- Sherlock Holmes in the Jacquette Sherlock Holmes stories is not a detective and does not live in London at 221B Baker Street.

The argument is not that internal *de 're'* story-contextualization of true sentences in fiction is preferable to Lewis-style external *de dicto* story-contextualization. The point is only to observe that the internal *de* '*re*' method does not inherit the exceptions Lewis acknowledges to his external *de dicto* story-contextualization. The details are given below, in the course of critically examining Lewis's alternative to Meinongian semantics of fiction. It is easy to see at a glance that the problems mentioned occur because Lewis is driven to story-context entire sentences and larger units of discourse, instead of explaining particular references to individual fictional characters and related nonexistent intended objects ostensibly named or described in a story.

13.8 Limitations of Lewis-Style Story Contexting

Lewis adroitly adapts his story-context-prefixing to interpret the truth of many sentences judged true within a work of fiction. He also admits that there are counterexamples for which story-context-prefixing is not only unhelpful but implausible, if not evidently false. Lewis writes:

> I hasten to concede that some truths about Holmes are not abbreviations of prefixed sentences, and also are not true just because 'Holmes' is denotationless. For instance these:
>
> Holmes is a fictional character.
> Holmes was killed off by Conan Doyle, but later resurrected.
> Holmes has acquired a cultish following.
> Holmes symbolizes mankind's ceaseless striving for truth.
> Holmes would not have needed tapes to get the goods on Nixon.
> Holmes could have solved the A.B.C. murders sooner than Poirot. (Lewis 1983, 263)

Consider the first counterexample. Lewis cannot justifiably rewrite the true sentence, 'Holmes is a fictional detective', as the false sentence, 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes is a fictional detective'. The reason is that in the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes is not portrayed as fictional. This limitation is a peculiar feature of external *de dicto* story-contextualization, which concerns the truth value of the entire sentence that falls within its scope. The problem does not arise, even ignoring the fact that to be fictional is an extraconstitutive noncharacterizing property, when internal *de* '*re*' story-contextualization is applied. We retain the truth of Lewis's first counterexample sentence, when we rewrite it differently according to *de 're'* story-contextualization, as 'Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories is a fictional detective'. It is *de 're'* true *of* the fictional Meinongian object Holmes in the Holmes stories that he has the constitutive property of being a detective, and the extraconstitutive property of being fictional.

The same kinds of replies can be given in response to Lewis's other examples. It is obviously mistaken to embed the second problem sentence, 'Holmes was killed off by Doyle, but later resurrected', in the Lewis-style context, 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes was killed off by Doyle, but later resurrected'. Lewis seems to have in mind the fact that the character created by Doyle in a given set of stories is said to have been resurrected only in another unnamed story by another unnamed author. Lewis recognizes that his *de dicto* method of story-contextualization does not work in this instance. However, it is no special difficulty for *de 're'* Meinongian story-contextualization. The sentence requires disambiguation by means of two *de 're'* story context tags. We can rewrite the intuitively true sentence as the equally true 'Holmes in the original Sherlock Holmes stories was killed off by Doyle, but later [Holmes in a sequel to the Sherlock Holmes stories was] resurrected'. These are different Holmes characters. One is described in the original stories, and another in the sequel, and no one is required to consider them identical. Something similar is effected with Lewis-style *de dicto* story-contexting, but the adaptation militates against the simplicity of taking any sentence of or about fiction, and prefixing it universally as Lewis proposes with the clause, 'In such and such fiction. . .'.

It is unworkable for the same reason as the first counterexample to prefix Lewis's third counterexample sentence, 'Holmes has acquired a cultish following', in Lewis-style *de dicto* story-contexting, as 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes has acquired a cultish following'. The uncontexted sentence is intuitively true, the contexted sentence evidently false. Meinongian *de 're'* story-contexting on the other hand is unproblematic, because it is *de 're'* true *of* the fictional nonexistent Meinongian object Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories that Holmes acquired a cultish following. Indeed, it is arguably the nonexistent Holmes that is the intended object of fascination by the admirers of Doyle's fiction. The same is true of Lewis's fourth counterexample, 'Holmes symbolizes mankind's ceaseless striving for truth'. This sentence may or may not be true. If it is true, however, then the sentence is clearly not interpreted as true by Lewis-style *de dicto* story-contextualization in the expansion, 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes symbolizes mankind's ceaseless striving for truth'. The sentence is better interepreted as *de 're'* true *of* Holmes by Meinongian *de 're'* story-contextualization in 'Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories symbolizes mankind's ceaseless striving for truth'. The property of symbolizing the quest for truth on the *de 're'* account is directly attributed to the Meinongian fictional object Holmes by persons who understand perfectly well that Holmes does not exist.

A different set of problems plagues Lewis's fifth and sixth counterexamples. To say that 'Holmes would not have needed tapes to get the goods on Nixon', or that 'Holmes could have solved the A.B.C. murders sooner than Poirot', is hard to determine as true or false. Deciding the truth of these sentences is rather like trying to decide whether Holmes is more intelligent than Darwin or than Einstein, or, for that matter, whether Darwin was more intelligent than Einstein. Note that it would be equally difficult to judge of two existent detectives whether one could have solved an actual murder case sooner than the other. We can imagine good arguments offered on both sides of the question, reflecting the fact that such cases, whether they concern existent objects only, nonexistent objects only, or a comparison of existent with nonexistent objects, involve inherently unmanageable counterfactuals. The logic of such sentences, as Lewis admits, is not clarified by Lewis-style *de dicto* story-contextualization. Lewis's proposal blindly followed would transform the potentially true sentences he mentions into the definitely false sentences, 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes would not have needed tapes to get the goods on Nixon', and 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes could have solved the A.B.C. murders sooner than Poirot'. Applying the Meinongian *de 're'* story-contextualization method, on the contrary, preserves the potential for the *de 're'* truth of these sentences. The sentences are understood in a Meinongian *de 're'* interpretation as predicating properties of the fictional detectives Holmes and Poirot themselves, in 'Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories would not have needed tapes to get the goods on Nixon', and 'Holmes in the Sherlock Holmes stories could have solved the A.B.C. murders sooner than Poirot in the Herculé Poirot stories'.

Lewis says of all six problem sentences: 'I shall have nothing to say about the proper treatment of these sentences. If the Meinongian can handle them with no special dodges, that is an advantage of his approach over mine' (Lewis 1983, 263).

De 're' interpretation of story-contextualization, as we have now seen, can indeed handle all of these counterexamples to Lewis-style *de dicto* story-contextualization, and if Lewis is right, claims an advantage over his contextualization model. Contrary to Lewis, *de 're'* story-contextualization, by attributing properties directly to nonexistent objects regardless of their ontic status, constitutes a distinctively Meinongian semantics of fiction.[6]

13.9 Lewis's Modal Analysis of Fictional Worlds

The proposal to attach story context prefixes to some sentences of and about fiction provides only part of Lewis's semantics of fiction. The truth of the sentence, 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Holmes is a detective', requires analysis. The ordinary language prefix functions as a fictional modal operator, saying in effect that it is not categorically true that Holmes is a detective, but true only in at least some nonactual merely logically possible worlds associated with the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Lewis describes a standard modal structure in which a proper subset of logically possible worlds is distinguished as 'somehow determined' by a work of fiction. A sentence with its Lewis-style story-contexting prefix is true in Lewis's modal system, if it is true in every such distinguished logically possible world. Lewis maintains:

> Our remaining task is to see what may be said about the analysis of the operators 'In such-and-such fiction. . .'. I have already noted that truth in a given fiction is closed under implication. Such closure is the earmark of an operator of relative necessity, an intensional operator that may be analyzed as a restricted universal quantifier over possible worlds. So we might proceed as follows: a prefixed sentence 'In fiction *f*, ϕ' is true (or, as we shall also say, ϕ is true in the fiction *f*) iff ϕ is true at every possible world in a certain set, this set being somehow determined by the fiction *f*. (Lewis 1983, 264)

The possible worlds approach is worth exploring, but there are immediate drawbacks in applying modal structures to the logic of fiction. It is important to recognize that modal interpretations are not precluded from Meinongian semantics. There is no reason why a Meinongian theory of fiction could not also be supplemented with logically possible worlds. We can see the need for alethic modality in certain predications involving fictional Meinongian objects. If we think it is true that Holmes might have killed Moriarty, then we may find it indispensable to appeal to the modality of this 'might' by positing a subset of

[6] See Parsons 1980, 54: '. . .we don't confuse "Holmes doesn't exist" with "According to the story, Holmes doesn't exist."' Parsons considers degenerate fictions that seem to involve nothing but extranuclear (nonconstitutive) predications, 198: '*Story*: "Jay exists. The end." *Story*: "An object doesn't exist. The end."' Parsons expresses doubt about whether the examples are genuine stories, and from an aesthetic viewpoint this is perhaps a legitimate concern. It is hard to see what the passages lack in syntactic or semantic content that would disqualify them as (exceedingly uninteresting) stories.

logically possible worlds in which Holmes has the property of having killed Moriarty. The question remains whether it is necessary to suppose that fictional objects exist in nonactual logically possible worlds, or whether they can have different properties without existing in any logically possible world. The point is that Meinongian logic and a modal theory of logically possible worlds are not exclusionary choices. We can and may need and want to have both. The question is rather whether the logically possible worlds approach favored by Lewis-style *de dicto* modal story-contexting, by itself, without a referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended objects, can provide an adequate semantics of fiction.

There are difficulties about how a fictional world is to be specified. It is one thing to speak loosely of a fictional 'world' as that part of a semantic domain designated as containing nonexistent objects associated with the propositions of a work of fiction. It is another matter to invoke an entire logically possible world associated with a work of fiction or within which the propositions of the fiction are supposed to be true, where the action of the plot, if any, takes place, involving the fictional characters and subsidiary fictional objects of the story. The modal approach without benefit of Meinongian object theory must posit nonactual logically possible worlds in which Holmes exists as a complete entity, with definite eye color, a definite number of hairs on his head, a definite number of blood cells at any given time, and so on. Such exact specification is not required within the modal theory as a practical task, although the logical possibility is presupposed. We can wave a wand and stipulate that there are such worlds. The modal interpretation still seems unnecessarily complex in its implications, when we recall that its primary philosophical justification is to avoid referring and truly predicating constitutive properties of nonexistent objects.[7] If there is no decisive refutation of Meinongian object theory, and the question of whether or not to go the Meinongian route is mostly one of comparative aesthetic factors like simplicity, economy, fecundity, and the like, then Lewis's modal structures bereft of Meinongian object theory might be at a distinct disadvantage in the choice between competing semantics of fiction.

[7] Lewis 1983, 270: 'We sometimes speak of *the* world of a fiction. What is true in the Holmes stories is what is true, as we say, "in the world of Sherlock Holmes." That we speak this way should suggest that it is right to consider less than all the worlds where the plot of the stories is enacted, and less even than all the worlds where the stories are told as known fact . . . But it will not do to follow ordinary language to the extent of supposing that we can somehow single out a single one of the worlds where the stories are told as known fact. Is the world of Sherlock Holmes a world where Holmes has an even or odd number of hairs on his head at the moment when he first meets Watson? What is Inspector Lestrade's blood type? It is absurd to suppose that these questions about the world of Sherlock Holmes have answers. The best explanation of that is that the world*s* of Sherlock Holmes are plural, and that the questions have different answers at different ones. If we may assume that some of the worlds where the stories are told as known fact differ least from our world, then these are the worlds of Sherlock Holmes. What is true throughout them is true in the stories; what is false throughout them is false in the stories; what is true at some and false at others is neither true nor false in the stories.'

Another limitation of Lewis's non-Meinongian modal analysis is even more damaging. There is no reason to suppose that a work of fiction cannot ostensibly refer to and truly predicate properties of fictional objects that cannot exist in any logically possible world. Meinong, as an implication of the free assumption of intended objects, allows the semantic domain of object theory to include not only contingently nonexistent objects, but also metaphysically impossible objects, such as the round square. Meinong need not say contradictorily that the round square is both round and such that it is not the case that it is not round, or square and not square, such that it is not the case that it is square. Despite this allowance, we should not imagine that there can be any logically possible world where the round square exists and truly has the property of being both round and square. Many other more subtle examples are available. Suppose that an author writes a sequel to the Holmes stories in which Holmes meets Gottlob Frege, who, according to the story, successfully effects the reduction of mathematics to logic. There may be logically possible worlds in which Holmes meets Frege, but there are surely no logically possible worlds where mathematics turns out to be reducible to logic. Lewis addresses the problem of impossible fictions when he writes:

> I turn finally to vacuous truth in impossible fictions. Let us call a fiction *impossible* iff there is no world where it is told as known fact rather than fiction. That might happen in either of two ways. First, the plot might be impossible. Second, a possible plot might imply that there could be nobody in a position to know or tell of the events in question. If a fiction is impossible in the second way, then to tell it as known fact would be to know its truth and tell truly something that implies that its truth could not be known; which is impossible. (Lewis 1983, 274)

Since my intuitions about truth in impossible fictions are largely at odds with Lewis's, I can only try to articulate my views and encourage others to test their agreement or disagreement against my misgivings. Lewis distinguishes between blatant and latent impossible fictions. As an example of blatant impossibility in fiction, Lewis considers a story like the one above about Frege, about the troubles of the man who squared the circle. A latently impossible fiction by contrast is one in which an author through forgetfulness or the like inadvertently falls into inconsistency, as when Doyle in different stories attributes to Watson the property of having been wounded only once both in the shoulder and in the leg.[8]

Where the plot in a work of fiction is blatantly impossible, Lewis claims that anything, every proposition, is (vacuously) true. He states:

> According to all three of my analyses, anything whatever is vacuously true in an impossible fiction. That seems entirely satisfactory if the impossibility is blatant: if we are dealing with

[8] Lewis writes, in Postscript B in the reprinted version of 'Truth in Fiction', on 'Impossible Fictions', *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. I, 277: 'An inconsistent fiction is not to be treated directly, else everything comes out true in it indiscriminately. But where we have an inconsistent fiction, there also we have several consistent fictions that may be extracted from it. (Perhaps not in the very hardest cases—but I think those cases are *meant* to defy our efforts to figure out what's true in the story.) I spoke of the consistent corrections of the original fiction. But perhaps it will be enough to consider *fragments*: corrections by deletion, with nothing written in to replace the deleted bits.'

> a fantasy about the troubles of the man who squared the circle, or with the worst sort of incoherent time-travel story. We should not expect to have a non-trivial concept of truth in blatantly impossible fiction, or perhaps we should expect to have one only under the pretence—not to be taken too seriously—that there are impossible possible worlds as well as the possible possible worlds. (Lewis 1983, 274–5)

Why should we suppose that according to the story Lewis mentions it is equally true that the man who squared the circle did not square the circle? Or, with reference to the previously mentioned story, why conclude that Frege both reduced mathematics to logic and did not reduce mathematics to logic, that Sherlock Holmes met Frege and that it is not the case that Holmes met Frege, that grass is green and grass is not green? Why suppose that there must occur such inferential explosion in the semantics of fiction, except as a consequence of what should be the questionable allegiance to the paradoxes of strict implication in a classical modal framework? I do not suppose that the authors even of blatantly impossible fictions intend any and every proposition to be logically implied by introducing impossible objects or impossible elements of plot. We should hesitate to adopt whatever consequences follow from a Lewis-style modal story-contexting *de dicto* approach to the logic of fiction when the acceptability of such a theory as opposed to a Meinongian *de 're'* theory is the problem at issue.

The alternative for an unconventional modal analysis of fiction may then be to expand Lewis's modal structures to include logically impossible as well as logically possible worlds, as some logicians for other reasons have independently proposed.[9] Another solution might be to replace the classical propositional logic that Lewis presupposes as foundation with a paraconsistent theory.[10] These suggestions represent significant departures from anything Lewis envisions, and their complexity and ontic prodigality would need to be evaluated in comparison with the advantages of a Meinongian object theory semantics and general philosophical account of the meaning of fiction.

Lewis recommends a different type of analysis for fictions that are not so blatantly impossible. He inquires:

> But what should we do with a fiction that is not blatantly impossible, but impossible only because the author has been forgetful? I have spoken of truth in the Sherlock Holmes stories. Strictly speaking, these (taken together) are an impossible fiction. Conan Doyle contradicted himself from one story to another about the location of Watson's old war wound. Still, I do not want to say that just anything is true in the Holmes stories! (Lewis 1983, 275)

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[9] See Priest, guest ed. 1997. Especially contributions by Mares, Nolan, and Van der Laan. Hintikka 1975. Rescher and Brandom distinguish between 'inconsistent' and 'impossible' worlds. See their 1979, 4: 'It is necessary to insist … that one should avoid speaking of *inconsistent* worlds as *impossible* worlds. This would be question-begging, for it is a prime aim of the present analysis to show that they can be considered as genuinely possible cases.' Rescher and Brandom's logic is proto-paraconsistent, but it is clear that a Meinongian semantics might interpret the modalities of impossible objects like the round square either by means of impossible or inconsistent worlds.

[10] See *inter alia* Jaskowski 1969; da Costa 1974. An extensive edited volume is published by Priest et al. 1989, Priest 1995.

I do not understand why Lewis thinks that absolutely anything is true in the blatantly impossible story of the man who squares the circle, but not in the Holmes stories. What explains the difference?

Lewis suggests that we maintain logical consistency in the inconsistent Holmes stories by splitting them up into distinct story contexts. He is willing to follow the practice even within a single story for the latently inconsistent fragments of its distinguishable parts. This suggests that it is not so much the blatancy of inconsistency in the squared circle story that makes its impossibility unavoidable in Lewis's judgment, but the fact that a single object is defined as having impossible properties in a single compact story, rather than having the incompatibilities distributed over widely separated sentences dispersed over many pages as a long story unfolds. The distinction seems relatively superficial, since an inconsistency scattered over multiple sentences might be every bit as blatant as one that is tightly condensed, from the standpoint of the author's deliberate intentions versus lapses of forgetfulness and lack of vigilance in concocting what turns out to be an inconsistent fiction.

To see that there is no clearcut distinction between blatantly and inadvertently impossible fictions, consider the case of Piggy in William Golding's (1962) *Lord of the Flies*. Piggy is described as nearsighted. The bullies among the stranded children who eventually revert to a state of nature steal his glasses because they have learned that they can be used to start fires and Piggy cannot defend himself against their aggression. Such a task, however, as a matter of geometrical optics, cannot be accomplished with the concave lenses needed to correct for nearsightedness. Is this a blatant or latent impossibility? It is in any case some kind of physical causal impossibility. Should the answer depend on what Golding intended, and how much he can reasonably be assumed to know or not to know about geometrical optics? Must the semantics of fiction first settle the problem of the intentional fallacy of which Monroe C. Beardsley and William K. Wimsatt warned the interpreters of artworks generally (Wimsatt and Beardsley 1946)? It appears that we cannot decide the status of the impossibility in these works simply by appealing to the question of whether or not an apparent inconsistency can be resolved by fragmenting the story and attributing mutually inconsistent parts to different story subcontexts. We can separate those parts of the text that contain sentences describing Piggy as nearsighted, as belonging to a different substory than those describing his glasses being used to concentrate rather than diffuse sunrays in starting a fire. Nor does it seem reasonable to attribute to Golding the desire to fictionalize even the laws of physics in the 'world' projected by his novel. Piggy, as the particular character he is portrayed as being, seems to vanish if he is not held together by the properties of being both nearsighted, and having the kind of eyeglasses the other boys covet for their fire-starting ability, with the power their possession confers. The result in Golding's fiction is that Piggy's eyeglasses have both of these properties, demanded by the story, but contrary to the laws of physics.

The question is not relative degrees of blatancy, but how inconsistency of any sort in an impossible fiction is to be understood. Should the semantics of fiction

posit nonexistent impossible Meinongian objects, or invoke some variation of Lewis's modal story-contexting and interpretation, in terms of logically possible or impossible worlds? Meinong's *de 're'* semantics appears significantly simpler in comparison with Lewis's *de dicto* modal story-contexting. Are the aesthetic tradeoffs required by a non-Meinongian modal approach to the semantics of fiction adequately compensated by satisfying the pre-theoretical desire at all costs to avoid referring to and truly predicating properties of nonexistent objects? Lewis evidently believes so. In lieu of a more powerful argument against Meinongian theory, the difficulty and disadvantage seems to belong to the modal analysis.

13.10 Toward a Universal Semantics of Fiction and Nonfiction

It is a remarkable fact that writing and reading and talking about fiction proceeds so smoothly with so few occasions—primarily those manufactured by logicians and philosophical semanticists—in which it is necessary explicitly to disambiguate story context, internally or externally.

That such disambiguation can always be done in an intuitively correct way is theoretically comforting, even if it bestows no practical advantage on reading or writing or thinking critically about the logic of fiction. A novel can be indistinguishable in content, phenomenologically, so to speak, from the reader's standpoint, on the one hand, from a work of history, on the other hand, as in the fiction of Daniel Defoe, William Thackery, Tobias Smollett, and many another realistic writer. Hume, in *A Treatise of Human Nature*, makes a similar observation:

> If one person sits down to read a book as a romance and another as a true history, they plainly receive the same ideas, and in the same order, nor does the incredulity of the one, and the belief of the other, hinder them from putting the very same sense upon their author. His words produce the same ideas in both; tho' his testimony has not the same influence on them. The latter has a more lively conception of all the incidents. He enters deeper into the concerns of the persons; represents to himself their actions and characters and friendships and enmities: he even goes so far as to form a notion of their features, and air and person. While the former, who gives no credit to the testimony of the author, has a more faint and languid conception of all of these particulars, and except on account of the style and ingenuity of the composition can receive little entertainment from it. (Hume 1978, Book I, Part III, Sect. VII, 97–8)

The fact that fiction functions without explicit Lewis-style semantic prefixes suggests that philosophically unprejudiced producers and consumers of fiction do not regard the reference and true predication of constitutive properties to nonexistent objects as indistinguishable from that occurring in false science, history or extradisciplinary factual reporting. This is also why the fine line between fiction and false science or history is sometimes easy to blur, and why scientific and historical

frauds can be perpetrated. Such facts are more philosophically significant for logic and semantics than is often appreciated. They powerfully suggest, as Meinongians insist, that reference and true predication of constitutive properties to existent, abstract, or nonexistent objects function univocally in precisely the same way in fiction as in science or history. The logic of thought, if it is to be metaphysically indifferent and ontically neutral, must be the same for any discourse, regardless of its intention in conveying what happens to be true or happens to be false. What is it to logic whether or not Holmes exists? What is it to logic whether or not phlogiston or the planet Vulcan exist, or, for that matter, whether or not protons and neutrons or the planet Neptune exist?

Chapter 14
Anti-Meinongian Actualist Meaning of Fiction in Kripke's 1973 John Locke Lectures

14.1 Kripke's Locke Lectures

Saul A. Kripke delivered the John Locke Lectures at Oxford University in 1973, shortly after his three 1970 Princeton University lectures on *Naming and Necessity*. Unlike *Naming and Necessity*, the Locke Lectures, titled *Reference and Existence*, have been available in the intervening 40 years only in bootleg photocopies of the transcript on deposit at the Oxford University Library. The original text was supposed to be available for study only at the library, and not otherwise reproduced. By some wrongful avenue, in the nobler interests of scholarship, a copy of the transcript was leaked and circulated fearlessly, if not widely. The contents of Kripke's Locke Lectures consequently no longer come as much of a surprise with this edition as they might have 40 years ago. It is an important event nonetheless to have an authorized text of Kripke's 1973 Locke Lectures, that can now be publicly more freely discussed and criticized. The talks represent Kripke's *actualism* applied, as in his metaphysics of modal logic, in this case, among other interesting topics in epistemology and perception theory, to the meaning of fiction. The latter discussion is of particular significance for anyone interested in Meinong's philosophy, because, in the semantics of fiction, Kripke's actualism is the philosophical antipode to a Meinongian object theory analysis of the meaning of fiction.

The Locke Lectures volume is the second publication issued by the Saul Kripke Center (SKC) at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), under the editorship, in this case, of Gary Ostertag, SKC Director. The book, now published in this first imprint, contains an edited version of the original transcript of Kripke's Locke Lectures, lightly salted with explanatory footnotes and minimal related scholarly apparatus, a preface, list of references, and index. Kripke in the Preface explains that: 'Although I have added most of the footnotes, replaced passages that could use clarification, compressed some that now seemed too long (or difficult to comprehend), and even extended some that seemed too short, I can say that the final text remains faithful to the lectures as they were delivered. This is

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_14

so even though the view of negative existentials stated at the end was highly complicated and one that I was not wholly satisfied with, even at the time, nor yet today. But it is not as though, at present, I am wholly satisfied with or prefer my alternative' (Kripke 2013, *x*). Unless I misunderstand, Kripke is saying that the 2013 publication of the 1973 Locke Lectures is in some crucial respects substantially modified in comparison with the Oxford University transcript, although the new publication contains no concordance with the original document. It would be interesting to know word for word exactly what changes from the deposited manuscript have been made.

Kripke's Locke Lectures complement and carry forward vital topics of *Naming and Necessity*, and of Kripke's March 1973 lecture on 'Vacuous Names and Fictional Entities'. The latter was presented at a conference on Language, Intentionality, and Translation Theory, at the University of Connecticut, which was in some ways a Locke Lectures dress rehearsal. In the first SKC edition of papers, *Philosophical Troubles, Collected Papers Volume 1*, Kripke describes 'Vacuous Names and Fictional Entities' as 'essentially a precursor of my John Locke lectures at Oxford' (Kripke 2011, 52). In reading *Reference and Existence*, we have an edited text of these six lectures by Kripke over as many weeks in the late Fall of 1973. The lectures are enormously rich and rewarding. Especially intriguing are Kripke's positive suggestions toward an actualist logic, semantics and metaphysics or ontology, adapted to explain the meaning of fiction, without giving himself over to what he perceives as the Meinongian dark side of semantics.[1]

14.2 Meaning of Fiction and Realm of Modality

We cannot dismiss fiction as meaningless, particularly when it is hard from the texts alone to distinguish works of fiction from works of history. Supposing fiction to be the meaningful expression of something, the question is what are the semantics of fiction? How does a work of fiction have meaning? What meaning can be written into and read from any random choice of imaginative literature? There is sure to be a fundamental opposition between, under any banner, some forms of actualism and nonactualism.

Kripke's lectures show how far and with what adjustments an actualist metaphysics can propose to explain the meaning of fiction. Kripke's actualist metaphysics of modality allows only those rigid-designator-stipulated transworld identities of actual objects in possible worlds where actual objects can have different accidental properties than they happen to have in the actual world. There is a Kripkean possible world where I (under some designation) am covered in tattoos, and another

[1] Kripke mentions Meinong or Meinongianism no less than nine times in the 1973 lectures, which might be interpreted as Kripke's tacit recognition that Meinong's object theory is the intensionalist alternative to the actualist theory of fiction and fictional characters Kripke develops.

where I died in childbirth. Harsh as it seems, there can apparently be no Kripkean actualist possible world where I have children, if I never actually had children.

Actualism shows some of its limitations already in this application, since having or not having children appears to be one of life's insuperable contingencies. If I have not had children, then there is no one in the actual world to baptize, capable of having adventures in another possible world. The actualist answer in Kripke is that if I do not actually have children, then, like Sherlock Holmes and unicorns, there is no possibility of their existence. It does not serve to predicate of me as actually existent entity the accidental or essential (natural kind) property (*ceteris paribus*) of possibly having children, and thereby populating at least some nonactual possible worlds with my nonactual possible children, riding piggyback ontically on my actual accidental or essential properties.

For the actualist, for Kripke, there can be no property of possibly having children, except *a fortiori*, where the accidental properties of actual children are considered. There can be no property of possibly having actually nonexistent entities of any kind. To speak of them at all, they are beyond the reach of naming, with no place on the causal-historical network by which intended reference is spread from language user to language user within a sociolinguistic community. Hence for the nonactual there can be no projected transworld identity achieved by means of stipulation through the use primarily of such devices as proper names functioning as rigid designators. There are no proper names for nonactual entities, Kripke's actualism maintains, but, as in works of fiction, at most and at best *pretend* proper names.

The reason has more to do with Kripke's sense of the distinction between essential and accidental properties than any developed theory or criterion Kripke's modal metaphysics. I can imagine, but it cannot possibly be the case, that I should have different parents than I have. Being in particular Matt and Mabel's beaming boy is among my essential properties, not something that could be different in another Kripkean possible world. Equally, I can in some sense imagine or pretend, but it cannot possibly be the case, if Kripke's modal actualism is right, that I have children that I never actually have. If my actual parents are essential to me as actually existent individual, then so is my actual progeny. If I do not actually have any children, then if actualism is true, I do not possibly have any children. The thing soon gets out of hand anyway, once we begin to ask such questions as who their mother would be, and if she was actual or was also riding piggyback into the referential domain on my actually existent ontic shoulders as one of the possible nonactual mothers of my possible nonactual children, who her parents were, and so on, back to the Garden.

If the restriction is not observed, then we quickly get back all of the objects that Kripke wants to exclude from any possible world, if they do not actually exist. All that is needed is for someone actual to have had a great-great-great-great-grandmother, who possibly had a son, who possibly had a daughter, who in that world turns out to be the mother of Sherlock Holmes. These events all take place far away from our prying eyes, with transworld identities that seem to be out of our

immediate conscious stipulative control. The point is then that, despite Kripke's modal and fictional actualism, Holmes would possibly exist, if the metaphysics of modality were to allow possible sons and daughters, and the possible offspring of actual grandparents of all past lineage, of actually existent persons.

The attractions of actualism are as palpable as the robust sense of realism. Nevertheless, it seems inherently wrongheaded to ground all of possibility on actuality. If Kripke is right, then we can only pretend that there are actually uninstantiated individuals and natural kinds. That can hardly be the end of the story, however. Understanding the semantics of such intentional states as imagining or pretending cannot be trusted to take care of itself in a general program for advancing actualism. What is the actualist explanation of imagining or pretending? These are usually considered intentional states, defined and distinguished from one another in intensionally fine-grained ways by virtue of intending distinct intended objects. Where the intended objects of pretending and imagining manifestly do not exist, we are already deep in Meinongian object theory logic and semantics, whether the actualist likes to admit it or not. Kripke's actualism needs to hold the line at projected possibilities stipulatively managed by judicious use of rigid designators, in order to predicate different accidental properties of actually existent objects than those they contingently have in the actual world. What then is the semantics of pretending and imagining? If these are intentional states, what intended objects do they intend if not beingless Meinongian objects, the nonexistent intended objects of fiction and fantasy, invention, and pretense?

Kripean rigid designation is rigid also in being limited exclusively to actually existent intended objects as individual things capable of being named, referred to, or made the intended objects of true constitutive property predications. Holmes as a fictional intended *object* is ruled out of the Kripkean actualist domain, including all nonactual possible objects in all Kripkean rigid designator stipulated possible worlds, because there is no Kripkean rigid designator 'Sherlock Holmes'. No one in the actual world is named Holmes, and if there were that person would not be identical to anyone we pretend is named Holmes in the Doyle stories and novellas. There is no causal-historical chain of like-intending communication extending through a linguistic social community that terminates in any perceivable person Sherlock Holmes. In fiction, makers and consumers of fiction *pretend* that there is someone named Holmes, just as we pretend that there was a hound of the Baskervilles or Viktor Frankenstein's monster.

Kripke's actualism should not leave things here, without saying something more about the intentionality of pretending. How is pretending something about Holmes different than pretending something about Anna Karenina? In lieu of invoking nonexistent fictional intended objects in what is effectively a Meinongian nonactualist referential semantic domain, it appears difficult to put weight on the manifestly intentional mental act of pretending. Remarkably, Kripke speaks also in this context of 'characters', and we shall always say 'Kripkean characters' when his concept is discussed. Kripkean characters, whatever else they are, exist in real time as the creations of their authors. They cannot be abstract sets of properties, but they must actually exist in some form in order for fictional Kripkean characters to be said

to be actual. Meinongians do not suffer this burden, because they understand fictional characters differently as intended nonexistent objects, for which the actual existence of a document trail is not logically or semantically relevant.

Actualism stretches thin at exactly this point. The inscriptions of authors, and presumably their inventive nonexistent object-intending thoughts, although thoughts are not much mentioned, are invoked as something concrete that you already know exists. You can get your hands on an actual intended object, be it only the manuscripts and printed copies of texts and other documents related to the artistic creation and distribution of a work of fiction. Memory trace as much as inventive intentionality would seem to be important also in the account, although it is the perceivable written word that seems more essential for Kripke. Compared with Meinongian nonactualism in intended object theory, there does not seem to be much to recommend Kripkean actualism in understanding the meaning of fiction, except in the bare knuckles choice of referential actualism over any referential nonactualism. Kripke clearly excludes the nonactual Sherlock Holmes from inhabiting any possible world. What is less clear is exactly why he does so. Kripke stands for actualism, but the proposition that semantics must involve exclusively actually existent objects in a logic's referential semantic domain is unargued. Kripke's banishment of Holmes from every possible world, if sound, would apply as well to the modality of nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended objects. Failing to exist in the actual world, these Meinongian objects, for very different reasons, would also fail to exist in any Meinongian logically possible world. Existence, in contrast, is no qualification requirement for reference and true predication of properties to nonexisent Meinongian fictional intended objects like Sherlock Holmes and Anna Karenina, and nonexistence is no semantic disadvantage.

If philosophy is at least partly about the exploration of concepts and dialectical spaces, then, in order to better understand both sides, we should not discount the juxtaposition of Kripke's actualism and Meinongian nonactualism, a semantics of nonexistent intended object that satisfy the same intensional self-identity requirements as any existent entity, actual or abstract. We must consider possibilities defined over nonactual possible worlds, where differential accidental properties among actual objects only can be meaningfully stipulated by means of rigid designators such as proper names exclusively for existent entities.

Where the semantics of fiction is concerned, Kripke's emphasis on authors and consumers pretending to achieve reference and true predication of constitutive properties to fictional objects by means of their pretend names, is exactly right, but by itself it does not distinguish the intuitively distinct pretending that one does in the case of Sherlock Holmes as in the case of Anna Karenina. If I pretend that there is someone named Sherlock Holmes who is an English detective, *and* I pretend that there is someone else named Anna Karenina, who is not an English detective, then do I not pretend different things about different nonexistent intended objects? It may be a problem for Kripke, as it is not for Meinong, to explain how the distinct intentionalities in pretending about Holmes and pretending about Karenina

can be explained without allowing Holmes and Karenina into the referential semantic domain as distinct nonexistent fictional intended objects.

14.3 Kripke's Actualist Semantic Analysis of Fiction

Kripke's six lectures begin in Lecture I with the task of tying up what he calls 'some loose ends' of his 1972 lectures on *Naming and Necessity* (1980). Kripke's principal target, as he clears the ground for his alternative picture of how referential meaning functions in a language, is an on-demand *description* theory of reference.

Kripke seeks to overturn what in the late 1960s and early 1970s he perceives as a predominant descriptive theory of the referential meaning of proper names. He associates the description theory of reference with an assumption attributed in common to the otherwise diverging semantic theories of Frege and Russell. It is the questionable proposition that thinkers and speakers should need to be able to provide *on-demand* the definite descriptions by which the referents or intended objects of their speech act uses of names are specifically determined. When in many practical situations they are imagined not to be able to do so satisfactorily, the referential theory in general terms is blamed and the way supposedly prepared for a different approach.

Neither Frege nor Russell ever held such a view. The spirit and occasionally some of the content of Russell's 1918 lectures on *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* permeates Kripke's Locke Lectures, as do parts of Wittgenstein's 1922 *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. But in these sources there is no on-demand description theory of reference to be found. Kripke rightly attacks the adequacy of the on-demand description theory of reference. He observes that individual speakers who refer to a specific object by a variety of terms in a variety of speech acts are often unable to articulate the description of individuating distinctive properties that the named object is supposed to have. They somehow correctly intend the Fregean *Bedeutung*, but they lack, at least at the tips of their tongues, the connecting Fregean *Sinn*. Unfortunately, for Kripke's objections, neither Frege nor Russell suppose that we as genuinely referring name users must be prepared to specify the properties that would truly and uniquely apply to the intended objects of nominal reference. Michael Dummett argues the point persuasively in the 2nd edition of *Frege: Philosophy of Language*.[2]

The on-demand description theory may have originated as the projection of a speech act model onto a historically defensible abstract platonic Fregean-Russellian description theory of reference. If so, then it would seem to have been supported ahistorically by philosophers like John R. Searle among others. They followed a then currently popular understanding of the later Wittgenstein circulating in philosophical discussions at the time of Kripke's lectures. None of which changes

[2] Dummett 1981, Appendix to Chap. 5, 'Note on an Attempted Refutation of Frege', 110–52.

the fact that the on-demand description theory of reference cannot be conscientiously laid at Frege's or Russell's doors.

The corruption of Frege's and Russell's more pristine, cognitively and epistemically independent platonic account of referential meaning conditions for names, disregards our subjective psychologistic opinions about the objects we refer to by name or other singular referring expression. Our facility or lack thereof in describing the intended objects of referential uses of names is considered irrelevant. Awareness of these limitations long precedes Kripke's inheriting a subjectivized version of a more abstract Fregean-Russellian description theory of reference, in the on-demand form Kripke undertakes to criticize. That in the abstract there exists a definite description or complete explication in any other form of the sense or Fregean *Sinn* of a proper name, is a very different requirement from a name user's being able in practice to present such specification of the named object's distinctive characterizing properties, if called upon to do so, or as a precursor to successful reference in using the name. What is more, as Kripke rightly emphasizes, literally everything that we poor mortals may think we know about the intended object of a meaningful use of a proper name, even and especially for an existent entity, its referential meaning as an existent entity in a logic's referential semantic domain, could turn out to be false. Such false beliefs would nevertheless still be beliefs *about* the existent object. Those thoughts must somehow intend the relevant object, even in the absence of the language user's having any true beliefs about the object's actual properties, or about the actual state of affairs in which the existent intended object does not have the property it is imagined or pretended to have. The semantic situation is the same, even if all relevant language users called upon are altogether lacking so much as a single true distinguishing description on which to build.

14.4 Actualism Versus Meinongianism in Semantics of Fiction

Fiction, as Meinongians appreciate, is a difficult business to bring under universal semantic principles. It is especially challenging without invoking the inclusion of nonexistent objects in a referential extraontology, an ontically neutral semantic domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects that can be referred to, and to which we can truly predicate characterizing properties. Fictional Meinongian referents are distinct intended objects potentially intended by multiple thinkers, stereotypically by authors and their readers or audience as producers and consumers of literature. Despite their nonexistence, fictional Meinongian objects belong to an ontically neutral referential semantic domain of intensionally property-related distinguished existent and nonexistent intended objects, about which those who read and write works of fiction can pretend to refer and pretend to truly predicate constitutive properties.

Kripke says confusing things in the Locke Lectures about the ontic status of fictional characters. He univocally asserts that fictional *characters* like Sherlock Holmes, unlike Holmes considered as fictional nonexistent intended *object*, are actually spatiotemporally existent creations of literary imagination. Although, with respect to another set of ontic categories, Kripke in some places affirms while in others he denies that fictional characters, as he understands the concept, are *abstract*. Kripke appropriately emphasizes that fictional characters are created in time by the energy and imagination of the authors of fictions and myths. If so, then it is hard to see how Kripkean fictional characters as something made could possibly be abstract, in the sense of transcending space and time, like the Platonic individual mathematical and logical objects and relations, properties, universals, propositions, sets, possible worlds, that are sometimes posited. All of these familiar *abstracta*, whether or not we agree that they exist, are anyway all *supposed* to be eternal, changeless, existing beyond space and time in Platonic heaven and not in the world of spatiotemporal phenomena. Kripke cannot have his fictional characters turn out to be abstract entities in this sense, because then the Kripkean fictional character Sherlock Holmes would not have begun to exist, as Kripke also wants to say, only when Arthur Conan Doyle imagined some of the elements of his character and decided what to write in putting pen to paper.

There is more to be said about Doyle's acts of creating Holmes. Doyle at some time must have intended to create the character Holmes, or to make a character that later evolved into Holmes, to make that pretend detective and none other the intended object of his detective stories. To say so is nevertheless to speak Meinongian, truly predicating constitutive properties of the nonexistent intended fictional object Holmes. Kripke is right that fiction involves pretense on the part of fiction and myth creators and their readers and audience. Remarkably, Kripke does not further ask how we can even in principle distinguish one act of pretense from another, if we do not regard these as distinct tokens of intentional states that intend distinct intended objects, Sherlock Holmes in one favorite instance and in another Anna Karenina. If we are speaking of nonexistent intended objects, then we are already in Meinongian semantic territory, and this is precisely what Kripke repeatedly says he wants to avoid.

Kripke in 1973 by his own admission does not seem to have read Meinong. He offers no text-based argument, but only unsupported semantic prejudice against a Meinongian approach to the meaning of fiction, which he has not troubled to study, but is certainly thickly in the air. At the time, analytic philosophers and logicians, taught to reverence especially Frege and Russell, did not know much of anything correct or positive about Meinong. There was little reliable discussion of the idea of a Meinongian referential semantic domain, an ontology absorbing ontically neutral extraonology of existent and nonexistent, altogether beingless, intended objects. The concept was wrongly thought to be psychologistic, and as such anathema to mind-independent logic and formal semantics. Kripke echoes the anti-Meinongianism of time. For which he is to be forgiven, much as we forgive nineteenth and early twentieth century English language authors for excessive use of masculine pronouns.

How then, does Kripke propose to explain the intended object of pretending that Sherlock Holmes satisfies Kripkean naming requirements, as distinct from the intended object of pretending that Anna Karenina satisfies Kripkean naming requirements, or any other that a thinking subject as it happens may intend? Suppose that the Kripkean fictional meaning of '*S* pretends that "Sherlock Holmes" is a genuine name' $\neq$ the Kripkean fictional meaning of '*S* pretends that "Anna Karenina" is a genuine name'. How can the nonidentity of meanings be understood *except* as a nonidentity of intended nonexistent objects on the part of *S*, intending in one instance Sherlock Holmes and in another Anna Karenina? That is presumably how the semantics would work if *S* was pretending that an *existent* neighborhood dog does not exist, or that the dog is of a different breed, or friendly toward him rather than hostile, as distinct from *S* pretending that a tax audit letter open on the kitchen table does not exist, or that the envelope contains instead a cordial invitation to spend the summer all expenses paid on a tropical island. Nonexistent intended objects, Meinongian objects, popularly so-called, are what acts of pretending pretend, and hence of what they intend. Pretending about and projecting nonexistent objects and states of affairs does not make its first appearance in semantics with the invention of fiction, let alone with attempts to provide its formal semantic interpretation. It enters semantic interpretation and explanation instead with actual mental acts or psychological episodes of imagining and pretending that the tax audit is a nonexistent invitation, that the neighborhood dog is not a hateful beast but a charming obedient engaging canine, that 'Anna Karenina' is a genuine name, and that 'Sherlock Holmes' is a genuine name, thinking about, referring to and predicating properties of these nonexistent intended Meinongian objects, just as we do in the case of any existent intended object.

14.5 Kripkean Actualism in the Semantics of Modal Logic and Fictional Discourse

Kripke's actualism is semantically-ontically solid stuff only insofar as it supports a good explanation of the apparent reference and true predication of properties to what a Meinongian considers as nonexistent fictional objects. These are the intended Meinongian objects encountered through their constitutive properties, described in a work of fiction, and satisfying Leibnizian intensional property-based self-identity conditions as distinct intended fictional objects. Fictional objects in a Meinongian nonactualist semantics are precisely the nonexistent intended objects of an author and readership or audience in the acts of imagination and pretending that Kripke rightly emphasizes as vital to understanding the meaning of fiction.

The fundamental idea of a Meinongian logic of fiction is to consider fictional objects at intuitive face value as nameable, countable, quantifiable nonexistent 'Meinongian' objects. These, despite their ontic disadvantages, not only deserve,

but finally need, to be treated as the particular intended objects of specific thoughts. They must be objects in a referential semantic domain that includes both existent and nonexistent objects of intentions, if we are to arrive at a fully general semantics for meaningful expression in language covering all true and false sentences. We require nothing more of nonexistent objects in a semantic referential domain than we do in a semantics limited to actual physical entities and abstract formal properties. We should expect for both general categories of existent and nonexistent intended objects that they be Leibnizian Law-abiding residents if not citizens of the extraontology housing all existent or nonexistent states of affairs needed to explain the possible truth or falsehood of all existentially positive and negative propositions.

A general semantics must serve the interpretive needs of every logically possible predication of properties to every possible intended object of any possible intention. These include not only existent objects like Napoléon Bonaparte and J.S. Mill, but Sherlock Holmes and Anna Karenina. There is more to developing a Meinongian semantics of fiction than saying that Holmes is a nonexistent Meinongian object. If Holmes is a nonexistent Meinongian object, what does it mean, and what follows from such a matter of fact classification? It must at least be true of Holmes in that case that he is a Meinongian object. If it is true of Holmes that he is a Meinongian object, then many other things must also be true of Holmes. To be a Meinongian object is to have a distinguishing intensional *Sosein* of distinguishing constitutive properties that is semantically independent of membership in or exclusion from the higher-order categories of *Sein* and *Nichtsein*, the most general ontic domain and its complement, under one of which any intended object in principle must fall. Holmes possesses a distinguishing choice of properties, a so-being, or being thus-and-so, in order to satisfy Leibnizian identity conditions. If he is a Leibnizian Law-abiding intended object associated with distinctive identity conditions, then, however ontically impoverished Holmes may be, he can at least semantically be the *distinct* object of particular intentions.

We can always in principle explain what it means to say that a thought is about Holmes rather than about any other existent or nonexistent object, by referring to their distinct identity conditions, their distinct so-beings of constitutive properties. If they are semantically different intended objects, then, regardless of their ontic status, there must be at least some discrepancy among their constitutive properties by which they satisfy unique identity conditions. They must do so even to be intelligibly considered as nonexistent intended objects. The intentions of Holmes's literary creator, and thereafter of readers' imaginations as they entertain themselves enjoying the stories, appears to be that Holmes is one continuous character of whom we have episodic glimpses in Watson's fictional reportage. Holmes is thus and so, rather than having other properties. Holmes *has* a character, although I would not say with Kripke that he *is* a character, except in the banal sense of being mentioned in something like the List of Characters that a book might contain on a front leaf to aid the reader or theatre-goer in keeping all fictional persons mentioned straight throughout the story. Kripke does not fully motivate his disallowing the referential sense in which Holmes and Watson or Karenina are nonexistent intended objects

that can and should be treated semantically precisely on a par with existent intended objects, irrespective of their ontic status.

14.6 Intentionality of Pretending in the Meaning of Fiction

The philosophical question that arises in contrasting Kripke's actualism with a Meinongian intensionalist semantics of fictional intended objects and their properties, is how actualism could conceivably account for the apparent fact that it is a different thing to pretend something ostensibly about Sherlock Holmes than it is to pretend that the same or something altogether different is true ostensibly about Anna Karenina.

Thought is free to fantasize that Holmes jumps novels and rescues Anna from both Vronsky and her unfeeling prideful husband, Alexei Alexandrovich Karenina, not to mention the locomotive. No such pretending touches in the sense of altering the Kripkean character of any of these ostensibly distinct fictional intended objects. They can then be said to have the character created for them and by and through the object-intending intentional act of which they are created as nonexistent fictional intended objects. To do so naturally requires imagination and pretense, a certain inventiveness. Like lying, it is parasitic on conventions for factual communication exploited for its entertainment potential by describing nonexistent intended objects that give readers and writers something novel and interesting to think about, to admire as a work of art. It is these creations that become the objects of fiction possessing rather than being identical with a fictional character in a different sense than Kripke's.

With Kripkean character eliminated in understanding the difference between reader's or audience member's pretending one thing or another about Holmes, and pretending the same or something else altogether about Anna Karenina, we are left with only the orthographic difference of their pretend names in a strategic application of the use-mention distinction, in a Quinean *semantic ascent* (Quine 1960, 271–6). Names by themselves will not quite do, if there are situations where we must pretend different things about identically named characters, as happens sometimes in works of fiction. As I enjoy a work of fiction, phenomenologically speaking, I do not pretend that *names* or Kripkean *characters* as existent collections of existent properties solve crimes or throw themselves under the St. Petersburg Express, but only that the non-Kripkean characters of these stories and novels, in the Meinongian sense of beingless fictional intended objects, are caught up in these imaginary adventures.

It is historically and philosophically interesting to learn what Kripke has to say about Meinong and Meinongianism at this early date in 1973. Unsurprisingly, he says quite explicitly what many other mainstream analytic philosophers also say at roughly this time. Kripke's case typifies the phenomenon, maintaining that a Meinongian domain of existent and nonexistent objects is either semantic nonsense, psychologistic, or incapable of coherently supporting any true characterizing

predications when *pretending* that fictional nonexistent intended Meinongian objects with fictional names have fictional properties, while acknowledging not having invested the effort of working through Meinong's writings. What is interesting in part is that, despite the distortions, there are distant reverberations of Meinong's object theory even at the time of Kripke's 1973 lectures (unless these are later additions of Kripke's to the lectures transcript), during the darkest of the Meinongian Dark Ages before the Renaissance of more recent years. Meinong, at his most disrespected, has not entirely disappeared from the causal-historical chain of intended usages, even if more often than not during this time he comes to be mentioned only to be disparaged.

Kripke abhors the domain of nonactual objects. Accordingly, he stretches actuality as far it will go, in two different ways, in order to avoid what he explicitly describes as a 'Meinongian, shadowy land' (Kripke 2013, 78). First, Kripke emphasizes that there is no genuine naming or true predication in understanding the meaning of fiction. There is only the *pretense* of these legitimate semantic activities and extant semantic relations in the case of actually existent entities. The problem of understanding distinct intentions of different token pretenses in creating and appreciating fiction, what makes one pretense different from another, among thought's various sometimes criss-crossing intentions, cannot easily be solved without invoking distinct nonexistent intended objects. These nonexistents are just what Kripke wants to avoid. Inhabitants of the shadowy Meinongianville that Kripke rejects without critical examination. He does so purely on the grounds, if we are to take the lectures literally, that he does not know much about the early phenomenologists and object theorists. Second, Kripke rightly emphasizes the real-time existence of fictional characters in the sense of actual things that are created and can be destroyed or lost in the evolution of cultures, when all records and memory of them have evaporated. Kripkean fictional characters, unlike putative fictional objects, are real, actually temporally existent things, although their usefulness in explaining the meaning of fiction appears rather limited.

We are wont to say that fictional intended objects *have* characters that are created for them by their authors and experienced vicariously by literary consumers. When we speak of the characters in a play, we do not always mean to speak of any particular actual persons, nor to the physical inscriptions scratched or printed on a page, by which we often say instead that a fictional character is defined. There may be a list of characters presented as the performance's *dramatis personæ*. These 'characters' are also not patterns of ink or magnetic information, but the intended nonexistent objects of pretense originating in the thoughts of the play's author, to be interpreted by direction of the performance and diction of each actor and actress.

To maintain as a truth about Holmes that Holmes solves a crime is not to speak falsely, although Kripke is surely right that the meaning of fiction depends heavily on the intentionality of semantic pretending. Consider the Kripkean fictional character of Holmes, the actual authoritative writings about Holmes in any medium, and suppose the none too exciting discovery that among these documents there occurs in Doyle's handwriting, the sentence, 'Holmes solves a crime.' It is not enough just

to have the sentence inscribed somewhere in the manuscript book. The *meaning* of the sentence needs to be sufficiently explained so that it can be considered as making a specific contribution to Holmes's actual Kripkean fictional character. How is the meaning of Doyle's sentence 'Holmes solves a crime' to be understood, if Holmes is not a nonexistent Meinongian intended fictional object who is said to have the property of having solved a crime? Is that not precisely what Kripke would have the creator and consumer of fiction pretend? If we are to pretend such things, then we will be hard-pressed to explain their distinct intentions without invoking nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended objects such as Holmes.

On a Meinongian object theory logic and semantics, Holmes is the nonexistent intended object to which the property of solving a crime is predicated in articulating his character, in both non-Kripkean and Kripkean senses. It is not just the easiest thing to say that fictional characters are nonexistent nonactual intended objects in a logic's properly comprehensive Meinongian referential semantic domain. Although in comparison with the actualist alternative Kripke offers, it is worth emphasizing the naturalness with which the Meinongian categorization in terms of nonexistent intended objects is made in understanding the meaning of fiction, and of a non-Kripkean sense of fictional characters. If characters are in any sense individualizable objects of thought, then the non-Kripkean character of Holmes is a nonexistent intended object of certain works of fiction, whereas the Kripkean character Holmes actually exists and has a definite spatiotemporal history. The character of Holmes, according to Kripke, is not merely described in but constituted by the writings Kripke mentions. It is the work of a semantics of fiction to explain more precisely how pretend fictional reference and pretend true predication are supposed to work, whether by invoking a referential semantic domain of exclusively actually existent intended objects, or of both actual and nonexistent intended objects. Kripke might have been expected to require that when we engage in fiction-pretending we pretend that a fictional character is actual. Obviously, Kripke cannot say this, because for Kripke a fictional character qua Kripkean character is already actual.

Kripkean actualist possible worlds are stipulated by use of rigid designators, implying that Kripkean possibilities are limited to a spectrum of differential accidental properties among exclusively actually existent objects. Kripkean actualist meaning of fiction is similarly and more righteously circumscribed to what is unfortunately an incompletely semantically analyzed intentional state of pretending, and to a concept of fictional characters that are not fictional intended objects, but the concrete expressions of the pretendings of creative authors and consumers of fiction. These handwritten documents and printed texts are actual things in which we can take less shadowy ontic comfort. The trouble is that at least in the Locke Lectures, Kripke does not pursue the inquiry further into the semantics of the documents and printed texts. When I say that Holmes solves a crime, I mean that the detective Doyle writes about solves a crime. I do not mean that the Kripkean character of Holmes imagined and written about and circulating among the literate in printed copy, electronically and in other media, solves a crime, but that the intended object of those stories, considered as tokens or types, and of

Doyle's originating creative acts of imagination in dreaming up Holmes, solves a crime, and that Holmes solving the crime further characterizes Holmes as a particular intended object. The fact that the paper has inscribed by Doyle on it the sentence, 'Holmes solves a crime' presupposes that this arrangement of words has meaning, and it is hard to account for the sentence's meaning in purely inscriptional terms, but only as the predication of the property of having solved a crime to an actually nonexistent intended fictional object Sherlock Holmes. If Doyle wrote down on paper the sentence, 'Holmes solves a crime', then this is undoubtedly what he meant to express.

What Kripke's account leaves unaddressed takes us immediately back to the first question as to the best explanation of the meaning of works of fiction. An actualist semantics of fiction fails because it does not do justice to our actual grasp and use of the meaning of fiction, as precisely on a par with the ordinary reporting of facts and historical narrative and chronology. Fictional objects and events are understood not to exist, but their predicational structures are indistinguishable from those applied in describing the properties of actual and abstract existent objects, suggesting the desirability of a universal semantics. If a friend joins a discussion mid-conversation about events described in a novel, then it usually suffices to say at some point that the subject of predication is just a nonexistent character in a fictional story.

14.7 Leibnizian Identity Conditions for Fictional Objects

Like existent objects, nonexistent objects are permitted into a Meinongian logic's reference domain only if they satisfy Leibnizian intensional identity conditions, by virtue of possessing or being nominally associated with distinctive sets of characterizing constitutive properties. Conditionally, they can be referred to, says the Meinongian, even if they do not exist, provided that we can distinguish them from other intended objects, so as to be able to refer to and say true and false things specifically about them. Their names can conventionally abbreviate their distinguishing constitutive properties, in a nominalization of what Meinong speaks of as an intended object's so-being. Without satisfying identity conditions, nonexistent intended objects do not hold still semantically to dress them truly or falsely with constitutive property attributions. A partial grasp of an intended object's so-being is all that we can ever manage to achieve, even in the case of existent objects. Their properties we also never completely know, nor are we ever prepared to disclose these in their entirety whenever we use their names, as we would need to be able to do if the on-demand referential theory of proper name meaning were ever supposed to be true.

Nonexistent intended objects can be named 'Zeus' and 'Sherlock Holmes'. They can be counted in a certain context, if it is made clear by sortals what kind of counting is wanted. Nonexistent intended objects can be quantified over in universal and 'existential' quantifications, ranging across the broad ontically neutral reach of the logic's referential semantic domain. Thereby are generally included all

possible existent and fictional intended objects, existent and nonexistent intended objects, rubbing elbows together as potential referents of actual and possible thoughts in the Meinongian *Außersein*. Characterizing properties can be truly or falsely attributed to such objects. I can falsely but significantly say, using narrow scope placement of negation, that Sherlock Holmes is not a detective, rather than it is not the case that Sherlock Holmes is a detective, just as on the present assumptions I can truly say that Sherlock Holmes is a detective. Unless I am trying to be clever with some kind of equivocation, then it will be true of one intended fictional nonexistent 'Meinongian' object that it has the property of being the god of storm, thunder and lightning, and, in another case, of being a violin-playing cocaine-shooting nineteenth century London detective.

Speaking loosely of the Brentanian phenomenological tradition that underwrites Meinong's object theory, Kripke explains: 'I mean figures such as Bolzano, Brentano, and the like, as well as Meinong, who are sometimes said to be in the "background of phenomenology." I confess to knowing very little about them' (Kripke 2013, 63, note 5). Kripke forthrightly acknowledges this lacuna in his philosophical education at the time, and anyone reading these words can point to similar even more substantial historical-philosophical gaps in their own background. Points for honesty, and we do not blame Kripke for not knowing his Brentano, Bolzano, Meinong, and Husserl, for starters. He does not propose to cover every side of the question historically, and it is doubtful that anyone could. Instead, among other topics, including perception and sense data theory, Kripke presents with great ingenuity and resourcefulness a philosophical program for an actualist semantics of fiction. We can say conditionally but unqualifiedly that *if* Kripke's actualist semantics of fiction succeeds, *then* the nonactualist Meinongian object theory interpretation of the meaning of fiction is obviated. For this reason alone, Meinongians cannot afford to ignore what Kripke's anti-Meinongian actualism in the 1973 John Locke Lectures has to say about the meaning of fiction.

It is interesting to observe that, while Kripke cannot cover all the relevant philosophical literature, especially in traditions that have been downplayed in recent analytic myopia, he is nevertheless so confident in his actualist semantics of fiction that he mentions but does not much discuss, and claims not to know, precisely the tradition that stands in direct opposition to his modal actualism and actualist explanation of the meaning of fiction. The suggestion is that all nineteenth early twentieth century writing on phenomenology and the intentionality of thought is destined for the scrapheap of arcane texts and topics, some of them hard-going anyway and more literary than scientific, in this particular sidebranch deadend in the recent history of philosophy. The concepts, whatever sense their authors may pretend to make of them, become irrelevant with the triumph of an actualist semantics of fiction. Despite admitting unfamiliarity with the intentionalist and phenomenological tradition, Kripke does not give Meinong sufficiently wide berth in heaping anti-Meinongian abuse (contrary *arguments* would be fair game) on a philosophical position he claims not to have studied. Kripke recognizes that a Meinongian logic and semantics of existent and nonexistent intended objects stands in opposition to his own semantic-ontic actualism. The dialectical opposition

suggests that Meinong's object theory should be essential background for Kripke's actualism in semantics, just as Kripke's Locke Lectures and all his writings should finally be considered, especially for the confirmed Meinongian.

Effectively, Meinongian semantics with its intensionalist Leibnizian self-identity comprehension principle, extends Quine's famous dictum that there is no entity without identity. It proposes instead that there is referentially and quantificationally speaking no entity *or* nonentity without identity. Kripke's Fregean actualism will have none of this, and it is instructive to see him make the contrary case for a more complicated non-Meinongian account of the semantics of fiction, when contrasted against a Meinongian alternative. Kripke distinguishes between nonexistent fictional objects and existent fictional characters, and he emphasizes throughout the role of *pretending* in explaining the meaning of fiction, from both author creative and reader appreciative standpoints. These factors in the semantics of fiction are discussed in light of his picture of referential meaning and the modal implications of naming. A Meinongian can find Kripke's reasoning and the proposal it supports fascinating and insightful, without accepting Kripke's controversial solutions to some of these ontically and semantically momentous questions. What do Kripke's remarks on the meaning of fiction imply for a Meinongian object theory of fictional intended objects? Does Kripke, in comparison with a Meinongian semantics, present a superior, inferior, comparatively advantageous or disadvantageous, alternative explanation of the meaning and metaphysics of fiction? What is the Meinongian counterpart to Kripke's actualist modal logic and semantics of fiction that Kripke himself does not provide?

14.8 Intentionality and Intending Fictional Objects

It begins to appear that the essential referential element in naming is what leading members of the Brentano school in all its branches would have referred to as a conceptually irreducible *intentionality*, extending from the thoughts of thinking-intending subjects to correlated thought-intended objects. Pretending that the objects in a work of fiction are named and have the properties that the story ascribes to them on Kripke's explanation of the meaning of fiction is for a Meinongian already a primary psychological state, both in the creation and appreciation of imaginative literature. It is the intentionality of imagination and pretending, the presumed connection of such psychological states with intended objects in works of fiction that needs to be understood or explained away in demystifying the logic and semantics of fiction. The question is whether this further step can be managed by Kripkean actualism, or only by a Meinongian extraontology or ontically neutral referential semantic domain. By extension, and in contrast with Kripke's pretense-dependent analysis of the meaning of fiction, the unintended falsehoods and ostensible reference to beingless objects in science and history, including such scientific law-related ideal entities as the frictionless surface or moving projectile

unimpeded by impressed forces, are easily dealt with by minor appropriate tweaking within a Meinongian logic and semantic framework.

Kripke, again in his Preface to the Locke Lectures, writes:

> I took natural language as my guide, which just quantifies over these things. Thus, I did not intend to apply the notion to 'Vulcan,' 'phlogiston,' or other vacuous theoretical names of a more recent vintage, which are 'mythological' objects only in a highly extended and perhaps even metaphorical sense of 'mythological.' However, I am not entirely sure of the difference in principle between such erroneously postulated scientific entities and the figures of myth which were, after all, genuinely, though wrongly believed to be real. So perhaps I should have extended the treatment to them as well, as some have assumed I did. But the use of natural language as a guide perhaps reveals an essential difference. (Kripke 2013, *x*)

The problem, repeatedly emphasized, but not yet addressed, is that when we have acknowledged with Kripke that fiction involves pretending rather than normal successful reference and predication of properties to ontically respectable existent objects in a logic's referential semantic domain, we must still satisfactorily explain within the alternative competing actualist and Meinongian semantics, how it is that pretending that Sherlock Holmes is a drug-addicted English detective is not the same as pretending that Anna Karenina is a tragic Russian love-torn adulterous suicidal mother, if the pretending in each case does not intend a distinct nonexistent fictional object.

Meinongians as neo-Brentanians consider pretense to be yet another intentional state that intends a specific existent or nonexistent object. I can pretend that my existent dog has X-ray vision, just as I can pretend that Anna Karenina is a psychologically troubled member of the lower Russian aristocracy. In Meinongian terms, the names 'Sherlock Holmes' and 'Anna Karenina' in their respective works of fiction manage to refer to distinct beingless Meinongian objects to which distinct properties are fictionally ascribed. For Kripke, in the Locke Lectures and in 'Vacuous Names and Fictional Entities', as in Addendum (a) to the 1980 republication of *Naming and Necessity*, the act of pretending that certain fictionally named fictional objects satisfy the conditions for naming and true constitutive predications is supposed to explain away the intuition that there are nonexistent fictional entities. Non-authoritative pretenders, readers and other consumers of fiction, who can think whatever they like, including making false and consequently still meaningful predications, are not permitted reference to or predication of characterizing properties to beingless 'Meinongian' objects as individual nonexistent referents in a Kripkean actualist semantics of fiction. How, then, does Kripke's actualism explain the meaning of fiction?

Prior to this point, in his 1963 essay, 'Semantical Considerations on Modal Logic', Kripke had adopted the commonsense attitude that although Holmes does not exist in the actual world, Holmes exists in alternatively nonactual merely possible worlds.[3] By the 1973 Connecticut essay, and Addendum (a) to the 1980

[3] Kripke 1963. Kripke in 1980, Addendum (a), 158, refers to a reprinting of his 1963 in Linsky, ed., 1971, 65.

publication of the lectures on *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke had radically changed his mind, and concluded that Holmes, like mythological natural kind unicorns, is not possible in the sense of not existing in any nonactual merely possible world. The reasons for this change of opinion are not easily found in Kripke's explicit statements, although it is clear that for Kripke there are no causal-historical referential chains of intended linguistic usages for nonexistent objects such as Holmes. If there is no actual Holmes, then there is no referential terminus for the networks of usages of the proper names 'Sherlock Holmes' extending out through the social world, by which picture the workings of reference are supposed to be understood after the refutation of the (on-demand) referential theory of proper name meaning.

The pretend name 'Sherlock Holmes' is not a genuine proper name for Kripke. Hence, it cannot be a rigid designator, designating the same thing in every possible world in which the designated thing *exists*. With no genuine proper name 'Sherlock Holmes' to serve as rigid designator, there is no using the pretend name in Kripke's actualist modal metaphysics to stipulate another possible world where Sherlock Holmes has some difference among his accidental properties than in the actual world. Holmes is at an insurmountable modal ontic disadvantage, because in the first place, he does not happen to inhabit the actual world. For these among other reasons, Kripke between 1963 and 1973 recognizes the need to disallow Holmes or any other putatively nonexistent object to be referred to, except in pretense, in accounting for the meaning of fictional discourse.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Kripke makes no adequate provision to explain why it is that pretending that Holmes satisfies naming requirements is different from pretending that Anna Karenina satisfies the same requirements, without bringing nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended objects into the account. The Kripkean fictional characters of Holmes and Karenina already exist for Kripke, as he technically understands the concept. The *characters* are actual, as opposed to the corresponding putative fictional intended *objects*, once the characters of Holmes and Karenina are dreamed up by Doyle and Tolstoy, and, better, written down and inscribed, by their respective creative authors in some more or less permanently or indefinitely reproducible printed document. There is no saying in this semantic framework that authors and readers of fiction pretend that these fictional characters exist. What one knows as a matter of fact to be true one cannot sensibly pretend to be true. Intuitively in Kripke's semantics of fiction, what happens instead is that one pretends that a fictional character is an existent object. The sticking point throughout is that there must be a reasonable difference to be made out between pretending that the existent fictional character of Holmes belongs to an existent object, and pretending that the existent fictional character of Anna Karenina belongs to another existent object, where in both cases there are actually no such distinct existent objects.

The result is that the semantics of fiction is driven back to nonexistent, beingless 'Meinongian' objects. Existent fictional characters that are not the characters *of* nonexistent fictional intended objects, together with existent objects only, do not explain how it is that pretending one thing of Holmes is different than pretending

something else of Anna Karenina, unless they are distinct intended objects of distinct intentional states of pretending. What makes such fictional intended objects distinct, such that Sherlock Holmes $\neq$ Anna Karenina, appears to be their differently satisfying the same Leibnizian intensional identity and individuation principle. These distinct collections of properties are precisely what Kripke considers to be distinct existent *characters* introduced in a work of fiction. They are not sets, and they are unlike Fregean *Sinn*, and unlike again the Meinongian category of *Sosein* or so-being, because, Kripke observes, they are created by their authors in time, and can and do presumably pass out of existence again when their tokens and all memory trace of them have disappeared.

Further pressed, Kripke does not have either a Meinongian or non-Meinongian answer as to what these fictional characters are supposed to be characters *of* if not of distinct nonexistent intended objects. Holmes, we want to say, is a fictional character who, and because he, *has* a fictional character. Kripke's fictional characters, above all, cannot be nonexistent fictional Meinongian intended objects, because they exist in space and time when their creators write down their ideas for them. If the answer is not just that, and anyway not that easy, then we are still owed an account in Kripke's semantics of fiction as to how pretending that something is named Sherlock Holmes is different as an act or psychological episode of pretending from pretending that something is named Anna Karenina. It would be necessary, but seemingly impossible, to accomplish this purpose without allowing that thought is capable of intending distinct fictional objects with distinct pretended names associated with distinct existent Kripkean fictional characters. No one thinks of any of this in reading fiction, and few would ever be able to conjure such complicated semantic divisions forth.

Any given thinker, although presumably not all at all times, might be mistaken about any and hence in the limit case all of the properties actually belonging to a particular intended object. Such mistaken thoughts would nevertheless be mistaken thoughts about the object in question. As John R. Searle and others have objected, it seems to be intending that does the heavy lifting, if it does not finally bear exclusive burden, in Kripke's causal-historical social networking picture of meaning (Searle 1979, 155–7). That each speaker situated on the spreading web of usages of a rigidly designative proper name or other singular reference fixing term in a language refers back to the subject of an original naming ceremony or first use of the name of a named object, appears a perfectly plausible but equally altogether detachable supplement to the core idea in Mill's *Logic*, that names name things without further connotation when and only when a thinking subject capable of intending a named object intends by the use of a term in a language so to refer.

Kripke offers a perfunctory nod in the direction of an actualism-antipodal Meinongianism, which he does not pursue: 'There was a considerable discussion in the literature, of course, especially in the Meinongian or German "pre-phenomenological" literature, on intentional objects of this sort, involving the postulation of objects of desire when someone wants something which doesn't exist' (63). He states early on in Lecture I: 'No problem has seemed to represent a more perplexing philosophical conundrum than that of the use of names which have no

reference—or, not to beg the question against Meinong (though I will beg it perhaps practically from here on out), names which appear to have no reference' (Kripke 2013, 4).

Meinongians, even on reading olive branch statements like this, should be squirming in their chairs. Kripke seems to think he is not begging the question against Meinong by considering 'names which appear to have no reference'. Meinong, however, like other philosophers of meaning, understands full well that names need to name something. The question is whether names need to name, and hence to refer to, something *existent*, or whether they can also name and hence refer to *nonexistent* intended objects of thought. Meinong thinks they can, provided that the objects satisfy the same general Leibnizian intensional identity conditions as existent entities, when they are nominalized and made intended objects of reference and predication. As a phenomenological starting-place, consider thoughts exemplified by flights of imagination. Provided they satisfy identity conditions, they should intend specific objects defined by reference to a particular set of properties that no other object by any name can also possess. There are no names without reference for Meinong. There are only some names with and some without reference to *existent* entities. To attribute to Meinong, even in graciously acknowledging the alternative as Kripke does here, the idea that names need have no reference, is already to put the wrong foot forward with respect to a highly developed semantic philosophy for both existent and nonexistent, including fictional, objects, that stands most instructively in contrast with Kripke's. It is to use the word 'reference' in a way that no Meinongian would, as though it necessarily implies reference to an actually existent or abstract entity.

14.9 Ontic Neutrality of Identity Conditions for Fictional Intended Objects

Intensional Leibnizian identity conditions in and of themselves are ontically neutral, as Meinong understands them. The most general logic must consider them as content-free, and hence in pre-theoretical purely logical form, multi-interpretability and -applicability. If self-identity relations are satisfied by nonexistent objects, as they are for solid dependable existent objects, then there is no logical justification for excluding nonexistent objects from a logic's referential semantic domain.

The Meinongian characteristically maintains, contrary to Kripke, on this essential point, that any candidate intended objects that satisfy ontically neutral intensional identity conditions should be considered nameable referents. These referents, in turn, regardless of whether or not they exist, and however they may be excluded by conversational implicature in practical situations of language use, can be included in some and excluded from other conditional quantifications, but not from universal quantifications over all intended objects. We rely on this assumption when we speak of two distinct associates in a Doyle story, among the major cast of figures with distinct Kripkean characters, and distinguish Watson from Holmes

accordingly as different individual nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended objects.

We can count and quantify over the number of times Holmes saves someone's life or solves a crime in the canonical stories. All the while, we fully understand that none of these things exist, neither the persons nor the events, as concrete or abstract objects, but appear intuitively and phenomenologically notwithstanding to be distinct nonexistent intended objects of distinct intentional states, and in particular of intentionally directed distinct pretendings by author and reader. They appear phenomenologically in all other ways to behave like other objects to which we can refer. We can distinguish fictional intended objects from all other referents, to which we can predicate certain kinds of properties. We can count them, and quantify over them in domains and distinguished subdomains, that mark them as unique among all objects of reference in a logic's semantic domain. The proof is that we can do all of these things phenomenologically exactly alike regardless of whether the objects we intend turn out later to be existent or nonexistent, as our knowledge increases, as the history of natural science testifies, and as we know from reading works of fiction. If we did not know better, picking up Daniel Defoe's 1722 novel, *A Journal of the Plague Year*, from the library shelf, we might suppose we were reading an account of those desperate days written as an account by someone who had lived through those times. Such realistic works of fiction are capable of such verisimilitude as to be internally indistinguishable in every way from historical documents and narrative works of history.

Meinongians are comfortable with the idea that nonexistent objects can be named, referred to descriptively, and generally identified and individuated from all other intended objects, regardless of their ontic status. It is in this sense that the intension of the predicate 'being a detective' is considered in a Meinongian semantics to comprehend both actually existent and nonexistent fictional detectives, in an ontically neutral extraontology of objects beyond being and non-being. Not so Kripke, who concludes that 'Sherlock Holmes' (*pari passu* for mythological natural kind terms like 'unicorn') is only a *pretend name* to which no existent or nonexistent object corresponds. The fact that Kripke in the Locke Lectures hesitates to develop in detail an extension of his semantics of fiction to the ostensibly nonexistent including ideal intended objects of science, true and false, suggests that he may be uncertain how to bridge the gap between pretending in deliberately creating or enjoying fiction, and whatever happens in science when theorists posit an entity or kind of entity that in the end turns out not to exist. Scientists like Le Verrier do not seem to have been pretending that the planet Vulcan existed between Mercury and the Sun. Nor did Le Verrier's readers and critics pretend that this was so, or think that Le Verrier was only pretending. Hypotheses, for the Meinongian, whether they turn out to be true or false, like assumptions generally in many kinds of inquiry, are once again yet another intentional state in which intended object's are intended. Whatever connection Kripke might hope to forge between the pretending in his account of the meaning of fiction and the semantics of false scientific hypothesis and historical explanation, he will need to identify another more specialized intentional attitude φ to replace pretending in order to account for

what scientists and historians do when they get things wrong. This intentional attitude φ will still ostensibly involve the intending of nonexistent intended objects, so that φ-ing phlogiston $\neq$ φ-ing vortices. It is unclear how the actualist can surmount these difficulties without giving in at some point to the need for a referential semantic domain of nonexistent fictional intended objects such as a Meinongian object theory affords.

In reading the Holmes stories, Kripke argues, we merely pretend that the words 'Sherlock Holmes' satisfy the requirements for naming an individual, as they would if Holmes were a real person and 'Sherlock Holmes' were a genuine rigidly designating proper name. Kripke's fictional characters are created in real time by the sweat and ingenuity of inventive, imaginative thinkers and writers. Concerning the actual existence of fictional characters created in real time as opposed to the concept of nonexistent or beingless fictional objects he rejects, Kripke further explains: 'So my view is that ordinary language quantifies over a realm of fictional or mythological entities. They don't exist, so to speak, automatically: that is, they are not Meinongian in the sense that whatever is an object of thought exists in some second-class sense. On the contrary, it is an empirical question whether there was such and such a fictional character' (Kripke 2013, 71).

Doyle writing about Holmes remains the classic if overworked case. Doyle establishes the character of Holmes, according to Kripke, not as a Meinongian object, a nonexistent fictional intended object, from the very concept of which Kripke energetically distances himself. Eventually, he echoes Russell's description of Meinong's supposed lack of a robust sense of reality in commitment to a kind of *shadowy*, later he says, *secondary being* for intended objects, like the golden mountain and round square. These ideas are nowhere to be found in Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie*.

Kripke's fictional characters, as distinct from fictional objects, are metaphysically respectable ontically nonshadowy existent entities. We know this because they are invented at particular times and in particular places by writers of fiction whose works have been preserved or otherwise transmitted at least into the periphery of our culture. When we read about or see fictional characters acted on the stage or screen, according to Kripke, we enter into the performance by pretending that these persons, places, situations and events are real, just as we pretend that in the work of fiction they are referred to by name, that they stand as objects of true predications, that Holmes plays the violin and shoots a little coke. *What*, according to Kripke, do we then pretend is so named? If we are Kripke's friends on this point, then we cannot say that we pretend that the nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended object Holmes is named, and we cannot say that the Kripkean fictional character Holmes is pretended to be named, for the Kripkean character Holmes is already actual, and is presumably actually named Holmes. We can only pretend that *something* is named 'Sherlock Holmes', without attaching to the nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended object Holmes any of the constitutive properties Doyle putatively ascribes to Holmes in creating his character.

To argue, $\exists x[Nx(\text{'sh'})]$', will obviously not do for Kripke's purpose, where *Na* ('bc') means that intended object *a* is *named* 'bc'. For then we can (falsely, Kripke

is clear) say that some (existent, no less) intended object is named 'Sherlock Holmes'. By expanding these conventions, pretense by pretender a as wide scope qualifier is now expressed, whereby the falsehood of the existential becomes the true statement of a thinking fiction-making creator or fiction-enjoying patron a, who is *pretending* that the existential is true, in $Pa\exists x[Nx(\text{'sh'})]$. All perfectly reasonable, but not obviously adequate to the data, when we reconsider, as previously more informally expressed, the equally true proposition ostensibly intending Anna Karenina (ak), that, $Pa\exists x[Nx(\text{'ak'})]$. Different intentions in the two instances of pretending can only be extensionally understood if, $\neg[\exists x[Nx(\text{'sh'})] \leftrightarrow \exists x[Nx(\text{'ak'})]]$. For Kripke, in his thoroughly existence-presuppositional referential actualism, it must be true that both $\neg\exists x[Nx(\text{'sh'})] \wedge \neg\exists x[Nx(\text{'ak'})]$, from which it follows trivially that $\exists x[Nx(\text{'sh'})] \leftrightarrow \exists x[Nx(\text{'ak'})]$. The pretend context Pap, for any proposition p, must therefore be intensional, as it is intentional. The trick is to explain the expected truth functional equivalence without bringing distinct Meinongian fictional objects into the semantics, such that sh $\neq$ ak. Quinean semantic ascent, agreeing all around that 'sh' $\neq$ 'ak', will still not serve, because generally $\Diamond[\text{'sk'} \neq \text{'ak'} \wedge \text{sk} = \text{ak}]$, as witness, among existent named entities, observing a standard use-mention distinction for names of objects and the objects themselves, 'Mark Twain' $\neq$ 'Samuel Clemens' $\wedge$ Mark Twain = Samuel Clemens.

No nonexistent intended objects are nameable in Kripke's actualist semantics. We only pretend to name them, as we would otherwise do in the case of actually existent intended objects. The problem is that we can only make sense of pretending to name fictional objects if we can refer to them as distinct intended, and, in the nature of the case, nonexistent, fictional intended objects. Doyle in creating the hero of his fictions does not actually but only pretends to name Sherlock Holmes. We pretend that the fictional characters in certain works of fiction have histories and are living through whatever local circumstances are supposed to prevail at the fictional time and fictional place in which their experiences are described. Fictional persons in works of fiction have fictional conversations with one another, they may try to outwit, or escape from the feeling of falling in love, or even shoot at each other or knuckle it out in the interests of justice or unlawful gain, tragic love, or the like, none of which being mutually exclusive. We may do much the same in entertaining hypotheses of *reductio ad absurdum* reasoning for specialized conclusions, in supposing that there is a greatest prime number, in order to expose a contradiction in the *reductio* hypothesis against more firmly entrenched background assumptions. We might as well say, pretend for the moment, that there is a greatest prime number, in order to see what would follow then.

Meinongians tend to take a more aerial perspective on the interpretation of intentional states, including, but by no means limited to, pretending, in a scientific phenomenology or descriptive psychology. Invoking pretending, in which we certainly do engage when writing or reading a work of fiction, does not avoid the problem of explaining whether a complete referential semantic domain for understanding the meaning of fiction should or should not include nonexistent intended 'Meinongian' objects. They should be the intended objects of pretending, as in flights of fantasy, imagination, and abstract mathematical or counterfactual

assumption, as well as existent intended objects of other more mundane less theoretical kinds of thoughts, in science, history, philosophical theorizing, and everyday semantic interactions. This is one of the primary and most fertile research grounds for Meinongian object theory, as for a generically scientific phenomenology, where distinguishing certain thoughts and kinds of thoughts seems impossible without referring to their respective distinct beingless intended objects. We must be able to name such objects, as we do when we mythologize about Zeus and Pegasus, unicorns and mermaids. We must be able to count them in a story, or the number of incidents in which they are described as being involved, the number of gods in one religion's pantheon as opposed to another's. We can sometimes but not always accomplish such reference, counting and quantification by counting names or blocks of ostensibly referential and predicational discourse. If we can meaningfully do these things, even if in playfully entertaining pretend propositions, in which we pretend to name and refer to and count gods, then we may need to include nonexistent intended objects in a logic's referential semantic domain, in order to distinguish one act of pretending in its specific meaning from that of any other.[4]

14.10 Equivocal Ontic Status of Kripkean Fictional Characters

Kripke does not say as much as one might like concerning the nature and metaphysical status of fictional *characters*. We know that they are not supposed to be abstract sets. Nor are they beingless Meinongian objects, possible or impossible. Kripke has already been quoted as saying: 'Thus, their [fictional Kripkean charaters'] existence is not like that of numbers, abstract entities which are said to necessarily exist, independently of empirical facts' (Kripke 2013, 72). If we are being charitable, then we must consider it a slip of the tongue for Kripke to say, as he does at the end of Lecture III:

> So in this sense, instead of saying that the name 'Hamlet' designates nothing, we say that it really does designate something, soemthing that really exists in the real world, not in a Meinongian, shadowy land. When we talk in this way, we use names such as 'Hamlet' to designate *abstract* but quite real entities, and can raise existence questions about whether there are such entities with given properties. (Kripke 2013, 78; emphasis added)

Even in the Preface, Kripke had already written, carelessly or deliberately, possibly involving a different sense of 'abstract' than he troubles in the 1973 Locke Lectures to explain:

> Probably the most substantial contribution of the lectures was the ontology of fictional and mythical characters conceived as abstract objects whose existence depends on the existence or non-existence of various fictional or mythological works. (Kripke 2013, *x*)

[4] See Thomasson 1999, 2003.

Fictional characters must therefore be somewhere in between these categories in a semantic and ontic middle territory that Kripke has regrettably not said enough about so far to explain. They are created in time by human invention, although they are presumably not merely the marks on paper or magnetic patterns on a computer disk by which they are expressed, in the uses of concrete media or sheer imagination that accompany their creation. If Kripkean fictional characters are abstracted rather than platonically abstract in the sense of numbers and the like that he already discounts, then what are Kripkean fictional characters abstracted from? The only answer can be the works of fiction and myth including oral traditions in which these pretendings are culturally disseminated. The character of Holmes must somehow be related to the movement of Doyle's pen on paper, and perhaps to the imaginative thoughts construed as brain events in a neurophysiological supervenience base of mental activity that inspires and is inspired by his writing down sentences containing a pretended name, pretended anaphoric reference, and the like.

If the Kripkean Holmes *character* is neither abusively 'Meinongian', by virtue of being created in real time, if the Holmes character is not merely *inscriptional*, not existing merely in the scratchings of ink or other methods of linguistic expression Doyle used in writing the Holmes stories, then a Kripkean semantics of fiction may find itself at a loss to explain exactly what kind of thing a Kripkean fictional character is supposed to be, and how it is supposed to be included in a logic's referential semantic domain, except as a nonexistent Meinongian object. Roman Ingarden, in his 1960 essay, investigates a similar ontology for fictional objects. He also describes fictional objects as occupying a conceptual and metaphysical middle space between the usual two ontic benches.[5] Kripke cannot directly avail himself of Ingarden's concept, even if he should want to, because Kripke does not consider fictional intended objects as accessible for semantic application, but only existent fictional *characters*. These are not the fictional characters, in the more usual non-Kripkean sense, created by their authors in real space-time *of* or *belonging* to any fictional intended *objects*. Kripke's actualism rules nonexistent fictional intended objects altogether out of consideration, but does not offer a better understanding in its place that allows the semantics of fiction to explain how it is that pretending Sherlock Holmes is named is different semantically, and not just psychologically or phenomenologically, than pretending that Anna Karenina is named without finally appealing to a referential semantic domain that includes nonexistent Meinongian fictional intended *objects* Sherlock Holmes and Anna Karenina.

A Meinongian Kripke is as yet a fictional intended object. One nevertheless imagines the possibility of Kripke reading Meinong someday, and absorbing the surrounding literature. Perhaps since 1973, Kripke has done so assiduously. I speak throughout only of respectful possibilities among Kripke's accidental properties. He may in the process have thereby softened his position on the unintelligibility of beingless Meinongian intended objects of fiction. The characters of those

[5] Ingarden 1960. See Smith 1980.

Meinongian objects will then be their existent characterizing properties, their so-beings, as Meinong would say, their *sayso* properties as John Woods in his 2009 [1974] study, *The Logic of Fiction*, reasonably maintains, that an author expresses in composing a work of imaginative fiction in a series of creative decisions in real time and place.

Kripke quotes with qualified approval a statement made by Douglas Lackey in the 'Introduction' to his edited volume, Russell, *Essays in Analysis*, 1973, 19: 'In this controversy [between Russell and Meinong] Russell has usually appeared to be an apostle of common sense while Meinong has appeared as a wild ontologizer hypostosizing entities at will. But Meinong's theory says that "Pegasus is a flying horse" is true, while Russell says that this assertion is false. The average man, if he knows his mythology, would probably agree with Meinong' (Kripke 2013, 55). It is exactly the hope of a Meinongian logic and semantics that Kripke here perceives to do justice to the meaning of empirically encountered ordinary thinking and colloquial language usage of the sort and in the kinds of judgment contexts that Lackey mentions, including all the semantic structures involved in the consideration of fiction. Whereas in certain sciences we can cover meaning and the truth values of sentences by correlating terms with the entities in a referential semantic domain of existent intended objects only, we cannot or not as readily do so in the case of thought and its linguistic expression. The meaning of fiction poses an especially important test case, but one that can be found in many other applications also, as reflected in responses like Lackey's remark that Kripke seems to weigh with some sympathy.

At another later stage of clarifying his concept of existent fictional characters, Kripke anticipates the objection that he is after all invoking the equivalent of intended nonexistent or beingless fictional objects. ' "Ah," so it is said, "so you agree with Meinong after all! There *are* entities which have only a secondary kind of existence." No, I don't mean that,' Kripke continues. 'I mean that there are certain fictional characters in the actual world, that these entities actually exist' (Kripke 2013, 70). Along with deprecating the Meinongian *Außersein* as 'shadowy', echoing the words of Russell's lectures on logical atomism, Kripke also remarks: 'Novels and dramas do not exist in some weak Meinong-land: there actually have been many novels in the ordinary world. On my view, to write a novel is, ordinarily, to create several fictional characters, as Twain, by writing *Huckleberry Finn*, brought both a novel and a fictional character into being. It is not that fictional characters exist in one sense but not in another. The fictional character Huckleberry Finn definitely exists, just as the novel does: I would withdraw the statement only if my impression that there was any real novel was mistaken. Thus, their existence is not like that of numbers, abstract entities which are said to necessarily exist, independently of empirical facts' (Kripke 2013, 72).

True that novels and dramas do not exist in some weak Meinong-land. Whatever rhetorical effect such formulations might be expected to have on Meinongians who know their subject, it is easy to agree with Kripke that novels and dramas (also comedies and many other kinds of fictional works in a large variety of entertainment and edutainment genres) are not beingless Meinongian objects. Meinong-land

in Kripke's comment might be intended to mean Meinongian *Außersein* or ontically neutral referential semantic domain, including both existent and nonexistent potentially intended but theoretically mind-independent intendable objects. Why, though, should any of that be considered *weak*? Weak, first of all, in what sense? To be weak, especially for the Fregean-Russellian-Quinean-Kripkean semantic-ontic actualist, something has to exist. (If I am dead, by analogy, I am past being weak because I no longer exist, although I might have been weak up to that point.) That rules out beingless Meinongian intendable objects as incapable of weakness, as much as of strength, or any other constitutive property. It does so, moreover, without the benefit or comfort of a good reason *why*, beyond the extensionalist dictum that nonexistent intended objects can be referred to or truly have constitutive properties. Readers are equally left to wonder why Kripke considers in the first quotation immediately above, the nonexistence of some intendable objects as nevertheless possessing a 'secondary kind of existence'. This is a phrase that does not appear in Meinong, and, since Kripke claims not to have looked deeply into Meinong's philosophy, it is unclear what is meant. The point of a Meinongian semantic domain combining existent and nonexistent objects is to provide for the reference to and true predication of characterizing properties to objects independently of whether or not they exist. Nonexistent objects do not have a *secondary* kind of existence, according to Meinong. Rather, they are nonexistent objects because they do not have any kind of dynamic or abstract existence at all. If Meinong is right, then that ontic inconvenience does not prevent nonexistents as individual intended objects capable of being referred to, named, described in predications of properties to them, counted, quantified over, and the like, just as do the existent entities objects in an actualist semantic domain.

Nor is it clear why there is what Meinong himself spoke of as a 'prejudice in favor of the actual in semantic philosophy typified by Frege, Russell, Quine, and also Kripke. It is not as though beingless Meinongian objects take up any space, as in Quine's grudging doorway. They are there unobjectionably like any other object in a logic's referential semantic domain, as intendable objects of naming, describing, counting, predication and quantification. There is no question of *ontic* excess in Meinongian semantics. Quite the contrary. The Meinong referential semantic domain of all existent and nonexistent intended objects can be made ontically as streamlined as any purely extensional actualist semantics, insofar as the subdomain of existent entities as potential intended objects is concerned, which alone, after all, is the *ontology*. If the division that Kripke contra Meinong invokes holds between the actualist referential domain of existent entities only, and the object theoretical referential domain of both existing and nonexisting, intendable objects of thought, especially when the pretendings of fiction are at play, then, from Kripke's standpoint, *nothing* ontically 'weak' exists to further criticize. Objects in Meinong-land simply do not exist, for Kripke *and* Meinong. That eventuality, one would think, a semantically conservative actualist ought to find satisfying enough. Kripke considers this the death-knell for beingless Meinongian objects, without really explaining why or arguing for the position, whereas Meinongians just as resolutely and intuitively, from another contrary perspective, do not.

A Meinongian never sensibly supposes that anything *exists*, even in an ontically 'weak' sense, whatever that would be, in a Meinongian referential semantic domain of *nonexistent* objects. We need only be able logically to designate beingless objects as distinct individuals, by virtue of their having or being nominally associated in each case with particular distinguishing totalities of Leibnizian Law-qualifying characterizing properties. The concept is easily extended as well to the *Außersein* category of pure referentiality, altogether independent of an object's ontic status. These potentially intended objects take their place in an ontically neutral pure referential domain alongside despite being ontically distinct from any existent objects of reference. Nonexistent objects, by virtue of satisfying the same intensional property-distinguishing Leibnizian identity conditions, can in both cases be individually designated by names, definite descriptions, and in other ways made the intended objects of predications. The most basic predications can then be combined into molecular expressions by truth functions and quantifiers, property abstraction, formalized identity principles, modalities, and many other devices besides, in all the usual ways and by all the same properly expanded mechanisms as in classical logic. This is not an on-demand description theory of reference, of the sort Kripke is right to criticize, but wrong to attribute to Frege and Russell. It is a view of mind-independent correlations between intendable or potentially intended objects and the characterizing property bundles by which their distinctive identity conditions are satisfied for logical and semantic purposes, even in pretending to name, count, predicate properties of and quantify over an ontically neutral logic's referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects.[6]

[6] I am grateful to members of my weekly reading group on Kripke's Locke Lectures for insightful commentary on Kripke's arguments, working systematically through his text during Herbst semester 2013 at Bern.

Chapter 15
Metaphysics of Meinongian Aesthetic Value

15.1 Aesthetic Value

Meinongian metaphysics makes aesthetic value a matter of subjective feeling, rather than an objective property of an aesthetically appreciated object. Meinong regards aesthetic value as residing not in the intended aesthetic object, but in the thinking subject's attitude in which an intended object is aesthetically appreciated.

The advantages of a Meinongian subjectivistic aesthetic value theory are explained and defended on several grounds. They are upheld especially against the criticism that objectivizing beauty and other values in the sense of interpreting aesthetic value as an objective property of aesthetic objects is a more natural way to understand the semantics of talk about aesthetic value and the metaphysics of aesthetic judgment than subjectivizing value as a property of an experiencer's aesthetic feelings. The problem is considered of how physically indistinguishable artworks could rationally have different aesthetic value, suggested by Arthur C. Danto's gallery of physically indistinguishable painted red squares, in his 1981 book, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*. A Meinongian analysis is maintained as affording the best understanding of the relation of value to an artwork's objective properties, and an art appreciator's subjective feelings about the artwork's objective properties.

We may ordinarily think of aesthetic value as belonging to aesthetically appreciated objects. In admiring a painting, we might suppose that the painting itself is beautiful.[1] What Meinong means by aesthetic value is something rather different. Meinong believes that aesthetic value belongs exclusively instead to the subjective feelings occasioned by a perceived object, rather than being possessed objectively as one of the object's intrinsic properties. To say that a painting is beautiful or wretched, according to Meinong, is to say something about the emotional reactions

[1] An enthusiastic classic modern defense of the objectivity of aesthetic value is given by Alexander 1968. See for example 7–9, and Chap. X, 'The Objectivity of Beauty'.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_15

evoked by perception of the artwork when empirically encountered by individual perceiving subjects. It is not, as might otherwise be thought, about any intrinsic defining constitutive properties of the painting. There are positive and negative feelings toward such things as events generally and actions in particular, as Brentano already taught, which may be as true in aesthetics as it is in ethics and other fields of value.[2]

15.2 Witasek's Aesthetics in Meinong's Graz School

Meinong himself wrote very little about aesthetics, despite his serious interest in the arts, and especially in music, and in contrast with his extensive writings on value theory generally. It was left to his psychologically trained student Witasek within the Graz school to explore the philosophical concept of aesthetic value more particularly and in greater depth.

Witasek's 1904 book, *Grundzüge der allgemeinen Ästhetik*, examines the Meinongian theory of aesthetic value, particularly in relation to the psychology of the sense experience of the forms of aesthetic objects.[3] It is, as Karl Schuhmann in his essay, 'Meinongian Aesthetics', agrees, the most complete statement of a Meinongian theory of aesthetic value from Meinong's time. Schuhmann writes:

> Witasek's 400-page volume ... [is] a comprehensive work which in fact treats almost all problems which an aesthetic theory of the time could be expected to deal with, and moreover does so in a thoroughly Meinongian vein. In what follows, Witasek's [*Grundzüge*] therefore will have to serve as the basis for presenting the outlines of a Meinongian aesthetics.[4]

Schuhmann also rightly observes that Witasek's Meinongian aesthetics is developed primarily from suggestions in Meinong's own 1894 treatise, *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werth-Theorie*.[5] Schuhmann nevertheless qualifies the independence of Witasek from certain aspects of Meinong's concept of aesthetic value, adding:

> [T]here exist certain differences even between early Meinong and Witasek. Where in Witasek it is above all the work of art, i.e., a *non-propositional* object of a certain kind to which aesthetic predicates such as "beautiful" are normally attributed, Meinong on the contrary insists that these predicates concern *propositional* objects of a certain nature. Notwithstanding such differences, their views are sufficiently close to each other to allow for their classification under the common denominator of a Meinong-Witasek theory of

[2] Brentano 1969, 17–8. Brentano not only distinguishes between positive and negative but also correct and incorrect moral judgments and emotions. See Chisholm 1986, 3–5, 17–58. Chisholm 1982b, c.

[3] Witasek 1904, 59–98. The empirical methodology of the psychologist Fechner 1876 is an important inspiration for Witasek in opposition to then prevailing post-Kantian aesthetics.

[4] Schuhmann 2004, [2001], 240.

[5] Meinong 1894; *AMG* III.

> aesthetics, just as in the case of ethics the theories of early Meinong and [Christian] von Ehrenfels were sufficiently close to each other as to legitimize talk of a von Ehrenfels-Meinong theory.[6]

Minor differences about the intended objects to which aesthetic values are in any case incorrectly attributed notwithstanding, Meinong and Witasek in Schuhmann's judgment agree on the fundamental thesis on which we also focus in what follows. The common ground that allows us to speak of a Meinongian aesthetics, combining elements from both Meinong and more especially from Witasek, is the proposition that despite ordinary ways of thinking and speaking about aesthetic values as inhering objectively in aesthetically contemplated objects, aesthetic values in truth belong to the subjective psychological states and more especially to the aesthetic feelings (*Gefühle*) of thinking subjects who may find themselves aesthetically appreciating an empirically encountered object, rather than belonging intrinsically constitutionally to the object of aesthetic appreciation.[7] Instead of agreeing with the commonplace that a painting is beautiful, Meinong and Witasek would have us acknowledge that we feel beautifully when experiencing or contemplating the artwork. Meinong and Witasek commit themselves to an interesting and, as it turns out, controversial, metaphysics of aesthetic value. They maintain that aesthetic value in a very precise sense is subjective only, and not constitutive of any aesthetically appreciated object. It is this metaphysical thesis that we examine within the logical and semantic framework of Meinongian object theory, and then critically evaluate and defend as in all essentials offering a consideration-worthy structural metaphysical analysis of the concept of aesthetic value, of what it is and where it lives.

15.3 Aesthetic Values as Meinongian Objects

Is it correct to say as Meinong and Witasek do, that aesthetic value belongs to the perceiving and in other ways thinking, intending, aesthetically appreciating subject, and not to the objects of aesthetic appreciation themselves? If not, then Meinong's and Witasek's fundamental assumptions about the metaphysics of aesthetic value in the main are false. How can we test the concept of aesthetic value in order to see whether in application a subjectivist Meinongian theory must be correct, or could possibly prevail over, or at least compete with, the contrary view that aesthetic value is objective in the sense of belonging to perceived objects?

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[6] Schuhmann 2004, 240.

[7] Witasek maintains in the opening passage of his 1904, Chap. II, 'Der ästhetische Zustand des Subjektes', 59: 'Die Charakteristik der ästhetischen Eigenschaften ist naturgemäß auf die Analyse des psychischen Zustandes angewiesen, den ihre Träger als solche im Subjekt hervorrufen'. See Chisholm 1982c. Also Baumgartner and Zełaniec 1996.

The challenge immediately before us is to devise a method for assessing the likely truth or falsehood of the Meinongian thesis that aesthetic value is subjective rather than objective. It is interesting and by no means accidental that Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* provides the ideal logical and semantic framework within which to examine the Meinongian thesis of the subjectivity of aesthetic value. We can adopt its framework to ask pointed questions about the metaphysics of value, and consider the possible answers that might be given from the standpoint of Meinong's philosophical psychology and object theory.

More particularly, in Meinongian logic we need not worry about problems of reference failure to what are sometimes called fictional objects of art. Meinong's object theory provides a semantics in which the things we need to say about beingless objects intended expressively by existent or at least imaginary artworks are seamlessly incorporated along with talk about existent physical and abstract entities. The referential semantic largesse of Meinong's ontically neutral extraontology, combined with the conventional robustly realist ontology of concrete physical and abstract entities that the extraontology subsumes, makes Meinong's object theory in principle ideal for analyzing the discussion of many issues in the philosophy of art, including the logic of fiction, mythological representation, the metaphysics of aesthetic value, and artistic purpose and intention. Meinong's philosophy is ideally positioned to consider the relation between the intentionality of perceiving existent artworks and what intending subjects think and say about the artworks they perceive in the phenomenology of aesthetic value appreciation.[8]

The first rule in trying to accurately understand and critically evaluate the metaphysics of Meinongian aesthetic value should be to try insofar as possible to work within or at least with the recognition of the kind of metaphysics that would be compatible with Meinongian object theory. We know that for Meinong moral and aesthetic values are particular kinds of objects, which he classifies as dignitatives and desideratives (*Dignitative*, *Desiderative*). Values, including aesthetic values, are first and foremost a particular kind of intended *object* for Meinong.[9] Objects in Meinong's object theory are in the most general sense things that, even if they do not exist in the physical world or realm of abstract entities, but only subjectively, can still be referred to as the designated objects of true predications. They can be numbered as possible referents and intended objects as much among the existent and nonexistent objects that populate the entire ontically neutral Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain. Meinong believes that we must be able to refer to and say true things about these intended objects, regardless of whether or not they exist, and even if they cannot possibly exist. Even to say that *they* cannot possible exist is already to say something true about *them*. Meinong is accordingly committed to a logically very fine-grained individuation of intended objects of reference in

[8] I present a sketch for an application of Meinongian object theory to the semantics of fiction in Jacquette 1989a, 1996a.

[9] *AMG* III, 400–6; 418; 462–64.

all three metaphysical categories, of dynamic and abstract existents and beingless objects. His Brentanian intentionalist philosophy of mind entails that every thought intends an object, even when the object does not exist. It is up to each thought to bring another mind-independent intended object into consideration. Since thoughts can intend different objects possessing every different combination of constitutive properties, Meinong must accordingly provide adequate identity conditions for all intended objects in a way that is indifferent to their ontic status. He does this in an archetypal intensional way, by reference to the constitutive properties by which intended objects are individuated. He allows into the semantic domain an object corresponding to every combination of constitutive properties and their complements, including both metaphysically possible, inactual, and impossible objects. Meinongian objects are precisely intensionally identified for purposes of reference and predication, independently of whether or not they exist, by correlation with their uniquely defining so-being of constitutive properties.[10]

Meinongian semantics and metaphysics in this sense, as widely recognized, is the antithesis of referentially extensionalist theories of meaning and ontology, in which only existent entities can be referred to and made the objects of true predications of constitutive properties.[11] Meinong, as such, should be interesting, even for those who have no philosophical sympathy for the principles of a Meinongian object theory in their own thought and work, and who may prefer some form of Kripkean modal and fictional actualism. Meinong showcases the philosophical opponent of mainstream extensionalist theories of meaning in an intentionalist and intensionalist account of meaning as a relation between a thought and its intended object, in the thought itself, and sometimes further objectively expressively in language or art.

15.4 Essentials of Meinongian Object Theory for Aesthetics

We cannot create real things merely by exercising the power of intending. When engaged in the act of conceiving of or imagining a beingless object with any desired combination of constitutive properties we would be mistaken to attribute that sort of prolific causal efficacy to our intentionality. We can only think about unreal things as possessing a certain constitutive nature, associated and often nominalized as intended objects of thought with a particular choice of constitutive properties. We cannot make such things real, merely by intending them as objects of thought, though they are indeed sometimes the beingless intended objects of our thoughts.

[10] The best general introduction to Meinong's object theory remains Findlay 1995.

[11] For recent discussions of Meinongian semantic intensionalism versus mainstream later Russellian-Quinean extensionalism see the essays collected by Griffin and Jacquette, eds. 2009, including Jacquette 2009b.

Poets, religious and other myth-makers, freely invent intended objects, and sometimes succeed in getting other people to imagine them and even take pleasure and comfort or terror in reflecting on these nonexistents. They are thought to be the bearers of an incomplete list of constitutive properties that are supposed to belong to a god or God, or to angels or demons, divine heroes and good or evil spirits, and, in some religious, hybrid creatures, sometimes part human and part animal, imaginary supernatural origins and circumstances of conception and birth, and their sometimes wondrous deeds, that would appear to challenge not only probability and commonsense but the laws of physics and genetics themselves. Some of these stories offer such a deeply resonant psychological satisfaction that they gain for certain of their adherents enormous cultural and even political and military power, among a culture's underlying socially unifying myths.

The intentionality of thought thesis in its most general terms that Meinong inherits from Brentano prepares him to acknowledge in very non-Brentanian terms that many kinds of thoughts can only be rightly understood as intending a particular distinct individual object that happens not to exist. If every thought intends an object, then thoughts ostensibly about Zeus and Pegasus, Tom Sawyer and other nonexistent persons, places and times described in fiction, and represented in other modes of artistic creativity, are the most obvious candidates to serve as the intended objects of such thoughts, despite the fact that they manifestly do not exist. Creative artistic expression takes many forms, and in some it involves ostensible reference to beingless objects, fashioned by an artist in an act of creative imagination. Meinong's object theory, in which framework Witasek also develops his more elaborate account of subjective aesthetic value, comprehends beingless fictional, mythological and other ideal objects as well as existent concrete physical and abstract entities. If Meinong and Witasek are right, then, when we aesthetically appreciate an object of art or scene of nature, our feeling intends not only the object and some of its constitutive properties, but also simultaneously the aesthetic values attributed to the object that actually belong to the perceiving, feeling, intending aesthetic subject.

Aesthetic values for Meinong are specially intended objects, the dignitatives and desideratives. These designations are not altogether apposite, because aesthetic values must also include the complements of whatever is judged to be dignified or desired. This complementarity places such properties as ugliness alongside beauty, displeasing alongside pleasing color tonalities, proportion, expression, and so on, in a spectrum of overlapping and philosophically contested positive and negative aesthetic values. Meinong in fact recognizes matching complementary positive and negative aesthetic values as essential to a complete aesthetic theory. Terminological infelicities aside, Meinong's general value theory recognizes dignitatives and non-dignitatives or anti-dignitatives as well as desideratives and non- or anti-desideratives, together in a comprehensive category of aesthetic value, in which good $\approx$ beauty and bad $\approx$ non-beauty or ugliness, by analogy with moral values and the general concept of negative as well as positive moral values. That aesthetic values in Meinong's object theory belong to a specific subcategory of objects should not come as any surprise, since whatever can ostensibly be thought

of at all must be some kind of intended object in Meinong's object theory. Aesthetic values fit the bill exactly as something of philosophical interest that can and frequently are thought of, and thereby made the objects of those thoughts in which aesthetic values are considered. If we think that a Vermeer interior is beautiful, then the beauty belonging to our experience of the painting is something we can think about independently of the Vermeer. This already shows that beauty as an aesthetic value is an intended object of some kind in its own right. It also suggests that aesthetic pleasure in the presence of the Vermeer is an intentional psychological occurrence that links two intended objects, the perceived Vermeer and the desiderative beauty. An artwork or the experience thereof and the beauty are two different intended objects brought together intentionally in the psychological occurrence of experiencing the Vermeer interior as beautiful or judging it to have that aesthetic value. It is as though we had placed a crown of approval on the Vermeer itself in its frame, imaginatively joining and hence intending two objects to put in the dignifying relation, the painting and the crown.

If we understand that for Meinong aesthetic values are particular kinds of intended objects, then we can begin to ask after their identity conditions. Meinong's object theory logic and semantics are intensional, meaning that logically possible constitutive properties and property combinations determine and define particular objects. Meinong's subjective account of aesthetic value implies that aesthetic values as objects are not among the constitutive properties by which other particular Meinongian objects are identified and individuated.

An artwork like Michelangelo's *Pietà* is an existent Meinongian object defined in Meinongian object theory as the object with a number of aesthetically relevant constitutive properties that are themselves not yet aesthetic values. We can say that Michelangelo's *Pietà* is the existent object with the potentially infinite or indefinite set of extra-aesthetic constitutive properties, $Sosein(Pietà_m) = \{P_1; \ldots; P_n; \ldots\}$.[12] We should nevertheless not find among the *Pietà*'s identifying constitutive properties the possession of any aesthetic value, positive or negative, approving or disapproving or anything in between on that spectrum of aesthetic virtues or defects. We can intend the golden mountain in Meinongian object theory, an object whose *Sosein* includes the properties of being golden and a mountain, by which it is identified as the particular Meinongian intended object of particular logically possible thoughts. However, we cannot think of a beautiful golden mountain in Meinongian object theory as opposed to an ugly golden mountain, a Meinongian object the *Sosein* of which includes, respectively, being golden, mountainous, and beautiful or ugly, just as we cannot identify a Meinongian object in Russell's challenge to Meinong as the existent golden mountain, whose *Sosein* paradoxically is supposed to include the properties of being golden, mountainous, and existent.

[12] Meinong's thesis of the independence of *Sosein* (so-being) from *Sein* (being) is a cornerstone of object theory. I introduce the *Sosein* function as taking objects into their respective sets of identifying constitutive properties in Jacquette 1996a, 28–32.

The reason for the exclusion of a distinct Meinongian object identified as an existent golden mountain as opposed to a beautiful or ugly golden mountain are nevertheless very different in Meinongian object theory extended to include Meinong's sketchy remarks about the inherent subjectivity of aesthetic value. There is no intended existent golden mountain because the property of existing or being existent is not an assumable constitutive property like being red or round, but an extraconstitutive property that cannot on pain of logical inconsistency belong to the *Sosein* of any Meinongian object. Existence is accordingly excluded as a defining or identifying constitutive (C) property of Meinongian objects, although existence is nevertheless a supervenient extraconstitutive (XC) property of those Meinongian objects that actually exist.[13]

The case of the beautiful or ugly golden mountain is very different. These must be interpreted by Meinong as involving a rather different type of predication, semantically and metaphysically. The proposition that the golden mountain is beautiful or that Michelangelo's *Pietà* is beautiful is analyzed as making two different assertions, one objective and the other subjective. The objective statement concerns the object of aesthetic judgment whereby it is singled out for the attribution of aesthetic value, and the subjective statement concerns the attribution of aesthetic value, ostensibly to the object, but actually belonging to the subject and the subject's feelings about the object. When subject *S* judges that artwork or natural scene or other object *O* has aesthetic value *V*, the judgment is to be analyzed into these two meaning components, conjointly reflecting two very different sets of metaphysical assumptions.

15.5 Meinongian Metaphysics of Aesthetic Objects and Values

To inquire about the metaphysics of Meinongian aesthetic value, we might begin by asking whether for Meinong an aesthetic value as an intended object is in fact intentionally related as advertised to two other objects, the object of aesthetic appreciation and the appreciating psychological subject. We know that in the end Meinong decides in favor of regarding aesthetic values as subjective, and the properties by which the possession of aesthetic value is attributed are deemed by Meinong to belong exclusively to the aesthetically appreciating subject, or perhaps more accurately to the subject's feelings, rather than to the intended object that occasions the subject's feelings of aesthetic appreciation and to which aesthetic values are ostensibly attributed.

The first observation to offer in this regard is perhaps the fact that at least Meinong's attribution of aesthetic value to the feelings of an aesthetic appreciator rather than to the intended object of aesthetic appreciation is not always in good

[13] Jacquette 1996a, 80–91.

accord with ordinary thought and colloquial linguistic usage. If I say, for example, what I genuinely believe to be true, that Vermeer's *Gezicht op Delft* is a beautiful painting, or that Salvador Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory* is disturbing, I do not mean that my feeling is itself beautiful or disturbing. I might insist that it is Vermeer's painting itself that is beautiful, and Dalí's that is discomfiting. These ordinary ways of speaking need to be rewritten in the Meinongian aesthetic value idiom to say, instead of the claim that the Vermeer is beautiful, rather that I respond emotionally as perhaps other persons would to the qualities of this painting in such a way that I experience it with a certain type of pleasure and admiration I have learned to call beauty. By an unconscious process of association, I then naturally attach this value to the painting, as though the beauty belonged to the cause of my feeling of beauty. The key element of the cause of my feeling of beauty is my experience of the artwork itself. There is thus a kind of imaginative transference of the feeling of beauty that often naturally occurs from intending subject to intended object, if Meinong is right. If subjective aesthetic feeling is sufficiently strong or widely shared, then it is possible to express this conviction by saying what is strictly misleading, that the object itself is beautiful, disturbing, or the like. This mode of speech and thought becomes stubbornly embedded in practice, even if it is not philosophically correct, with the result that afterward it can even sound awkward to propose reformulating established patterns of objective attributions of aesthetic value directly to intended objects rather than as subjective expressions of aesthetic appreciation, against the current of an objectivizing popular culture.

Meinong's account of aesthetic value as a subjective phenomenon, about which there can obviously also be objective psychological facts, enables the philosophy of art to explain relatively easily and plausibly why it is that there are sometimes fundamental disagreements about aesthetic value, exemplified by differences between subjects about the appreciation of an artwork or natural scene, who may nevertheless otherwise agree about many and even all objective matters of fact. If the recognition of beauty or other complementary or conflicting aesthetic values is a function of subjective psychology, rather than an objective truth about the world, then we can understand straightforwardly why the very same artworks aesthetically attract or repel different perceiving subjects, or why the same artworks sometimes aesthetically appeal and sometimes disgust or leave the same subjects unmoved at different times or under different circumstances of encounter, as when new experiences or cultural conditioning bring about a change in the subject's aesthetic sense or artistic taste.

The major components of the two-part analysis of an aesthetic judgment for Meinong are thus:

1. Subject *S*, among other constitutive properties the constitutive property of recognizing or attributing aesthetic value *V* to intended object *O*. Possession of an aesthetic attitude of attributing aesthetic value *V* to object *O* is made part of the *Sosein*, not of object *O*, but rather of subject *S*, or, more precisely, of some special feelings experienced by subject *S*.

2. The *Sosein* of intended object *O*, which, whatever properties constitutive of *O* it includes, according to Meinong, definitely does not include the property of being beautiful, or any other aesthetic value *V*.

The *Sosein* of intended object *O* might still contain what Chisholm has called the converse intentional property of having been judged or appreciated, recognized, or the like, by subject *S* as being beautiful.[14] This should be permitted in particular, if, as it seems on independent grounds to be required, objects can include certain converse intentional properties in their *Soseine*.[15] To have the converse intentional property of being aesthetically admired or thought beautiful by subject *S*, is nonetheless an altogether different thing from being beautiful, objectively speaking, as partly constitutive of an intended object's *Sosein*. If we revert for the moment to the objective way of speaking about aesthetic value, then it would be natural to acknowledge that Vermeer's *Gezicht op Deflt* could be aesthetically admired or thought beautiful by a subject, even though the artwork is not in fact beautiful, by virtue of lacking the property of being beautiful among the constitutive properties in its *Sosein*.

Were we to spell out the subject-object situation in the case of someone's aesthetically admiring Michelangelo's *Pietà* more explicitly in terms of the *Sosein* of the *Pietà* and of the admiring subject, then the analysis might look something like this:

Sosein($Pietà_m$) = {made of Carrara marble; 174 × 195 cm in dimension; carved by Michelangelo in 1499; pyramidal in overall design; displayed in St. Peter's Cathedral, Vatican City; etc.; aesthetically admired by subject *S* (and by subjects S', S'', S''', etc.); judged beautiful by subject *S*; judged sublime by subject S'; judged pathetic by subject S''; judged decadent or kitsch by disapproving subject S'''''''; etc.}

Sosein(subject *S*) = {born in 1961; female; Caucasian; citizen of Austria; brunette; etc.; attributes positive aesthetic value to or positively aesthetically values Michelangelo's *Pietà*; attributes negative aesthetic value or negatively aesthetically values Vermeer's *Gezicht op Delft*; etc.}

Sosein(subject S') = {etc.}

Etc.

What is crucial is that aesthetic value itself is not made an objective feature of an intended aesthetic object on Meinong's and Witasek's theories, but only of the intending aesthetically appreciating subject. For Meinong, as the hackneyed saying

[14] Chisholm 1982b.

[15] One argument for including converse intentional properties in the *Sosein* of some Meinongian objects applies a criterion for the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, on the basis of whether or not any Meinongian object lacks both the property and its complement. We have such examples ready to hand when we reflect on a nonexistent object, such as the mythological horse Pegasus, as far as we know, having neither the extrinsic property of being worshipped by ancient Greeks nor its exact complement. See Jacquette 1996a, 75–8.

goes, beauty is literally in the eye—and in the *Sosein*—of the beholder, or of the beholder's feelings that the aesthetic object brings forth. This means not only that aesthetic value is subjective, in the sense of being differently potentially appreciated or appreciated not at all by different subjects, but also in the sense of belonging as a property of the feelings of aesthetically appreciating intending subjects only, and not, again, according to Meinong, intrinsically to the objects to which such properties as beauty among others aesthetic values are conventionally attributed, but falsely, philosophically inappropriately and unjustifiably.

If Meinong and Witasek are right, then aesthetic values, although they are Meinongian objects in their own right, do not properly belong to any experienced objects of aesthetic appreciation and judgment. There are nonetheless undeniably objective features of objects that are widely recognized as beautiful, sublime, ugly, grotesque, and the like, by many subjects, which are frequently cited as justification for their aesthetic judgments. These include color, form, proportion, grain, disposition, and many other things besides. When asked why we find Michelangelo's *Pietà* beautiful, if such is our aesthetic feeling when encountering the work, we can usually point to objective constitutive properties of the object that evoke these responses, and that in Meinong's terminology are part of the object's *Sosein*.

How are such evident facts to be explained in Meinongian object theory supplemented by a Meinongian aesthetic philosophy and psychology of aesthetic value as subjective? The answer is presumably at least in part that feelings of aesthetic value in a psychological subject are evoked through a complex interactive process that involves some of the objective *Sosein* of an object's intrinsic properties and those of a thinking subject's psychology, that are part of the subject's *Sosein*. The subject can also be considered objectively as an intended object, and the subject's aesthetic feelings can often be explained in a larger intersubjective historical framework of cultural conditioning about the use of terms of aesthetic appraisal that is rightly described as a social phenomenon involving the evolution of aesthetic taste, or as specific types of conscious states supervening on the subject's neurophysiology.

There are leaders and followers in the social environment of individual subjective feeling, just as there are in other areas of human pursuit. Some persons allow others to be the arbiters of aesthetic taste, and simply if sincerely feel only what they have been led to believe is aesthetically valuable in the worlds of art and nature. While some, of more independent perspective, blaze their own trails, responding more genuinely, however they respond, to works of art and natural impressions, spontaneously and without a concern whatsoever for what other people think. Even so, it is hard to imagine that such individual aesthetic discernment is not at least influenced to some degree by social psychological factors related to personal development of aesthetic judgment, however difficult in many actual circumstances these influences may be to identify and trace in their exact effects on a subject's aesthetic feelings. Unless we are extraordinary mavericks, then as a rule we generally like what others like and what we have been taught by others to like, responding possibly to some natural features of aesthetic objects on the basis of our individual innate psychological predispositions.

15.6 Danto Aesthetic Value Puzzle

Arthur C. Danto in his 1981 book, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, raises an interesting problem of relevance for the metaphysics of Meinongian aesthetic value. The thought experiment he describes invites us to imagine an exhibition of artworks and one professed non-artwork, some of which are physically indistinguishable canvases uniformly painted red, accompanied by a variety of artistic explanations of varying degrees of plausibility for the otherwise aesthetically disappointing identical appearance of the panels.

Danto takes us from 'the Danish wit, Kierkegaard'—who possibly thought of himself as something more, or anyway something different, than a mere wit—to an unnamed Dutch portraitist, then on to Matisse and Giorgione, all of whom turn in as their work a plain uniformly red painted canvas, and each with a transparently derisory story to tell as to why they did it or what it is supposed to mean.[16] Danto explains:

> This completes my exhibition. The catalogue for it, which is in full color, would be monotonous, since everything illustrated looks the same as everything else, even though the reproductions are of paintings that belong to such diverse genres as historical painting, psychological portraiture, landscape, geometrical abstraction, religious art, and still-life. It also contains pictures of something that is a mere thing, with no preference whatsoever to the exalted status of art.[17]

We simplify one aspect of Danto's rich thought experiment in order to concentrate on something that seems relevant to the question of Meinong's thesis that value is subjective rather than objective. What follows is not Danto's example, but rather one that it directly inspires.

Suppose that two persons, Piet Mondrian and Pete Nobodyrian, each paint a uniformly red panel of exactly the same size with exactly the same paint and cut from the same larger canvas on the same day. If you like, they even paint in the same studio right next to one another, get their artist supplies at the same shops, and the like. Many years later, the art world is all abuzz about the discovery of the Mondrian *Red Panel*, which authorities on Mondrian's career solemnly agree represents the culmination of his geometrical-color abstractions that had previously been more tentative but pointing in its inevitable direction. Perhaps this was Mondrian's intention, perhaps not. It makes no difference either way to the example's application in testing Meinong's thesis that aesthetic value is always subjective rather than objective. The Mondrian *Red Panel* is the subject of scholarly articles, special exhibitions are organized for it, together with others of Mondrian's works, those of artists who influenced him and of those he influenced, so that viewers can compare his progress, and the artwork is appraised and insured at an astonishing astronomical market value, museums on several continents simultaneously begin polite hardball bargaining for possession of the *Red Panel*, and

[16] Danto 1981, 1–3.

[17] Ibid., 2.

everybody seems to have an opinion about it. Some think it is sheer genius, while others think it's just a red square that anybody could have painted. Meanwhile, Pete Nobodyrian's physically indistinguishable red square is discovered a day later in the same general location and summarily tossed into a trashbin.

That's fair, after all, many people would say. Mondrian, unlike Nobodyrian, has earned his place in world art history, and it is only reasonable that there should be so much attention devoted to a previously unknown or assumed lost work of the master. At least the curators are undoubted, eventually taking a vote on it and publishing their deliberations in the friends of the museum newsletter, that they saved the right red canvas and threw the wrong one away.

With due qualifications, we can now describe this Danto-inspired thought experiment as giving rise to the *Danto aesthetic value puzzle*. The Danto puzzle requires that we explain how two physically identical uniformly red painted panels could command such different aesthetic value. It might be said that the Mondrian *Red Panel* we have described simply has positive aesthetic value among its other objective properties, and this is why it has inflamed the art world, while Nobodyrian's red canvas fails to interest anyone or to have any positive aesthetic value. This way of looking at the puzzle puts the matter objectively, as a difference in aesthetic value of the two indistinguishably painted panels. However, in a Meinongian theory of aesthetic value, the challenge Danto poses to our understanding of the difference in the respective canvasses, one by Mondrian and the other by someone lacking artistic credentials or reputation, must be interpreted as a difference of attitudes and levels of appreciation for the two otherwise indistinguishable panels subjectively entertained in judgment by persons who value the historical importance of anything touched by the artist's hand that has a distinct role in the creative process.

Meinongian object theory in its metaphysics and semantics can nevertheless go still further in characterizing the differences of fact rather than value in the two similarly painted panels. The Meinongian is not limited to how the panels would appear visually to an external observer, as uniformly red oil paint applied with a roller to an identically sized and prepared canvas. It is ingredient in the Meinongian so-beings of the two respective objects to have been historically made in the one instance by Mondrian and in the other by someone without Modrian's artistic cachet. What is definitely lacking from the *Sosein* of either painting is the possession of aesthetic value or corresponding market worth, high or low, depending entirely on subjective regard for the fact that one panel was done by a famous artist and the other by a non- or at least publicly unrecognized artist. It is not enough merely to add into the so-beings of the two panels that one was made by Mondrian and the other by Nobodyrian. What is needed and easily added to supplement Meinong's aesthetic philosophy, in light of Danto's aesthetic value puzzle concerning the two red panels is an account of the collective intentionality of aesthetic attitudes by which the value of an identically treated panel by an artist of Mondrian's fame comes to have such significantly greater value than its mirror image, prepared by someone without Mondrian's prestige among the community of art critics and historians.

Thus, we find:

Sosein(*Red Panel*$_m$) = {uniformly red oil-painted; X × Y cm; Z grams; painted by Mondrian; . . .}

Sosein(Canvas$_n$) = {uniformly red oil-painted; X × Y cm; Z grams; painted by Nobodyrian (≠ Mondrian); . . .}

Sosein(Art Appreciator$_a$) = {P_1; . . .; P_k; admires and values anything coming from Mondrian's atelier; has no interest in and attached no aesthetic value to anything by Nobodyrian; . . .} ∧ *Sosein*(Art Appreciator$_b$) = {P_m; . . .; P_p; admires and values anything coming from Mondrian's atelier; has no interest in and attached no aesthetic value to anything by Nobodyrian; . . .} ∧ . . . ∧ *Sosein*(Art Appreciator$_n$) = {P_q; . . .; P_t; admires and values anything coming from Mondrian's atelier; has no interest in and attached no aesthetic value to anything by Nobodyrian; . . .}

In Meinongian object theory, there are intended objects, including values and properties, where the possession of a value is among the properties of certain thinking subjects, responding in some instances with a particular type of feeling to particular experienced objects. It is mistaken, despite being an apparently natural thing to do, to attribute values to the objects themselves that evoke such feelings. The values instead belong to the emotional life of the subject as elicited by the empirical experience of the properties of such objects as Michelangelo's *Pietà* or a plain red-painted canvas believed to have been made by Mondrian.

Could it not be objected that aesthetic merit and significance belong objectively after all to the two panels in such a way that Mondrian's *Red Panel* has greater aesthetic value than Nobodyrian's indistinguishably red painted panel? Such value must be invisible and in some sense unsupported as supervenient by the physical properties of the two panels considered in and of themselves. It is nevertheless an equally invisible objective historical property of the one panel after the fact that it was painted by Mondrian and the other by Nobodyrian. Such properties, though imperceptible to casual inspection, are nevertheless objectively constitutive though patently extrinsic properties in the relevant Meinongian sense, for they belong to the intended objects themselves as part of their so-beings.

The trouble is in explaining where such aesthetic values could possibly come from on an objectivist perspective. An objective theory of aesthetic value must maintain that for good reasons aesthetic value $V \in \{Sosein(Red\ Panel_m)\} \wedge V \notin \{Sosein(\text{Canvas}_n)\}$. To adapt Socrates' question in Plato's dialogue the *Euthyphro*, we ask, not this time, Do the gods love what is pious because it is pious, or is something pious merely because the gods for no other reason love it? We ask instead, in parallel fashion: Is Mondrian's *Red Panel* aesthetically valuable because it is intrinsically aesthetically valuable, or is the imaginary *Red Panel* aesthetically valuable because it is extrinsically aesthetically valued? We plausibly suppose throughout that it is a good enough reason for some aesthetes to value Mondrian's

Red Panel because it comes from his atelier and has a historical and interpretive importance in understanding the evolution of modern art.[18]

There are such facts about the imaginary canvas that may in some way be responsible for the value accorded to Mondrian's imaginary *Red Panel*. The difficulty is to understand more precisely how such value attributions might be related to the historical facts about the circumstances of the panel's production. An objectivist cannot simply identify the historical facts with the aesthetic value of the Mondrian, on pain of conflating facts with values. The value placed on the panel, moreover, does not follow logically from the historical fact that Mondrian painted it in his workshop. The only possibility seems to be to say that the value of Mondrian's canvas objectively supervenes on historical facts about it, where if A supervenes on B, then there is an ontic dependence, according to which, if B occurs, then so does A.[19] An objectivist about aesthetic value, just like Socrates in questioning his interlocutor Euthyphro, must ultimately suppose that value either belongs intrinsically to an object or does not, and cannot acquire value by being valued. The objectivist might nevertheless try to maintain that an art object can acquire objective value if the value supervenes on objective historical facts. The objectivist must then conclude that the aesthetic value of Mondrian's *Red Panel* is objectively there to be appreciated by any thinking subjects psychologically disposed to recognize it, even if it should happen that no one ever actually does so.

The latter possibility in itself is theoretically perplexing, pointing toward another more serious difficulty in aesthetic value objectivism. It should be particularly embarrassing to inquire of the objectivist whether there is a sound method whereby the objective value of the object in question can be determined. Those who admire Mondrian's *Red Panel* because of its history may claim to find in it objective positive aesthetic value, while those who despise it on general grounds, or even because of its historical background, might claim to find in it objective negative aesthetic value. If the aesthetic value of an object is supposed to be an objective matter of the object's intrinsic constitutive properties, then either the admirers or the despisers must be correct in their valuations, and the despisers or admirers, respectively, must be wrong. More crucially, in that case, there ought to be an objective way, which of course there is not, of settling these potential disputes, of determining, as with an object's other objective properties, whether or not the *Red Panel* is aesthetically valuable. An aesthetic value objectivist need not subscribe to logical positivism or the verification criterion of meaning, in order to be concerned that there is no respectable procedure by which to decide even in theory the most basic questions of what is and what is not supposed objectively to be positively or negatively aesthetically valuable. The relevant historical facts can with equal plausibility be cited as justifying the claim that Mondrian's painting is aesthetically valuable, that

[18] Plato, *Euthyphro* 10a1-3.

[19] Kim 1984; references to Kim reprinted 1993, 53–78.

positive aesthetic value supervenes on the historical facts of its production, as for the contrary claim that Mondrian's painting lacks any positive aesthetic value, and that only negative aesthetic value supervenes on the same historical facts.[20]

15.7 Objective Aesthetic Value Attributions

We do, rightly or wrongly, ostensibly attribute beauty among other aesthetic values to some perceptually encountered objects, such as the *Pietà* again, or, say, to a sparkling performance of J.S. Bach's *Cantatas*. We do not generally say, even in our moments of intense aesthetic appreciation, that we ourselves as subjects of an aesthetic judgment are beautiful, although we might occasionally make reference to the aesthetic feeling we are experiencing as beautiful.

Significantly more typical is it for philosophers and non-philosophers alike to say that the *Pietà* itself or any of the existing 209 Bach *Cantatas* themselves are beautiful or in objective possession of some other aesthetic value, even if we *also* commonly talk about our feelings as they are evoked when we experience such artworks or aesthetically interesting natural scenes and other objects, as though this were something independent of and perhaps even caused by the object's aesthetic value.

The fact that we often find it natural to say such things as that the *Pietà* is beautiful *and* it makes one feel pleased, satisfied, calm, melancholy, or fulfilled, and so on, makes it seem as though perceptions of beauty in an object are different from other kinds of aesthetic or aesthetically-related feelings. The former may then appear objective, even if valuational, and only the latter subjective. Meinong is accordingly obligated to set his lightly sketched aesthetic theory against the background of ordinary thought and linguistic practice in connection with aesthetic judgment. Commentators such as Schuhmann have not made enough of this stubborn fact. It seems philosophically highly important, and deserving of careful analysis and resolution of the apparent conflict it represents with commonsense ways of thinking and speaking about aesthetic value and emotional responses to aesthetically interesting objects and events.[21]

[20] Support for the position comes also from another empiricist-minded philosopher, Ayer 1952 [1946], 113: 'Aesthetic terms are used in exactly the same way as ethical terms. Such aesthetic words as 'beautiful' and 'hideous' are employed, as ethical words are employed, not to make statements of fact, but simply to express certain feelings and evoke a certain response. It follows, as in ethics, that there is no sense in attributing objective validity to aesthetic judgements, and no possibility of arguing about questions of value in aesthetics, but only about questions of fact.' Ayer 1952, 102–13, describes the precisely analogous case of moral value and the futility of arguing that a value judgment is objectively right or wrong, arguing that corresponding value statements are never meaningful in the sense of verifiable except as an expression of feeling.

[21] The concept of aesthetic feeling, especially in nineteenth century philosophy, is usefully explained by Townsend 1997, 19–24. For more general studies of emotions, see Solomon 2004.

We may find nothing logically or conceptually peculiar when a person says: 'Michelangelo's *Pietà* is beautiful.' To which we may then receive the answer: 'Yes? And how does its beauty make you feel?' We do not generally consider such a question to be nonsensical or inappropriate from the standpoint of conversational implicature. We do not typically interpret the question, How does the beauty of the *Pietà* make you feel?, as asking, as it must if Meinong's subjectivist account of aesthetic value were correct and intuitively grasped by aesthetically appreciative subjects, How does your feeling about the *Pietà* make you feel about the *Pietà*? We generally accept such questions as meaningful about how we feel when experiencing what we may find it compelling to describe as an artwork's or natural entity's beauty or lack thereof. Moreover, we are often prepared to answer such questions in a way that is also regarded as sensible, appropriate, and probably true. We do not react with disbelief by rejoining: 'What do you mean? How do I feel *about* the beauty? I've just told you, my feeling *is* the beauty, what is sometimes called the object's beauty, is my emotional response to the object. Are you asking how I additionally feel *about* my feeling of beauty? Are you asking how I feel about how I feel? It is surely enough that the object occasions in me these beautiful feelings that I also sometimes call feelings of beauty!'

The fact, if it is a fact, that we do not find it natural to reply in this kind of way, strongly suggests that in attaching aesthetic value to the subject rather than the object of aesthetic judgment and appreciation is not in accord with most ordinary and some philosophical ways of thinking about aesthetic value. If Meinong and Witasek are correct, then despite appearances and contrary to ordinary unreflective extra-philosophical ways of thinking and speaking about aesthetic value, to have a feeling on top of or in addition to the feelings identified with aesthetic value is precisely to have a feeling about another feeling in which the second feeling is caused by the first. Nor is this situation in any way absurd. It is not only possible but a frequently observed phenomenon in other areas of our emotional phenomenology for one feeling iteratively to cause another or to intend or be about another feeling. The occurrence is observed for example when a feeling of lust or pity causes me to experience a feeling of pride or shame about having previously experienced such emotions.[22]

There are, moreover, instructive analogies with respect to other kinds of subjective emotional reactions to the objective properties of objects that are also popularly transferred to the object. These reactions can occasion feelings of beauty, as though such feelings were themselves objective properties rather than subjective feelings. Transference of this type occurs in those situations in which perceivers feel frightened or recognize the potential for something eliciting a feeling or emotional response of terror. They may then try to turn things around from the subjective to the objective pole, by describing the object itself as frightening or frightful. We might be frightened by a shadow, or an unexplained sound in the

[22] A useful overview of this category of iterative feelings about feelings is presented by Jäger and Bartsch 2006. See also Greenspan 1980.

night, even though a shadow or sound as an intended object does not plausibly contain within its so-being the constitutive property of being frightening or dreadful. It is rather we who feel fright or dread on such occasions. It is nevertheless natural in these emotional circumstances to describe an object as frightening or frightful. We may want to do so in view of the intended object's objective extra-valuational properties that are capable of eliciting a subjective feeling or emotional reaction of fright, among appropriately disposed psychological subjects exposed to the object and its clearly objective properties. The same might then be said of the emotional response associated with judgments of beauty. Feelings of pleasure in perceptual encounters with particular artworks or objects of nature are often projected back upon the object itself by calling the objects beautiful, or as possessing beauty among their other constitutive *Sosein*-inclusive (C) properties. We do this habitually, even though what may be true about the object is rather its ability to elicit from us a given type of feeling by virtue of its objective properties.

15.8 Vindicating Meinong's Subjectivity of Aesthetic Value

All such problems must give pause in considering Meinong's subjective account of aesthetic value. We should wonder whether there are good arguments to be offered either in support or pointing toward a rejection of Meinongian aesthetics.

It is possible vigorously and rigorously to defend at least a revisionary Meinongian-Witasekian account of aesthetic value as subjective aesthetic valuation, on at least the following grounds. The opposition of ordinary thought and language be damned, we might say, for the sake of attaining a philosophically correct object theory explanation of aesthetic values, as a special category of intended Meinongian objects belonging to a special phenomenologically identifiable category of subjectively intending feelings. A Meinongian theory is to be preferred over popular ways of thinking and colloquially expressing matters of aesthetic value on this line of reasoning, because neo-Meinongian aesthetics:

- Explains why artworks and natural scenes and objects cannot themselves have aesthetic values among their constitutive properties, on pain of the same object of aesthetic appreciation being at the same time beautiful and ugly, sublime and dull.
- Arguably makes the best sense of such well-established and apparently insightful commonplaces about the subjectivity of aesthetic appreciation and judgment as that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and that there is no accounting for aesthetic, including gastronomical, taste (*de gustibus non est disputandum*).
- Accounts for the independently interesting fact that two or more thinking subjects appreciating the same artwork or natural object can agree on every other objective property of the object except for the object's aesthetic value. A Meinongian metaphysics of aesthetic value explains this phenomenon as a direct consequence of the fact that the object of aesthetic appreciation in itself has no

aesthetic value in the first place. Rather, all aesthetic values belong to a special category of objects intended by the subjective responsive feelings elicited in the thinking subject in encountering the aesthetic object.

- Explains why it is that aesthetic tastes in judgments about the aesthetic value of many objects, as opposed to their objective properties, change with passing trends and fashions over time, why one generation's cutting edge artistic innovations are another generation's tedious formulas, with no apparent objective fact of the matter.
- Solves the Danto-inspired aesthetic value puzzle by offering a reasonable explanation of the fact that physically identical canvases with different historical origins but otherwise indistinguishable physical properties can command significantly different aesthetic and marketplace values.

Here is a supplementary argument within the Meinongian object theory framework to further secure the necessity of regarding aesthetic value as subjective. If aesthetic value were objective, which is to say, if the possession of such values were a constitutive property of the intended objects of aesthetic appreciation, then it would be necessary for some existent objects to have metaphysically inconsistent properties in their so-beings. The same statue by Michelangelo would then be, not just thought to be, simultaneously magnificent and non-magnificent, ghastly or kitsch. Which is not how we want contingently existent intended art objects to be characterized, depending on the differences among possible aesthetic responses to the same contingently existent intended objects.

This regrettable situation would necessarily occur whenever subject S attributes aesthetic value V to object O, and subject S' attributes the complementary possession at the same time of aesthetic value non-V to the same object O. Existent physical spatiotemporal dynamic objects and subsistent or abstract aspatiotemporal objects in Meinong's object theory cannot have both a constitutive property and its complement in their respective so-beings. That would make them metaphysically or descriptively impossible, whereas we understand that many of the objects of aesthetic appreciation exist. The solution in keeping with the spirit of *Gegenstandstheorie* seems to be to say that no intended object independently of its ontic status has in its so-being of constitutive (C) properties only any intrinsic aesthetic value properties, such as being beautiful or otherwise. Aesthetic values in the Meinongian framework do not thereby become extraconsitutive (XC) properties, but are instead steadfast (C) properties of the aesthetically appreciative intending subject, and not of the subject's intended object.

If, therefore, we know in advance that a certain object of aesthetic appreciation, O, such as Michelangelo's *Pietà*, exists, then we know from the general principles of Meinongian extraontology, that O cannot simultaneously have both value possession properties V and non-V, say, being beautiful and its opposite, non-beautiful, as constitutive properties belonging to its *Sosein*. If we are familiar with the basic requirements of a generically Meinongian object theory, then we can know in advance of any further experience or reflection that if an object O exists, $E!O$, then its *Sosein* cannot contain any complementary constitutive properties: $E!O \rightarrow Sosein(O) \neq \{V; \text{non-}V, \ldots\}$. If, conditionally, again, aesthetic value property V and

its complement non-V are supposed to be constitutive properties belonging to an intended object, then they cannot at the same time be objective properties of any object of aesthetic appreciation if there is so much as a logical possibility that different thinking subjects might experience different aesthetic feelings in experiencing the object.

As a final objection to consider, a critic might propose that the possession of aesthetic values could still be properties of some intended objects while not being *constitutive* properties, on analogy with the extraconstitutive properties of existence or possibility, of any intended objects. What is important to remark in response to this suggestion is that we never have both an extraconstitutive property and its complement holding true even of the same beingless nonexistent intended object in Meinong's object theory. Could values generally and aesthetic values in particular comprise another exceptional category of extraconstitutive properties altogether that can belong to a concrete intended object of aesthetic appreciation, like the extraconstitutive property of existence or possibility? Could they belong instead to another branch of extraconstitutive properties that, like constitutive properties, can be found at least implicitly alongside their complements among an object's combined constitutive and extraconstitutive properties?

Meinong certainly never countenanced such a possibility, nor, with good reason, should he have done so. The proposition entails that existent objects like Michelangelo's *Pietà* can in some sense have metaphysically incompatible constitutive properties. Faced with the choice of allowing existent objects to have metaphysically incompatible constitutive properties, or the alternative, under which the possession of aesthetic values is not a constitutive property of any objects of aesthetic appreciation, it is not hard sympathetically to support Meinong's decision to place values outside of the aesthetic object altogether and attribute them instead to the thinking subject of aesthetic feeling, appreciation and judgment.

15.9 Aesthetic Value and the Indisputability of Taste

At last we are in a position to understand more fully why Meinong must locate value generally and aesthetic value in particular outside the object and consequently in the subject. Otherwise, we must provide good theoretical reasons to justify why the $Sosein(Pietà_m) = \{V; \ldots\}$ rather than $Sosein(Pietà_m) = \{\text{non-}V; \ldots\}$, or the reverse. To accomplish this purpose is something rather more elusive than many another difficult challenge of aesthetic evaluation when the question is whether or not Michelangelo's *Pietà* is, say, pre-romantic, or tragic, sublime, majestic, uplifting, charming, or any of the other endlessly more subtle things that people want to be able to say and argue about in describing their feelings when they see, especially in person, but even in graphic and photographic or other media reproductions, such a work of art as Michelangelo's *Pietà*. Here the individual subjectivity of aesthetic taste appears irreducibly sovereign.

What aesthetic theory will settle any of these questions? If I find the *Pietà* beautiful and you find it non-beautiful, is one of us supposed to be objectively right and the other objectively wrong? If so, who gets it right and why? An existent object like the *Pietà* taking up its allotted portion of space-time cannot simultaneously be constituted both as beautiful and non-beautiful, at least not within anything resembling Meinong's original object theory. If the *Pietà* cannot be constituted by both aesthetic properties, it can only be constituted by neither or by one at the expense of the other, and either one of these choices would be a very difficult argument to make.

The search for an objective basis for saying that the *Pietà* is beautiful rather than not beautiful is certain to be fruitless. This is not to say that persons who feel strongly that the sculpture is beautiful and those who feel strongly that it is not beautiful cannot find good reasons why they think that the *Pietà* is beautiful or not. In the process of articulating their feelings, they will either disagree about the interest in one or another features of the sculpture, or else they will disagree about the aesthetic value of those features, assuming they agree that they in particular are relevant to aesthetic appreciation and judgment. The proposition that the *Pietà* is simply beautiful or on the contrary simply not beautiful would evidently be awkward to defend. At some point in the process aesthetic value must be projected onto some features of the *Pietà* with which another subject with a different outlook, disposition and sense of taste might fail to agree. The effort becomes more difficult still in matters of aesthetic judgment to insist that there is a definite right or wrong answer, when aesthetic values are attached to subjective experiences or the intended aesthetic objects of such experiences, than in cases of moral judgment, where something more important than aesthetic sensibilities are at stake.

The expected response is that our aesthetic judgment and attribution to an object of a certain aesthetic value depends on whether and how much we are pleased or displeased about this or that constitutive property or cluster of constitutive properties in the aesthetic object's so-being. Since this is where explanations of the required type necessarily end, another subject is free to find the very opposite pleasing or displeasing. The potential difference in subjective experience ultimately finds expression in an overall aesthetic response to the object as aesthetically favorable or disfavorable. What seems unreasonable to imagine in all this passive enjoyment or disgust is that there be a way of convincing someone by a chain of reasoning to change the basis of all their aesthetic judgments in their honest reactions to the sorts of constitutive properties of objects that seem to be causally responsible for at least some of the subjective aesthetic feelings they evoke. The difference in aesthetic response of two or more different aesthetic value appreciating subjects appears insurmountable. If symmetric proportion pleases you at the same time that it displeases me, what are we ever to do about it? If the pyramidal architectural design of Michelangelo's *Pietà* seems to me a brilliant solution to the representational problems he had posed for himself, and appears to you only as a dull cliché, how can either one of these aesthetic reactions possibly be justified over the other? Presumably, they cannot. That leaves only the possibility of denying, as Meinong does, that both complementary properties of possessing opposite aesthetic values are not in the first place among the constitutive properties of any aesthetic objects.

Once we learn to live with the initial strangeness of thinking of beauty and all other aesthetic values as belonging literally to the beholder, to the thinking subject of aesthetic appreciation, and we understand the psychological tendency to project aesthetic value onto the objects that occasion aesthetic feelings, by analogy with the frightful shadow or dreadful sound in the night, the philosophical advantages of regarding aesthetic value as subjective in a Meinongian object theory framework soon outweigh the peculiarities of maintaining that no experienced object is beautiful or ugly in itself, but that all aesthetic value resides only within our subjective feelings that aesthetic objects may occasion.

The question must then be raised as to why aesthetic value qualities are excluded from the so-being of an aesthetically appreciated object's constitutive properties. We have already seen that including converse intentional properties in an intended object's so-being cannot interfere with its so-being's providing adequate identity conditions. If we want to be more generous or imaginative in this regard than Meinong and Witasek, then we could say that it is a constitutive property of Michelangelo's *Pietà* to be admired by S_1 and despised by S_2. We do so without risk of introducing logical contradiction to object theory logic or making a real existent art masterpiece into an impossible Meinongian object, defined in part by being simultaneously loved and loathed by different persons or at least at different times.

The *Pietà* that we are talking about, the same intended object of conflicting aesthetic judgments, to oversimplify, is loved by a certain percent of those who see it, loathed by another percent, considered indifferently or not at all by the remainder. These properties can be regarded as constitutive, belonging to an intended object's so-being, without being essential, and without being invoked in intended object identity determinations, except heuristically for special constructions when occasion demands. Logic similarly expects the identical art or natural object to be loved by S_1 and loathed by S_2 (or by S_1 at times $t_1 \neq t_2$). We can say without putting logic under threat of inconsistency that predications of the kind do not defy the principle of noncontradiction. Nor do they imply that existent entities like Michelangelo's *Pietà*, subject to conflicting subjective aesthetic valuations, are thereby made predicationally internally impossible Meinongian objects.

The *Pietà* is untouched no matter what is thought about it. Generally, we do not consider, because we mostly do not know anything about, who loves, loathes, or is indifferent to any given artwork among the throngs passing through St. Paul's galleries. Unless we ask after the *Pietà*-loved-by-S_1, say, if S_1 is a noted Renaissance art critic, and related special constructions, we do not consider the converse intentional properties of intended objects as identity conditions. We can say the same thing of constitutive converse intentional properties presumably belonging to the so-being of *N*-nothing(ness), without being invoked in the concept or its identity principles. For identity principle applications be intendable, Mally's special case notwithstanding. It is not expected generally, with exceptions drawing on the resources of object theory heuristics, that an intended object's accidentally being intended by a particular intending thinking subject enter into its identity conditions. If we allow into an intended object of aesthetic appreciation's so-being the unqualified constitutive properties incompletely specified of being loved, being loathed,

and being regarded with total aesthetic indifference, then there is certain to be gratuitous logical predicational mayhem.

The problem arises only through faulty application of the principle. Inconsistency is not inherent in the inclusion of converse intentional aesthetic value properties in principle as constitutive of an intended art or natural object's so-being. It is a question thereafter of whether or not to refer to or make explanatory use of all contingent accidental extrinsic constitutive properties in an intended object of aesthetic appreciation's so-being. The question becomes inescapable in that event whether converse intentional aesthetic appreciation values should enter into such philosophically interesting applications as identity determinations. If I love the *Pietà* and you loath it, are we in fact talking about the same intended art object that one of us loves and the other loathes? It must then be the distinct constructed object *Pietà*-loved-by-S_1-and-loathed-by-S_2 that we both intend and concerning which we have aesthetic disagreement.

Again, logic is unmoved by the application. Heuristic invocation of these and unlimitedly more complicated extravagances, and, given that converse intentional properties are otherwise irrelevant to everyday identity determinations. Michelangelo's *Pietà* is not made into an impossible Meinongian object that is both loved and not loved. It is the totality of its intrinsic constitutive properties that precondition the possibility of the identical *Pietà* being loved by some and loathed by others, among those who are not merely indifferent. Whatever makes something the particular intended object of aesthetic judgment must be independently determined in its individual self-identity conditions prior to its being intended as that particular object of thought, and therefore in theory before it can be aesthetically admired, scorned, or passed over in indifference.

Chapter 16
Quantum Indeterminacy and Physical Reality as a Relevantly Predicationally Incomplete Existent Entity

16.1 Quantum Indeterminacy

The classical conception of physics requires every microparticle to have determinate position and momentum. Where particles are understood not as true atoms but on something like the Niels Bohr miniature solar system model, as a nucleus surrounded by electron satellites, determinate position is supposed to be calculated for each particle's center of mass. It is on the basis of this assumption and its commitment to causally necessary mechanical laws of motion that classical physics interprets the universe deterministically, holding that the history and future of every material particle is rigidly governed in its causal interactions with every other particle, under a single system of applied mathematical natural laws. The idea is epitomized by Laplace's imaginary demon, who, standing outside the universe, but with full knowledge of the laws of physics and the boundary conditions or determinate position and momentum of every particle at any chosen instant of time, is able infallibly and in the minutest detail to predict and retrodict the complete physical state of the entire universe at every other future and past moment (Laplace 1952, 4–6).

This paradigm or imaginary ideal of causally deterministic physics is overturned by two important developments in modern science.[1] Einstein's relativity theory demonstrates the practical futility and theoretical inaccuracy of thinking of physics as an inquiry undertaken even in principle by an ideal observer like Laplace's demon in a causally isolated and epistemically privileged position outside the physical universe being investigated (Einstein 1956, 1961; Miller 1981). The point is not that relativity theory need be indeterministic, but only that it disallows

[1] It is also possible to have an indeterministic physical theory in which all microparticles have determinate position and momentum, if its laws of motion are not deterministic, and a deterministic physical theory in which no particles have determinate position and momentum, as in classical wave theory. See Earman 1986, 4–79.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
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the possibility of an ideal observer like Laplace's demon in classical physics as part of a deterministic model's explanatory heuristics.

Heisenberg's uncertainty principle adds to Einstein's insistence on the spatio-temporal situation and causal involvement of observers investigating physical phenomena a powerful refutation of the classical assumption that subatomic microparticles are simultaneously precisely determined in position and momentum (Heisenberg 1930, 1959).[2] Heisenberg's scientific reasoning has the logical structure of a dilemma. The exact position of a microparticle cannot be determined even in principle, except by causally interacting with it in such a way as to disturb its momentum. The investigator in effect can only discover the position of a microparticle by bouncing another microparticle off of it in order to fix its location, thereby altering its momentum. The exact momentum of a microparticle similarly cannot be determined except by causally interacting with it in such a way as to disturb its position (Forrest 1988, 102–22). In either case, the particle's behavior is not precisely determined, but falls instead within a statistical Minkowski probability cone.[3] The two factors, position and momentum, can never be jointly determined at any time. Without determination of both factors, the classical deterministic requirements for microphysical systems cannot be satisfied (Mehra 1974, 4–8).

Einstein had already proved that important progress can be made in theoretical physics without a laboratory, through *Gedankenexperimente* and unified explanations of diverse phenomena already known to science. The question is which thought experiments and which explanations to accept, and how their implications should be further interpreted. Einstein's chasing light scenario? Schrödinger's cat? Feynman's double-slit chamber? Differences in possible paths for physics to take with very different philosophical consequences depend sociologically on extra-scientific popular commitments to metaphysical and methodological principles that are not themselves ever subjected to scientific scrutiny. Thought experiments involve analogies, and proper analogies always involve disanalogies. The question in weighing and judging the meaning of a thought experiment or claim to superiority of a proposed explanation is at every stage at the mercy of extra-scientific considerations as to which analogies and disanalogies to be emphasized, and which to be ignored or overridden. Theoretical physics, in fact, willingly and self-consciously or not, regardless of where theoretical physicists are housed, are accordingly engaged in often highly applied mathematicized natural philosophy.

[2] The sense in which determinism prevails in quantum physics, despite the indeterminacy principle, is examined by Earman 1986, 199–234.

[3] An elegant formal description of probability *t*-cones is given by van Fraassen 1991, 51–3. Event-spaces for quantum phenomena can be described topologically in other ways. See Mehra 1974, 107–16. Forrest 1988, 25–45.

16.2 Realist and Idealist Interpretations of Quantum Phenomena

We can distinguish two broad categories of philosophical accounts of the experimental findings of quantum physics. These are well-established alternatives that were articulated by scientists and popular commentators almost immediately upon first publication of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle.[4] They have been described in several ways and by a variety of suggestive terminologies. There are many subtle philosophically significant differences between some of these accounts. For simplicity sake, we follow Karl Popper (1982) in dividing interpretations of quantum abnormalities broadly into *realist* and *idealist* categories.

Realist interpretations of quantum findings claim that microphysical reality itself is fundamentally indeterminate, that quantum particulars literally do not have both determinate instantaneous position and momentum. They are mind-independently predicationally indeterminate with respect to specific position and momentum at any given instant of time. They are metaphysically constitutionally indeterminate, and to that extent incomplete intended objects, regardless of the psychological states and attitudes of the minds investigating them. An easy formulation of the realist interpretation is to say that quantum indeterminacy would obtain even if there were no minds. Quantum indeterminacy would then be a basic fact of the world, rather than of the world's apprehension in thought. Whereas a popular way of explaining quantum indeterminacy is to speak as if the investigator *deciding* to measure the position rather than the momentum of a quantum particle makes the particle's momentum indeterminate, or the reverse. A realist interpretation contrastingly implies that precisely these quantum indeterminacies, irrespective of any psychological occurrences, are an objective feature of submicroscopic quantum-level physical reality. Idealist interpretations, in contrast, understand quantum phenomena as psychological, and the quantum position-momentum dichotomy as essentially mind-dependent. This may either be because quantum phenomena are themselves ideal, mental, or psychological creations of the mind (*strong* or *ontic quantum idealism*), or because of the mind's unavoidable limitations in trying to understand and gain knowledge concerning quantum phenomena (*weak* or *epistemic quantum idealism*). Quantum idealism *per se* leaves open the question of the determinate or indeterminate nature of microphysical reality. Weak or epistemic quantum idealism can in principle be committed either to a metaphysics that agrees or disagrees with the classical determinist account of all physical occurrences embodied in the explanatory myth of Laplace's demon (see d'Espagnat 1971).

According to epistemic quantum idealism, the microphysical world itself is unknowable as determinate or indeterminate, and no stronger assertion can be

[4] An excellent source for the early history of dispute concerning hidden variables in quantum theory is provided by the papers collected by Wheeler and Zurek, ed. 1983. The hidden variable theory is associated with the work of Bohm and Bub 1966. See also Bohm 1963, and Bub 1974; Kochen and Specker 1967.

justified than that the physical sciences are limited to quantum indeterminacy in their methods of learning about the subatomic world. A quantum microparticular might then be classically determined in the sense of simultaneously having both determinate position and momentum. Since investigators can only find out a microparticle's boundary conditions by causally interacting and thereby interfering with the particle's properties, the particle's additional exact parameters needed for Laplace's demon to begin work can never be conjointly known. From a practical instrumental point of view, we must proceed in microphysics as though nature itself were fundamentally indeterminate. The inexact statistical description of microparticle behavior offered in quantum mechanics is the best we can do in discovering empirically what can be known about subatomic existence. Reality in and of itself, for epistemic idealists who find it sensible to draw such a distinction, may or may not *be* statistical. It is our *knowledge* of microphenomena that is uncertain, indeterminate, fuzzy. Whether microphysical reality is also predicationally incomplete cannot be decided from the inherent epistemic limitations in our knowledge-gathering methods.[5]

The distinction between realist and idealist approaches to quantum physics poses an interesting dialectical standoff. Realist interpreters typically find it unintelligible to distinguish between how the world is in reality beyond the absolute limits of our knowledge. Idealist interpreters standardly regard it as ontically pretentious to claim that the world itself must in reality conform to the limitations of what finite human inquirers can know. The problem recapitulates a familiar conflict in the history of philosophy, but one in which scientists and journalists of science in the wake of findings about the pecularities of quantum phenomena seem to be continuinally reinventing the wheel. Hence the proliferation of extrascientific speculations about the existence of parallel universes, divine cosmic and microcosmic intervention, mathematical models for action at a distance, retrograde causality, and Leibnizian monad-like intelligent and world-information-mirroring microparticles.[6] Hence, also, the scientific and philosophical controversies that continue to

[5] An interpretation of this sort is advanced by Einstein, Podolsky, and Rosen 1935, 777–80. This paper is the origin of the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen paradox in quantum physics. See notes 7 and 8 below on Bell's inequality theorem.

[6] DeWitt and Graham 1973. Backward causation is perhaps the least favored alternative explanations, because the irreversibility of time seems to be implied by the second law of thermodynamics. For a conceptual exploration of the possibilities of backward causation for problems in quantum physics and the philosophy of mind, see Forrest 1985, 210–7. The theory of quantum action at a distance is examined by Bohm 1963, note 4. The appeal (literally or figuratively) to divine intelligence is explored, as one might expect, more popularly (though seriously) than technically. See Davies 1983. Earman 1986, 233: 'An astounding—and frustrating—feature of the [quantum] theory lies in the contrast between the exquisite accuracy of its empirical predictions on one hand and the zaniness of its metaphysical 'consequences' on the other. The theory has been used to 'prove' not only that determinism is false but that realism fails, that logic is non-classical, that there is a Cartesian mental-physical dualism, that the world has the structure of Borges' garden of forking paths, etc. One is tempted to say that any theory which proves all of this proves nothing. But the temptation must be resisted. Although it is not clear what the quantum theory implies about determinism, it is clear that the implications are potentially profound.'

surround ingenious thought and laboratory experiments involving Bell's inequality theorem. The latter result in particular enjoyed considerable celebrity as a knock-down test case especially against epistemic idealist interpretations of quantum phenomena in the form of so-called hidden variable theory.[7] The proof has since reportedly lost much of its persuasive lustre among physicists.[8]

16.3 Quantum Indeterminacy, Relevant and Irrelevant Predicational Completeness and Incompleteness

The conceptual link between quantum indeterminacy and predicational incompleteness invites Meinongian semantics to contribute at least an ontically neutral language in which opposed metaphysical interpretations of quantum indeterminacy can be formulated without existential prejudice. Meinong spoke of incomplete and impossible objects (*unvollständige*, *unmögliche Gegenstände*), that fail to exist precisely because they are predicationally incomplete. Holmes has no definite number of hairs on his fictional head, unlike every existent human head. What, then, of the wine in the glass I raise to my lips? What shall we conclude, if the wine and the glass and my lips, everything, indeed, in physical reality, are as predicationally incomplete on the realist quantum indeterminacy thesis, as Holmes, lacking either exact momentum or exact position at any chosen instant of time at the microphysical quantum level? What if the world is as fundamentally relevantly predicationally incomplete with respect to its constitutive properties as intended Meinongian objects Sherlock Holmes and Anna Karenina, the golden mountain, and so on? Shall we conclude that physical reality in its entirety is a nonexistent Meinongian object, like Holmes, Karenina, and the golden mountain?

What does a Meinongian semantic framework enable us to say about the realist-idealist conflict of interpretations surrounding the remarkable discoveries and theoretical proposals of quantum physics? There would seem at first to be only three directions for a Meinongian understanding of quantum indeterminacy. The first is to retreat from the realist to some form of idealist interpretation of quantum indeterminacy. We have prevented this route of escape by confining attention for purposes of argument to realist interpretations of quantum indeterminacy. The second is to conclude that by virtue of their physical indeterminacy quantum particles do not actually exist. They can then at best serve an explanatory role as a scientific idealization, a fiction, in fact, like the ideal gas or the average salesman, which, for different reasons, are also predicationally incomplete. The third strategy is to conclude that by virtue of their indeterminacy quantum particles exist, but in a

[7] The Bell inequality theorem appears in Bell 1964. An interesting defense of the realist implications of Bell's theorem is given by Albert 1992. Compare van Fraassen 1982.

[8] For a recent overview of the controversy, see Cushing and McMullin, ed. 1989; Peat 1990; Kafatos, ed. 1989.

different way than spatiotemporally phenomenally more stable macrophysical entities, as only a part or moment of predicationally complete actually existent dynamic individuals.

If we opt for the second strategy, then we must say that the physical world of material entities does not exist. Quantum phenomena are no doubt strange, but why should we care if they are no more real than Holmes or the perfectly fixed fulcrum or perfectly rigid lever? Where, in that case, does the existent world of macrophysical objects suddenly come from? How does it make up for the predicational incompleteness deficiencies of an underlying quantum physical reality, so that predicational completeness is available to the wine in my wine glass and all of my anatomy poised to ingest and enjoy the fermented grape?

If quantum particles are at the bottom of the physical analysis of matter, but are actually nonexistent, then it is hard to see how a constructively existent physical reality could ever supervene on a nonexistent quantum physical foundation. Quantum indeterminacy, on the second interpretation strategy, might be understood as implying that quantum particles are not physically existent, considered in and of themselves, but are nevertheless a proper part or moment of an existent physical reality, in which they satisfy higher metaphysical demands for predicational completeness. Quantum particles, nevertheless, as nonexistent predicationally incomplete Meinongian objects, presumably could not be said to provide a supervenience base for the ontic dependence of predicationally complete physical entities, say, configurations of electrons, neutrons and protons, at a deeper subatomic level. Nor is it an easy solution to suggest that existence or nonexistence as usually defined for a Meinongian logic and semantics need not involve predicational completeness. We set the examples on the descent of a slippery slope thereby, beginning with Sherlock Holmes, Anna Karenina, and the golden mountain, with no clearcut way to impose a philosophically respectable distinction afterward on this spectrum, between other predicationally incomplete nonexistent Meinongian objects and quantum particles subject to the quantum position-momentum indeterminacy dilemma of the Heisenberg uncertainty principle.

The third choice holds the most promise for a plausible commonsense understanding of quantum indeterminacy in relation to physical reality within a Meinongian semantic framework. For this purpose, the proposal needs a little help, in the form of a principle of relevant predicational completeness and relevant predicational incompleteness. It is a distinction that has been relied on occasionally in preceding chapters on an intuitive basis. Rather than try to define the concept exactly, it should suffice in the present context merely to indicate the difference between relevant and irrelevant predicational completeness and incompleteness with a choice of appropriate examples, from which further applications can be generalized. We expect existent objects to be predicationally complete, but we do not require that they satisfy exactly one of every matched constitutive property and property-complement pair.

Thus, Holmes is supposed to be a human being, so that if he were an existent human being, he would have to have a definite number of hairs on his head at any given time. How are such transworld time-indexed attributions to be explained? We

have in fact no way of measuring or judging time in another logically possible world. If Earth in a nonactual merely logically possible world w_1, where Holmes is imagined to exist, had a different orbit around a different sun, then Earth-w_1 time would be very different from Earth-$w_@$ time in the actual world $w_@$. Since Holmes is predicationally incomplete with respect to head hair numbers in the actual world, we rightly conclude that Holmes is nonactual, that he does not exist in the actual world, despite the fact that by satisfying Leibnizian self-identity conditions he can be referred to as an intended object in a Meinongian referential semantic domain of existent and nonexistent intended objects. However, since Holmes again is supposed to be a human being, it does not subtract from whatever partial degree of predicational completeness Holmes can lay claim to that he is neither even nor odd in the arithmetical sense, nor, since he is not supposed to be a nucleic acid, that he is neither DNA nor RNA. These predicate pairs are simply irrelevant to Holmes's predicational completeness or incompleteness as a human being, and he is relevantly predicationally incomplete in indefinitely many other ways. A natural number, on the other hand, or a nucleic acid, would be relevantly predicationally incomplete if in the first instance it lacked the property of being even or odd (say, as the exact number of hairs on Holmes's head at the exact moment he solved the Hound of the Baskervilles case), or, in the second, if the nucleic acid lacked the property of being either a DNA or RNA helix.

We can, of course, unproblematically think and say that Holmes is or has the property of being non-DNA, non-RNA, non-even, non-odd, non-prime, and the like. Holmes is then something other than DNA, RNA, even, odd, prime. According to Meinongian identity conditions for specific intended objects, if we interpolate the property of being non-prime or the others into Holmes's so-being, beyond anything found in Doyle's authoritative source texts for the Holmes character, then, strictly speaking, we are no longer referring to Doyle's character Holmes, but equivocally to a different intended object with a distinct so-being than that defined for Doyle's Holmes. It is a new fictional character that we are then creating on the spot, building on the so-being of established properties for Holmes, but taking his story in a previously untried direction. The possibility of proliferating Holmeses by Meinongian free assumption does not change the fact that Holmes like other nonexistent intended objects is predicationally incomplete for many constitutive property alternatives. The essential point is that if we are being meticulous about identifying Meinongian objects with specific so-beings, then to *add* being non-prime and the others to Doyle's archetypal Holmes's so-being is no longer to intend Doyle's Holmes. Is it nevertheless true of Holmes that he is non-prime rather than prime? Holmes is supposed to be a human being, and human beings are neither prime nor non-prime, and we may believe that it is unnecessary for Doyle as inventor of detective stories to spell this all out, leaving our imaginations to fill in many of the blanks with the outline of information the author provides.

Since it is possible to write a story extending the Holmes character to something that is intended to be a prime number, the result perhaps of a fiendish device of the mathematician and Holmes's foe Moriarity's invention, it becomes unavoidable except in popular inexact thinking to distinguish a prime Holmes from Doyle's

Holmes and a non-prime Holmes. The Meinongian logic and semantics developed here distinguishes between (internal) predicate complementation and (external) propositional negation precisely in order to avoid inferences that can play havoc with object theory, in which the fact that something does *not* have a property like being prime in its identifying so-being does not imply that it has the complement of the property by virtue of having the property of being *non*-prime in its so-being. Relevantly predicationally incomplete nonexistent Meinongian intended objects like Sherlock Holmes and the golden mountain are nonexistent because they are relevantly predicationally incomplete. They are relevantly predicationally incomplete in turn because they lack both constitutive properties and their complements in their identifying *Soseine*. If every relevantly predicationally incomplete object could squeeze in a complement non-property for every property that is not included in its so-being, then even Holmes and the golden mountain would be relevantly predicationally complete rather than constitutionally incomplete.

16.4 Predicational Incompleteness in a Meinongian Semantic Framework

With the category of *relevant* predicational completeness or incompleteness in hand, we can suggest that it is no more relevantly predicationally incomplete for quantum particles to have both position and momentum simultaneously than it is for Napoléon to be neither prime nor non-prime. Quantum particles are no more obligated to have both particular position and momentum at the same time on such a conception than a real English detective is required to be either even or odd in the arithmetical sense, or no more than an actual detective would need to be either a DNA or RNA double helix strand, in order to be predicationally complete as a condition of its existence.

It would be senseless, as a contribution to theoretical physics, to declare quantum particles nonexistent on the grounds that they are arithmetically neither even nor odd, since they are not evenly divisible by 2 or any other number. They are not the kind of thing to which such a property and property-complement pair applies. To suppose otherwise is to commit a kind of Ryle-associated category mistake. It is not as though quantum mechanics implies that quantum particles do not have *any* simultaneous position and momentum, only that they do not have an *exact*, in principle experientiably determinable, simultaneous position and momentum. Which is a different thing. We know, if we test for exact position, then a quantum particle will have some momentum, or it could not have moved away as a result of the position-measuring interaction that the investigator initiates. It is just that the quantum particle's momentum displaces it somewhere, although nowhere determinable in particular on a Minkowski probability light cone. Conversely, the same is true if momentum is practically tested for a particle whose position is thereby rendered only probabilistic. Similarly, in line with recent and ongoing scientific

discoveries, it would be as meaningless to suppose that quantum particles are relevantly predicationally incomplete by virtue of being arithmetically neither even nor odd, nor as having exact simultaneous position and momentum. Moreover, if a quantum particle, whose exact position (momentum) has been determined, has only a probability of possessing (occupying) a certain momentum (position), then it has this definite probability and none other. This is again a kind of higher-order physical determinacy, although not of the sort to support a Leplacean physical determinism of Newton-era physics, prior to relativity and quantum theoretical revolutions.

Does this distinction resolve the logical-metaphysical problem centering on quantum indeterminacy and the existence of predicationally incomplete physical entities at the foundations of physical reality? The proposal has several theoretical advantages. It avoids the need to suppose that quantum phenomena are predicationally incomplete, in the sense of not being relevantly predicationally complete, and hence in Meinongian logical and semantic terms nonexistent. The proposal further avoids the need to suppose that predicationally incomplete objects as quantum particles are otherwise imagined to be nonexistent. It stands removed from any need to suppose that there could be a nonexistent supervenience base for the ontic dependence of actually existent physical entities, regardless of their size.

As to the question why quantum phenomena should fail to be relevantly predicationally complete with respect to simultaneous position and momentum, part of the explanation on realist and idealist interpretations is already available in the dilemma by which the Heisenberg uncertainly principle is introduced. What remains fascinatingly unclear, but a conceptual problem at this stage entirely for scientific experts in quantum physics to explain, is why it is that although quantum particles never simultaneously have both exact position and momentum, some quantum particles have position and some quantum particles have momentum. The meaning of such predications and limitations within a still developing quantum physics is properly accommodated within a Meinongian object theory semantics, outfitted in an ontically neutral scientific language of microphysics, interpreted by means of an ontology of relevantly predicationally complete existent macrophysical entities, and extraontology that incorporates the ontology along with every relevantly predicationally incomplete or impossible beingless intended object. With the existence question taken off the table, there remains the possibility for further theoretical development of both realist and idealist interpretations of quantum indeterminacy within an ontically neutral Meinongian object theory semantic framework. The fact that there are no adequate constitutive genidentity conditions for indeterminate quantum particles further suggests that they may be improperly designated. They might better be classified as quantum *phenomena*, perhaps even properties or attributes of other intended existent physical objects, rather than as distinct intendable existent microphysical objects or individual *entities*.

Chapter 17
Confessions of a Meinongian Logician

Every man his own Boswell

— Oliver Wendell Holmes

17.1 *Mea Culpa*

I am a Meinongian logician. There, I've said it.

The truth is that I am not merely interested in Meinong's object theory as an historical curiosity, nor for the sake of exploring alternatives to mainstream extensionalisms. On the contrary, I have been engaged in the project of formalizing a revisionary theory of beingless Meinongian objects because I believe that Meinongian logic offers the most intuitively correct way of understanding the semantics of thought and language.[1]

This is not the first time I have acknowledged my Meinongianism. Indeed, I have been promoting the advantages of Meinongian logic since graduate student days. I nevertheless feel the need now to confess my Meinongian proclivities more forthrightly, and to address some of the issues raised by critics of Meinongian logic. To be a Meinongian logician, even today, is to be a particular sort of renegade analytic philosopher, requiring justification as a legitimate even if heretical chapter in the ongoing development of philosophical analysis. Although I admit to being enough of a contrarian in philosophical outlook to find a certain amount of personal satisfaction in going against the popular logical, semantic and metaphysical grain, purely for the delight of marching to the beat of a different drummer, that is once again not my reason for having articulated a Meinongian logic. Rather, I have done so because I regard Meinong's insights about existent and nonexistent intended objects as offering the most plausible foundation for a general theory of meaning.

Despite a glacial movement away from extensionalism in the direction of some form of intensional logic and semantics, and a recent spirited Meinongian renaissance, Meinong's object theory is still very much a subject of disapproval among the vanguard of contemporary mathematical logicians and formal set theoretical semanticists. Meanwhile, many of the newly proposed alternatives to classical

[1] See the bibliography in Jacquette 1996a, and the present volume's list of References.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18075-5_17

logic, such as free logics and logics of abstract entities, in my opinion, do not go far enough. This makes it important to explain and defend Meinongian logic as distinct from other nonstandard formalisms.[2]

My confessions are, accordingly, not an apology in the usual sense. They are instead an attempt to advance a philosophical rationale for my interest in Meinongianism. The opposition between Meinongian and anti-Meinongian semantics reflects a fundamental conflict of philosophical intuitions. The disagreement boils down to the question of whether or not we can refer to and truly predicate constitutive properties of beingless objects as well as existent actual and abstract entities. In so basic a dispute, there are no shared premises to sustain argument between those who disagree about divisive underlying principles. The most that opponents can do is to freely acknowledge their contrary ideological orientations and try to clarify what they find attractive about their preferred side of the quarrel. Thus, a Meinongian can only try to articulate the motivations that recommend the object theory for others to agree or disagree. An anti-Meinongian can only try to say why Meinongian logic and semantics from a hostile standpoint seems so largely misdirected or absurd. As reasons, such considerations will lack persuasive force for those who are already convinced that it either is or is not possible for nonexistent intended objects of reference to possess constitutive properties.

Anti-Meinongians can speak for themselves. In this confessional forum, I shall only try to explain how I became interested in Meinongian logic, and why I think it has been a worthwhile endeavor. In upholding a Meinongian perspective on the problems of logic and semantics, I offer a revolutionary paradigm to challenge the monopoly of classical logics and less radically nonstandard logics in the theory of reference, predication, and deductive inference. Along the way, I expose and counterattack some of the worst misconceptions of Meinong's philosophy that have contributed to its undeservedly negative reputation in conservative analytic philosophical circles. As is widely recognized in Meinong studies today, much of the enmity that has hounded Meinong's object theory can be traced to Russell's misdirected but influential objections. This makes it important to conclude with a

[2] As interesting as free logics are, they do not allow reference and true predication to nonexistent objects. Such free logics avoid existence presuppositions in their quantifier semantics, so that an existentially quantified predication can be true even if there exists no corresponding entity. They do not introduce a semantic domain of nonexistent objects with intensional property-based Leibnizian identity conditions comparable to those for existent and subsistent objects into a fully comprehensive intensional referential semantic domain, as my conception of a Meinongian logic requires. Other free logics, such as Morscher 1983, proceed differently, by retaining conventional existentially-loaded quantifiers, but allowing some proper names to lack reference, there by blocking conventional existential generalizations. This approach to the formal logic of reference and quantification also does not tell a complete semantic story without the Meinongian referential semantic domain of nonexistent objects, and fails to preserve the intuition that we can after all quantify over nonexistent objects, meaningfully assert that there were more Hindu gods than Greek gods, count and order nonexistent objects in various ways, and the like. The same is true for nonstandard intensional logics of abstract objects that do not exist, but subsist in the manner of abstract Platonic entities and Fregean thoughts, and as such are not beingless Meinongian objects. See Jacquette 2010a, 22–30, 2011b.

critical re-examination of Russell's objections to Meinong, and of what can only be objectively seen as subsequent knee-jerk reaction Meinong-bashing, insofar as it relies on a misplaced allegiance to Russell's authority later in the century, as the essential background against which so much of contemporary suspicion of Meinongian logic must be understood.[3]

17.2 Up from Extensionalism

The first thing I must confess is my defiance of some of the main presuppositions of extensionalist philosophy. I have resisted what I take to be the stranglehold of referential extensionalism, represented by orthodox formal symbolic logic and semantics, on the philosophical imagination.

With growing numbers, I continue to do my part to overturn and break the grip of this stultifying paradigm of exact philosophy. I suggest that Meinongian logic not only deserves an equal hearing alongside, but is actually preferable to, classical referential existence-presuppositional extensionalist logic and semantics. Accordingly, in what follows, I argue that classical logic in conception is essentially incomplete. The heart of my critique, and of my Meinongian predilections, is that extensional quantifier semantics embodies an untenable bias in favor of actually and abstractly existent entities, and as such needs to be embedded in a more comprehensive nonclassical intensional Meinongian logic in order to provide a general semantics in which reference and true predication of properties is possible to beingless as well as existent spatiotemporal and abstract intended objects. In some ways, this conclusion has since become my starting place in philosophical logic. However, it is not the assumption with which I began my work in logic and philosophy.

I became interested in Meinongian logic and semantics as a student in philosophy of science. My project was to formalize the logic of ontological commitments of distinct scientific theories. From a historical and philosophical perspective, I was dissatisfied with efforts to understand the ontological commitments of scientific theories exclusively in terms of true, successful, or currently fashionable science. Like many undergraduates of my generation, I had been exposed during my formative years to Thomas Kuhn's sociological interpretation of scientific theory change in his powerful 1962 manifesto, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.[4] From Kuhn, I acquired an expansive appreciation of science in its cultural context, that included false science as equally meaningful in principle as any science judged true, and hence as equally in need of having its ontological commitments correctly interpreted in an adequate philosophical semantics. Scientists who happen to get things wrong attach as much positive meaning to their investigations as scientists currently believed to have gotten things right. I could therefore never accept a

[3] I discuss the problem with examples below and in Jacquette 1996b. The phenomenon has been lamented by several Meinong scholars.

[4] Kuhn 1962.

semantics of ontological commitment that did not do justice to the meaning of false as well as true scientific theories.

To mention just a few examples, I was prepared to take seriously, though not as scientifically true or correct, the ontological commitments of scientists or protoscientists who falsely hypothesized the existence of vortices, phlogiston, the planet Vulcan, or the philosopher's stone. I was equally willing to countenance idealized but no less nonexistent objects in orthodox science, such as the ideal gas, the perfectly rigid fulcrum, the projectile unimpeded by impressed forces, the frictionless surface, and many others besides. I was unwilling, except in light of a genuinely enlightening reductive analysis, to accept an account of such theories as ontologically committed to anything other than the objects to which they ostensibly refer. A theory of vortices, I continue unrepentantly to believe, is ontologically committed to the existence of vortices, even though contemporary science teaches that in reality vortices do not exist. A theory of phlogiston is similarly ontologically committed to the existence of phlogiston, even though there exists no such thing as phlogiston. These attributions are essential to understanding why theories of vortices and phlogiston are false, because they are in fact ontologically committed in their several theories to the existence of something that does not actually exist. The thing that those theories say exists that does not actually exist can only be meaningfully said either to exist or not to exist in an ontically neutral referential and predicational semantic framework such as the extraontology Meinong's object theory affords.

At the time I began thinking about these problems, the Bible for every student of ontological commitment was Quine's landmark essay, 'On What There Is', and his indispensable 1960 book, *Word and Object*.[5] I ate, drank, and slept with these valuable sources, although I finally found Quine's conclusions unsatisfactory. It was not that I was unwilling to distinguish between surface grammar and underlying logical structure in the way that Quine's paraphrastic analyses require. I had assimilated such expectations in all my prior training in analytic philosophy. The distinction was familiar to me also as a special application of Parmenides' detachment of appearance from reality. It is a fundamental metaphysical difference that I could accept with Aristotle as marking the beginnings of metaphysics. Russell had enshrined the distinction as vital to logic and philosophical semantics in his theory of definite descriptions. Wittgenstein, sharply critical of many aspects of Russell's philosophy, acknowledges the importance of Russell's appearance-reality distinction in logical analysis in words with which I fully concur, when in *Tractatus* 4.0031, he states: 'Russell's merit is to have shown that the apparent logical form of the proposition need not be its real form.'[6]

The same could be said of Quine's theory of ontological commitment. That, for me, was not the problem, although I suppose that I prefer whenever and to whatever extent possible to make logical analysis agree with the surface grammar of ordinary thought and discourse. I would have been grateful for any analysis of a problematic construction, however distant from its apparent logical form, if I thought the

[5] Quine 1953. Quine 1960, 233–76.

[6] Wittgenstein 1922.

philosophical issues were serious enough, and the analysis really solved the difficulties for the sake of which it was introduced. In the case of ontological commitment, the importance of an adequate analysis was never in doubt. The sticking point was whether Quine had correctly interpreted the ontological commitments specifically of false theories ostensibly committed to the existence of objects that in fact do not exist. I had no trouble accepting Quine's thesis that 'To be is to be the value of a bound variable', when applied to true scientific theories that proclaimed the existence of entities that luckily enough happened to exist. These seemed to be Quine's model for the theory of ontological commitment as a whole, and that was just the problem. The analysis to my mind simply did not work when applied to false theories that wrongly declare the existence of things that do not actually exist.

To identify the inadequacy requires turning to the underlying extensionalist existence-presuppositional semantics of Quine's logic. It is one thing to say that a false theory of vortices is ontologically committed to the existence of whatever entities must be assumed as the values of the bound variables of quantifiers in order for its sentences ostensibly about vortices to be true. The sentence, 'There are vortices', can obviously be translated into a canonical logical notation as $\exists xVx$, from which Quine concludes that the theory is committed to the existence of the values of the bound variable, to whatever objects have property V. It is quite another thing to carry the analysis one step further and ask what happens in an extensional semantics like Quine's when there are no existent objects with property V, or when the subdomain of existent values of the bound variable for the predicate in question is null. Does this mean that the theory of vortices is not committed to the existence of anything, on the grounds that there are no existent values of the bound variables in formalizations of the theory's propositions? Quine rightly cautions his readers not to confuse what *exists* with what a theory *says* exists. How, then, does Quine's extensionalist semantics interpret his conclusion that the theory of vortices is committed to the values of the existentially bound variable in $\exists xVx$, when the extension of predicate 'V' is altogether empty?

This was my question. I discovered confirmation for my misgivings in an even more poignant version of the criticism independently offered by Richard L. Cartwright in his 1954 essay, 'Ontology and the Theory of Meaning', Noam Chomsky and Israel Scheffler in their jointly authored 1958 article, 'What is Said to Be', and Michael Jubien, in what was then his more recently published 1972 paper, 'The Intensionality of Ontological Commitment'.[7] The task in all three of these challenges was to compare the ontological commitments of more than one false theory according to Quine's analysis. If a false theory of vortices and a false theory of phlogiston are contrasted, then intuitively their ontological commitments ought to be different. One is ontically committed to the existence of vortices, and another to the existence of phlogiston, which, according to their respectively false theories, are supposed to be very different kinds of things. The trouble is that the extensions of the predicates 'V' for 'vortice' and 'P' for phlogiston are indistinguishably empty. There are no vortices and there is no phlogiston. When we take Quine's analysis one necessary step further, by trying to interpret the ontological commitments of canonical statements of theories according

[7] Cartwright 1954. Chomsky and Scheffler 1958. Jubien 1972.

to Quine's extensionalist semantics, we see that there is no immediate referentially extensional basis for regarding the theories as ontologically committed to the existence of different intended objects.

The authors consider and ultimately reject three possibilities. (1) The theories are ontologically committed to the extensions of the predicates in their characteristic propositions; which is to say that they have no ontological commitments, because the extensions of the predicates in question are null. (2) The theories, by virtue for different reasons of being false, are alike ontologically committed to the universal set; the reasoning here is that in classical logic a false sentence by the paradoxes of material implication, *ex falso quodlibet*, materially implies the truth of any and every sentence, thereby inheriting the extensions of all such sentences as their respective ontological commitment sets. (3) The theories by stipulation are ontologically committed to specially designated distinct existent objects that are not to be found in the extensions of their characteristic predicates. There are comparative advantages to be discerned in the three approaches, although none is intuitively satisfactory. A theory of vortices is different from a theory of phlogiston, even though both are false, and should therefore have different ontological commitments to different nonexistent things. This desideratum for an intuitively adequate account of ontological commitment is contradicted by analyses (1) and (2). Analysis (3) attributes distinct ontological commitments to the theories, and is preferable in that regard, but implausibly commits the theories to different exististent entities. After all, if the theories are ontologically committed to existent entities, then to that extent at least they ought to be judged true rather than false.[8]

Jubien goes beyond the deadlock. He acknowledges the intensionality of ontological commitment in light of the failure of an existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist semantics adequately to account for manifest differences in the ontological commitments of false theories. He tries to solve the problem in Quinean fashion by proposing a *semantic ascent* that analyzes such false theories as ontologically committed to whichever of their predicates have null extension. By Jubien's solution, the theory of vortices is ontologically committed to the existence of the predicate 'vortice' (and its cognates), and the theory of phlogiston is ontologically committed to the existence of the predicate 'phlogiston' (and its cognates). I find this approach equally unsatisfactory, despite its ability to distinguish between the intuitively distinct ontological commitments of intuitively distinct false scientific theories or historical narratives and explanations. The difficulty is that the *predicates* in question exist anyway, as linguistic entities, even if there are no corresponding existent entities in their extensions. A theory ontologically committed to the existence of one of its predicates should turn out to be true rather than false, contrary to what we believe about the false theory of vortices and the false theory of phlogiston. As a result, I was equally unhappy with Jubien's

[8] The theories of vortices and phlogiston are not ontologically committed to something that exists, but to things or kinds of things that do *not* exist. That is *why* the theories are *false*. The main problem with analysis (3) is that by assigning an existent object to their ontological commitment classes, it does not allow these theories to be false. Note that true ontological commitment by itself is not enough to make a theory true, since the theory might say something false about those entities.

solution, despite his clarifying the problem in an interesting way. The issue for me remained one of properly identifying the ontological commitments of true and false theories indifferently by the same standard, and following a semantic method that was neutral with respect to a theory's contingent truth or falsehood. I could not agree that a theory of vortices is ontologically committed to the existence of a linguistic entity, such as the predicate 'vortice', and not to its ostensible object, the vortices themselves, which happen not to exist.[9]

The moral was relatively clear, although at the time I did not know whether or how the problem could best be solved. I only knew that whatever analysis might prove more satisfactory, I could not agree with a referentially extensionalist existence-presuppositional logic and semantics, because I could not accept a referentially extensionalist theory of ontological commitment for scientific idealizations and false scientific theories, and the equivalent in history and other fact reporting and interpreting. If a (true) theory of combustion was ontologically committed to the existence of oxygen, then a (false) theory of combustion should equally be ontologically committed to the existence of phlogiston. The logic and semantics of ontological commitment, as I conceived it then and continue to think of it today, must be indifferent to the truth or falsehood of the theories whose ontological commitments it interprets, as it is to the ontic status of a theory's intended objects. I was awakened from my extensionalist dogmatic slumbers by Cartwright, Chomsky, Scheffler, and Jubien, together with my own reflections, but I had not yet made sufficient acquaintance with Meinong or his teacher Brentano and the tradition of early Austrian intentionalism and phenomenology as the philosophical basis for a nonclassical intensional logic.

17.3 My Life as a Meinongian

I had known about Meinong's philosophy primarily through Russell's 1905a anti-Meinongian essay, 'On Denoting', to a lesser extent, his more sympathetic 1904 exposition, 'Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions', and his 1905b and 1907 critical reviews of Meinong's books, *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie* and *Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften*.[10] Like many critics of Meinong who accepted Russell's objections at face value, I had not yet tried to study Meinong's philosophy in its original sources. Since these reflections are meant to be confessional, perhaps I should take the opportunity to admit my schoolboy folly of thinking that Meinong from the

[9] Jubien 1972, 384–5. Jubien's intensional analysis of ontological commitment is no more satisfactory than the extensional theories he criticizes. It seems just as wrong to answer the question what thing or kind of thing a theory about unicorns is ontologically committed to by saying that an ontological commitment relation relates the theory to linguistic entities or bits of language like the word 'phlogiston', or expressions in which the non-(existent object)-designating term or extensionless predicate 'phlogiston' essentially occurs.

[10] Russell 1905a. Russell 1904, 204–19. Russell 1905b. Russell 1907.

sound of his name was Chinese, and wondering at the time why he should have written in German. It was not until years later that I was reminded of my error when I encountered the famous quip of one of Ryle's students, concerning Ryle's sparsely attended Oxford University seminar on 'Bolzano, Brentano, Meinong and Husserl: Four Austrian Realists', that the lectures might otherwise be called, 'Ryle's three Austrian railway stations and one Chinese game of chance'.[11]

I was propelled toward Meinong as a counterfoil to Russell and Quine's semantic extensionalism. Meinong had said what I so desperately wanted to hear, that when we appear to think about objects that do not exist, we are really thinking *about* them, that we are directed in thought and in the expressions of thought toward *them*, regardless of their ontic status, and that when we appear to attribute properties to these objects, the objects in question really have these properties. This, for me, was a liberating revelation. I had heard Terence Parsons lecture on Meinongian objects at Temple University in Philadelphia in 1976, from material associated with his essays on Meinongian semantics that would later culminate in his 1980 book, *Nonexistent Objects*. Parsons's presentation made an impact on my thinking about the problems of ontological commitment by reminding me of Meinong's theory of meaning with its promise of a radically different approach to the problems of reference, predication, and ontological commitment. I began to agree that Meinongian object theory could stand four-square with referentially extensionalist logic and semantics as a preferable alternative.[12]

I was fortunate thereafter to begin graduate studies with Roderick M. Chisholm, having applied specifically to study Meinong and the Graz School with him at Brown University. Chisholm seldom mentioned Meinong, or any other historical figures in his seminars on philosophical concepts, where as a rule he developed philosophical analyses addressing particular problems in the form of connected series of definitions. While to the best of my ability I assimilated Chisholm's style of doing analytic philosophy, I was left to my own devices in reconstructing the historical background and philosophical milieu in which Meinong's object theory had flourished. I warmly recall Chisholm giving me offprints of his essays, 'Meinong-Gedenkschrift', 'Beyond Being and Non-Being', 'Homeless Objects', and 'Thought and its Reference'.[13] I also obtained Chisholm's valuable anthology, *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*, with its translations from Brentano and Meinong, and, as I was completing my thesis, his *Brentano and Meinong Studies* appeared.[14] Chisholm also directed me to Findlay's remarkable commentary on *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values* and Richard Routley's *Exploring Meinong's Jungle and Beyond*.[15] It was not until I had completed several

[11] See Lyons 1980, 3. The same item of philosophical folklore is variously reported in the oral tradition surrounding Ryle's remark about Meinong.

[12] Parsons 1980.

[13] Chisholm 1954, 1972, 1973, 1977.

[14] Chisholm, ed. 1960, 71–117. Chisholm 1982a.

[15] Findlay 1995.

chapters of my dissertation on Meinong's semantics, however, that I was able to coax from Chisholm any substantive remarks about the significance of the Graz School, or Meinong's work in phenomenology, experimental psychology, philosophical semantics, value theory, and the potential contributions of *Gegenstandstheorie* to contemporary analytic philosophy.

My German was good enough at the time for most of Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein, but was overwhelmed especially by Meinong's later tortured philosophical prose. I worked slowly and painfully through the eight volumes of the *Alexius Meinong Gesamtausgabe*, an experience that made me doubt whether his writings had not after all been translated into German from Chinese. I was committed to understanding Meinong from the standpoint of firsthand acquaintance with his original sources, despite the difficulties. I was certain, after getting an initial grasp of the principles of his object theory, that he had been seriously misinterpreted and unjustly dismissed by the majority of analytic philosophers, who, moreover, had not troubled, as they would in the case of virtually any other thinker, to read carefully what Meinong had written and judge its merits independently for themselves, instead of relying on Russell's often mistargeted polemics. In this exegetical research, I was partly rewarded and partly frustrated. What I found was not so much a completed Meinongian system as a record of false starts and revisions, working toward a theory that was only to some extent refined in Meinong's lifetime to the point of constituting a cohesive philosophy. It was the project itself that Meinong had envisioned and in only some aspects successfully undertaken, rather than an accomplished set of conclusions, that I found attractive. Here was a philosopher who, without having struggled with Quine's extensionalist criterion, but beginning from a naive phenomenological starting place in Brentano's thesis of intentionality as the distinguishing mark of the mental, had outlined some of the main principles of precisely the sort of nonextensionalist theory of meaning that I had dimly seen was needed for an intuitively satisfactory analysis of ontological commitment.

17.4 Laboring in the Meinongian Vineyard

The trouble was that Meinong's multiple formulations and reformulations of the object theory required careful selection and restatement. For me, this was also part of the project's appeal. It was not just a matter of becoming a follower of another philosopher's insights, but of joining in an uncompleted project whose inspiration I found compatible with my own perspective. The challenge was to carry things forward in a similar Meinongian vein, using different methods and addressing a different set of problems.

Following Parsons, and other nouveau Meinongians, I wanted to formalize a version of Meinong's object theory by applying the resources of modern mathematical logic. The more progress I made, the more convinced I became that Meinong's philosophy offered the basis for a preferred system of logic and general theory of meaning. The advantages of a Meinongian logic thereby began to exceed my original goal of providing a more adequate account of ontological commitment than Quine's referentially extensionalist criterion. A Meinongian logic holds out the prospect of

making logic ontologically neutral in areas where classical existence-presuppositional logics are limited by the domain of whatever entities happen to exist. To hold, as in standard logic, for example, that $\forall x[Fx \rightarrow Fx]$ can be true or false, depending on whether or not there exists an F, still strikes me as absurd. Why should it matter to logic whether or not in fact there exists an F in order for the proposition to express a tautology? How is logic supposed to know? The principle that $\forall x[Fx \rightarrow Fx]$, if true, ought to be generally true, regardless of the actual state of the world, and of whether any existent intended objects happen to have property F.

Logic must transcend the facts of existence, if it is to apply to all reasoning from true and false assumptions. As such, logic should take no notice of the way things happen to be in any particular logically possible world. A classical extensional logic, by virtue of interpreting quantifiers as ranging over existent objects only, is unduly limited in its bias toward the actual world. Such a logic, despite being the most popular, well-entrenched logic in conventional analytic philosophy, in my increasing estimation was altogether disqualified as a fully general logic, or, indeed, as I am also prepared to say, more simply, as a *logic*. The same problem affects other mainstays of classical extensional existence-presuppositional logic. If nothing whatsoever exists, there should still be valid principles of logic.

What is classical extensionalist logic required to say about certain quantifications? Although the proposition, $\forall x[Fx \rightarrow Gx]$, is true if nothing exists, and hence no F's exist, it follows paradoxically in a referentially extensionalist logic, despite the assumption that nothing exists, that something exists which is conditionally such that, if it is F, then it is G, $\exists x[Fx \rightarrow Gx]$. The same problem arises for quantifier duality, when, if it is true that $\neg\forall xFx$, because nothing has property F, then it does not necessarily follow that $\exists x\neg Fx$, unless at least one non-F entity happens to exist. Why should this be true? Can pure *logic* dictate that anything exists? Are such truths not rather the burden of metaphysics and empirical science to determine? To this day, I do not see how any ontically partisan logic can be correct. To adapt Meinong's slogan, extensionalist existence-presuppositional logic suffers from an intolerable 'prejudice in favor of the actual' ('*Das Vorurteil zugunsten des Wirklichen*').[16] It is as much for reasons of developing a general logic that could be ontically neutral and metaphysically agnostic, as for the sake of advancing an adequate theory of ontological commitment, that I have wanted to explore the possibilities of Meinong's category of *Außersein* in a nonclassical non-existence-presuppositional neo-Meinongian logic.

The problem, I came to see, is not with quantifiers or quantifier duality as such, but rather with the standard existensionalist existence-presuppositional interpretation of the quantifiers. I had no difficulty accepting $\forall xFx \vdash \exists xFx$, provided that the so-called 'existential' quantifier was not understood to have real existential import. The existential quantifier in a Meinongian context signifies only that an existent *or* nonexistent Meinongian object is included in the Meinongian referential semantic domain. It is necessary first of all to reinterpret the existential quantifier, so that it says in effect only, 'There occurs within the ontically neutral referential semantic domain an object such

[16] Meinong 1904a; *AMG* II, 485.

that. . .etc.', and not 'There exists an object such that. . .etc.' The distinction makes it necessary to introduce a special extraconstitutive (XC) existence predicate, such as '*E*!', to predicate existence of an object, rather than relying on the existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist interpretation of the existential quantifier. The proposed expansion of the usual notation enables symbolic logic to formulate one of the key assumptions of Meinong's object theory, that 'There are objects of which it is true to say that there are no such objects — *es gibt Gegenstände, von denen gilt, daß es dergleichen Gegenstände nicht gibt*', by the intuitively meaningful but classically extensionally self-contradictory formulation, $\exists x \neg E!x$.[17] It is also necessary, which I see as a distinct advantage, to abandon Quine's bound variable criterion of ontological commitment. In ontically neutral Meinongian logic, the true statement that $\exists xFx$ does not validly imply that $\exists x[E!x \wedge Fx]$. As a result, ontological commitment must be established on the basis of a canonical Meinongian formalization of a theory's propositions as involving an explicit existence predicate, rather than the existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist interpretation of the 'existential' quantifier.

An important advantage of Meinongian logic is its principle of the independence of so-being or *Sosein* from being or *Sein*. Meinong holds that an intended object has the properties predicated of it regardless of its ontological status. An object's *Sosein* is logically independent of its *Sein* or *Nichtsein*. The objects themselves enter into the Meinongian semantic domain as whatever can be thought of, whatever can be intended by thought. This is the characteristically Meinongian thesis of the unrestricted freedom of assumption, or *unbeschränkten Annahmefreiheit*, which we have learned is only relatively unrestricted, restricted on principle after all. The idea is that we as thinkers are otherwise free to assume anything we like, and that thought, true or false, in its consideration of actual, possible, and even impossible objects, is unlimited by what actually happens to exist. In my efforts to work out a Meinongian logic, my uncompromising loyalty has been to Meinong's concept of unrestricted free assumption. I regard the thesis as phenomenologically undeniable, essential to the possibility of an ontologically neutral logic, and the ideational basis for an account of action as based on the intending of previously nonexistent states of affairs, the decision-related intended states of affairs that we want to bring about, as the psychological and semantic foundation of all human creativity.[18]

That we are free in thought to assume whatever we like, unhindered by the facts of the world, is one of the most profound insights of Meinong's philosophy. It is also potentially the source of logical paradoxes, some of which were already known to Meinong, but not necessarily adequately resolved in his statement of object theory. If thought is free to assume whatever it likes, and if intended objects have the properties predicated of them in thought, then it may appear that we can intend not only such objects as the round square, but, as we have seen in previous discussion of Russell's problem, an existent golden mountain and existent round square. Since the round square by virtue of its relevantly predicationally incomplete

[17] *AMG* II, 485.

[18] *AMG* II, 485 and *passim*.

and impossible so-being cannot exist, the existent round square seems to entangle Meinong's theory of meaning in outright logical contradiction. The solution to the problem, which Meinong regrettably garbles in his own efforts to satisfy conflicting intuitions in the matter, is to enforce the Meinongian distinction between two categories of properties, constitutive and extraconstitutive. By this distinction, between identity-determining properties with no implications for an object's ontic status, and non-identity-determining properties that attribute ontic status to an object, Meinong need not further curb the ideally unrestricted freedom of assumption in order to avoid blatant object theory contradictions. Meinong can say instead, as indeed he sometimes insists, that an object's so-being consists only of constitutive properties, and whatever extraconstitutive properties supervene on the intended object's totality of distinguishing constitutive properties. An object with an incomplete or impossible so-being like the golden mountain or round square is beingless, while an object with a complete so-being of metaphysically compatible constitutive properties like the Alhambra as a dynamic actual physical entity, or the irrational computable real number π exists as an abstract mathematical entity. The version of Meinongian logic I develop (Jacquette 1996a) depends essentially on the unrestricted freedom of assumption, the independence of so-being from being, and the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties.

There are other differences between classical and Meinongian logic to which I began to grow accustomed. It is necessary in a Meinongian formalism to distinguish between internal and external negation, or between propositional negation and predicate complementation, in order to prevent the freely assumed Meinongian round square, which is bad enough as a nonexistent impossible intended object, by virtue of being both round and non-round, square and non-square, from also being both round and such that it is not the case that it is round, or square and such that it is not the case that it is square. The distinction has been independently recommended even by several classical logicians, and it is one that I came to see as essential to preserve logical consistency in Meinongian logic. For similar reasons, although not all Meinongians agree, I have also found it most appropriate to cast Meinongian logic in a nonclassical propositional framework of three-valued or gap logic, for the sake of interpreting propositions involving constitutive properties and their complements, in which some beingless objects are incomplete, as neither true nor false. A Meinongian logic also needs a non-Russellian theory of definite description, while many other Meinongian counterparts of classical formal symbolic apparatus need to be adapted from referentially extensional to an intensional Meinongian logic and semantics.

Unrestricted freedom of assumption is a powerful comprehension principle for a logic ungoverned by existence constraints. I have symbolized the Meinongian referential semantic domain δ as: $\exists\delta\forall F\forall x[x \in \delta \leftrightarrow Fx]$.[19] The diagonal paradoxes that can arise from comprehension via free assumption consequently need to be addressed in a new way, because it is not in the spirit of Meinongian logic, as in Whitehead and

[19] I discuss the comprehension principle for a Meinongian semantic domain in Jacquette 1996a, 106–7, 126, 189–90. See also Jacquette 1995d; and Forthcoming.a.

Russell's solution, to stratify syntax terms into an ordered hierarchy of types. Anything that can be thought of is a Meinongian intended object, all of which, considered only as such, are logically on a par. This makes it imperative to impose restrictions of another kind elsewhere within the system, as I have proposed to do by limiting abstraction equivalence conditionally to existent abstract properties, while branding such properties as being the round square as nonexistent, if they entail any constitutive property predicational inconsistencies. A variety of categories of Meinongian objects need to be formally defined within the logic, including existent, nonexistent, impossible, incomplete, maximally impossible, among other types of intended objects. I thought it worthwhile to undertake consistency, completeness, and compactness metaproofs of Meinongian logic, in order to understand its scope and limitations, and to provide a formal basis for its exact comparison with classical logics. It is meant to be an important consequence of my brand of Meinongian logic that all of classical extensionalist logic is properly embedded in the more comprehensive intensionalist Meinongian system. It is provable that the fragment of Meinongian logic involving only extraconstitutive predications is classically bivalent.[20]

I was quite far along in my formalization of Meinong's object theory in 1981, when Richard (later Sylvan) Routley's monumental *Exploring Meinong's Jungle and Beyond* appeared.[21] I had known about Routley's work in free logic and Meinongian semantics from precursor articles, including a series of papers he had written with his then wife Valerie Routley, and other coauthors.[22] I cannot say whether it would have been worse for Routley's book to have been published, as in fact it was, just as I was finishing my dissertation, or if it had come on the scene when it would have been too late for me to take it into account. In the event, I was able to offer my reactions to Routley's work, as an essential part of my early research, which I still regard as my main sustaining inspiration, and as one of the most faithful contemporary logical formulations of Meinong's object theory, in a thoroughly rigorous consideration of its motivations and applications.[23]

[20] See Jacquette 1996a, 111, 121, 177–8.

[21] Routley 1980.

[22] See, *inter alia*, Routley 1966, 1969a, b, 1976, 1979; Routley and Routley 1973.

[23] The major points of my agreement with Routley's exposition of Meinongian logic in his noneist theory of items include the importance he places on the freedom of assumption, the need to distinguish between external and internal negation or propositional negation and predicate complementation, the need to recognize Meinong's distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive, the necessity for a three-valued or gap semantics in order to provide the propositional semantics for predications of constitutive properties and their complements, for which some beingless Meinongian objects are incomplete, and the reliance on the distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties in order to solve Russell's problem of the existent round square, instead of Meinong's theory of the modal moment and the watering down of extranuclear properties to freely predicable nuclear counterparts, lacking the modal moment. See Jacquette 1996a, 80–91; 1985–1986.

17.5 Road Less Traveled

I entered the fray of ongoing disputes about Meinongian logic with somewhat, but only somewhat, open eyes. I knew about the legendary misunderstandings of Meinong's object theory. The extent to which philosophers have negatively prejudged the prospects of a Meinongian analysis of reference, predication, inference, and ontological commitment, nevertheless continues to surprise and dismay. In what follows, I shall not subject the reader to a rogues gallery of anti-Meinongians, but mention only a few conspicuous cases that are representative of the hostility to Meinong's philosophy that persists even today, in shocking ignorance of Meinong's down-to-earth philosophical insights.

If a scientific analogy is desired, being a Meinongian in philosophical logic and semantics in recent times has been rather like being a Lamarckian in evolutionary biology. Lamarck erred when he conjectured that species evolve by passing along individually historically acquired traits genetically thereafter to their offspring. The giraffe does not have a long neck because successive ancestors stretched their necks a little farther in each generation to nibble at the most delicious leaves that were otherwise just out of reach. We are all similarly supposed to know, as referential extensionalism teaches, and Ryle's epigraph reinforces, that Meinong erred even more disastrously when he argued that in thought and language we can refer and truly predicate properties to any ostensibly intended objects, regardless of their ontic status as existent or nonexistent. According to extensionalism, we *cannot* refer to Meinongian objects or say true things about their constitutive properties. Why? Because they do not exist! It is in just such confrontations that the underlying presuppositions of Meinongian fellow travelers and anti-Meinongians collide.

The vilifying of Meinong in the philosophical literature is widespread, and quite unusual when compared with the work of other philosophers. There are few philosophical theses that philosophers are sufficiently confident have been so definitively proven false that they can attack them at will by label and slogan without taking the trouble to study them. The level of uninformed criticism that pervades commentary on Meinong's philosophy is in my judgment about the lowest in the industry. Unknowing misstatements of Meinong's ideas are rife in popular dismissals of what everyone supposedly already knows is a hopeless starting place for philosophical logic and semantics. The problem goes back to Russell, who, remarkably enough, as we have seen, was at first an enthusiastic advocate of Meinong's intensionalist semantics. After Russell turned away from Meinong's beingless objects, the power of his analysis of definite descriptions in 'On Denoting', and the authority of his polemics against Meinongian logic as internally logically contradictory, quickly defamed Meinong's object theory as the Lamarckism of semantic philosophy.

As a prime example of the type of misinformed Meinong denunciation frequently encountered, consider the following statement from an introductory undergraduate informal logic and critical reasoning source. Harry J. Gensler writes, in his 1989 *Logic: Analyzing and Appraising Arguments*:

> 'The round square does not exist' is a true statement about the round square.
> If there is a true statement about something then that something has to exist.

> ∴ The round square exists.
> But the round square isn't a real thing.
> ∴ Some things that exist aren't real things.
> [A philosopher named Meinong argued in this way that the realm of *existing* things extends much further than just the realm of *real* things. Russell was convinced of this view for a while. Later, Russell came to see the view as foolish and tried to expose the error of the reasoning by using his theory of descriptions.][24]

To anyone familiar with Meinong's object theory, it will scarcely be necessary to remark the falsehoods in this caricature aimed at impressionable young minds. Where is Meinong supposed to have said that 'If there is a true statement about something then that something has to exist'? This is a useful place to begin setting the record straight:

1. Meinong nowhere offers such an inference.
2. The inference is unsound in Meinong's object theory. Far from accepting the damning assumption that 'If there is a true statement about something then that something has to exist', in effect, Russell's being-predication thesis, Meinong repeatedly and emphatically says just the opposite. The major innovation of Meinong's object theory is to maintain the possibility of referring to and truly predicating properties of altogether *beingless*, nonexistent intended objects.
3. Meinong does not hold that 'the realm of *existing* things extends much further than just the realm of *real* things', but in fact maintains just the opposite. Meinong insists that spatiotemporal existence is a subcategory along with abstract Platonic subsistence in the realm of being for real things, existent intended objects.
4. Russell did not try 'to expose the error of the reasoning by using his theory of descriptions', as Gensler alleges. It is not even clear what it would mean to 'expose' an error in a contrary theory merely by 'using' or developing and applying a theory that simply disagrees with it, concerning the same or similar set of problems.
5. What Russell does in 'On Denoting' is to formulate a logical analysis of definite descriptions that offers an alternative interpretation of ordinary language expressions contradicting Meinong's object theory. Russell prefers and presumably hopes that the reader will prefer his extensionalist account over Meinong's, so that Meinong's object theory will be rejected. However, he does nothing to disprove Meinong's object theory by propounding his theory of definite descriptions. He offers reasons to accept his existence-presuppositional referentially extensionalist approach, embodied in the theory of definite descriptions, startkly opposed to Meinong's semantics, on the basis of its solution to difficulties involving three categories of logically ambiguous expressions.

Russell does not prove against Meinong that it is false that we can refer and truly predicate properties to nonexistent intended objects. On the contrary, Russell, in arguing for his theory of definite descriptions, explicitly rejects Meinong's

[24] Gensler 1989, 220.

semantics, on the grounds that he believes the theory violates the law of noncontradiction in the case of some nonexistent objects.

This is at first a weighty objection, but one that Meinongians have shown to be inconclusive when Meinong's distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties, and the distinction between external and internal negation or propositional negation and predicate complementation, are judiciously applied. The problem of the existent present King of France as both existent and nonexistent is avoided if extraconstitutive properties like being existent or nonexistent are not covered by Meinong's thesis of the independence of so-being from being. The problem of the round square being both round and not the case that it is round is avoided if we distinguish between the internal negation or predicate complementation of the round square being round and not round or non-round, and the external or propositional negation of the round square being round and it not being the case that the round square is round. Meinong's theory as a whole would be jeopardized if any nonexistent objects were involved in logical contradictions. Russell does not try to show that there is any logical difficulty entailed by predications of properties to incomplete as opposed to impossible objects, and as such seems to have no objection to referring and truly predicating constitutive properties of nonexistent Meinongian objects. There is no contradiction, as far as anything Russell says in his theory of definite descriptions, in referring to and truly attributing the property of being golden to the golden mountain.[25]

When we take into account the fact that such a primer is likely to be an undergraduate student's first and in too many instances only encounter with Meinong's philosophy, it is easy to conclude that, multiplied by as many faux authoritative pronouncements against Meinong, a climate of philosophical nonreceptivity is cultivated from the first exposure that otherwise open-minded young thinkers must have toward Meinong's thought. Here is another manifestation of the prejudice in favor of the actual. Who would want to take even the first step with Meinong down such an unpromising path, when his approach to logic and the theory of meaning is made to appear so ridiculous? Who, more importantly, would waste time reading Meinong or trying to master his complex terminology, if the

[25] Russell's objections in 1905a are concerned primarily with the claim that Meinong's object theory may violate the law of noncontradiction. Russell writes, 1905a, 482–3: 'Of the possible theories which admit such constituents [denoted by denoting phrases in propositions] the simplest is that of Meinong. This theory regards any grammatically correct denoting phrase as standing for an *object*. Thus 'the present King of France,' 'the round square', etc., are supposed to be genuine objects. It is admitted that such objects do not *subsist*, but nevertheless they are supposed to be objects. This is in itself a difficult view; but the chief objection is that such objects, admittedly, are apt to infringe the law of contradiction. It is contended, for example, that the existent present King of France exists, and also does not exist; that the round square is round, and also not round, etc. But this is intolerable; and if any theory can be found to avoid this result, it is surely to be preferred.' Also 491: 'This [Hugh MacColl's definition of 'the null class as consisting of all unreal individuals'] assumes that such phrases as 'the present King of France', which do not denote a real individual, do, nevertheless, denote an individual, but an unreal one. This is essentially Meinong's theory, which we have seen reason to reject because it conflicts with the law of contradiction.'

theory finally comes down to the absurd claims attributed to it by critics as well respected as Russell, or as quick to judge as Gensler? Is it any wonder, then, that even Ryle, who had read Meinong carefully and at least somewhat sympathetically, and ventured to teach a seminar on his work among that of other Austrian realists, should have announced the irrecoverable demise of Meinong's object theory, when in his essay, 'Intentionality-Theory and the Nature of Thinking', he offered his previously quoted famous last words, describing Meinong's object theory as: '. . .dead, buried and not going to be resurrected.'[26]

To see that philosophical misinterpretations of Meinong's object theory have disseminated even into the realm of academic fiction, consider the following passage from Bruce Duffy's amusing, even brilliant, but not always historically reliable philosophical novel about Russell, Wittgenstein, and the Cambridge intellectual scene, *The World as I Found It*:

> As I said, the problem here is of denoting statements that have a sense but no reference: you can't point to the present king of France in the way you can the king. The problem, then, is how a nonexistent thing or person can be the subject of a true or at least grammatically orthodox proposition. And you see, this curiosity can easily lead to metaphysical misadventures. Thus we had Meinong arguing that because we can say 'the round square does not exist,' there must be such an object as the round square, but that it must be a nonexistent object, dwelling, one must suppose, in that Platonic realm where nonexistent kings confer with round squares.[27]

Contrary to so many false accusations, Meinong, as previously emphasized, did not plant a jungle in the sense of inflating the ontology of logic with metaphysically objectionable existent entities. Rather, he supplemented the standard extensionalist ontology of existent spatiotemporal and subsistent abstract objects with an ontically neutral extraontological semantic domain of beingless incomplete and impossible objects.

Whether, in doing so, Meinong violated the injunction of Ockham's razor against multiplying entities beyond necessity depends on how this metatheoretical economy principle is interpreted. If the razor is narrowly understood as concerning only the number of *existent entities* a theory posits, then Meinong's object theory cannot be faulted for inflating the ontology with any other entities that one does not already find in any respectable extensionalist semantic referential domain. Indeed, Meinong's semantics can be adjusted so as to be even more economical than Quine's most arid desert landscape ontology, by categorizing abstract objects like sets, in a way that Meinong did not propose, as beingless rather than subsistent.[28] If, on the other hand, the razor is honed to raise difficulties about the proliferation of nonexistent intended objects in the ontically neutral extraontology of a Meinongian referential semantic domain or *Außersein*, then the question as always comes down

[26] Ryle 1973, 7.

[27] Duffy 1995 [1987], 58.

[28] I discuss the possibility of advancing a revisionary Meinongian logic that is even more austere than Quine's desert landscape ontology, by treating abstract objects as beingless, in Jacquette 1995e, 1996a, 10, 1996c.

to whether or not the beingless objects posited not as existing but only as meeting intensional Leibnizian self-identity requirements are or are not absolutely necessary for the theoretical purposes by which their inclusion in the referential semantic domain might be justified. Here, I believe, Meinong is on solid ground with respect to the philosophical motivations that induce him to posit nonexistent intended objects, as well as existent actual and abstract entities, in order to account, among other things, for the phenomenology of thought, the semantics of ordinary language, the ontological commitment of false scientific theories and idealizations, false histories and fabrications in all areas of discourse, the logic of fiction, and the philosophy of mind and theory of action.

17.6 Epilogue

What, then, have I learned? Would I have done anything differently? The project of working out a Meinongian logic and its applications continues. The climate of opposition to Meinong's beingless objects persists in analytic philosophy, and is if anything, as virulent today as 30 years ago when I became persuaded of the need for a Meinongian counterbalance to a predominantly contemporary referentially extensionalist logic and semantics. The arguments in support of Meinong's object theory by the same token have not tarnished in my estimation. That thought is intentional, directed toward intended objects, not all of which have being, and that logic must be ontically neutral in admitting reference and true and false predication of properties to any and all intended objects, regardless of their ontic status, still seem to me to be among the unassailable foundations of logic, philosophical semantics, metaphysics, ontology and extraontology. I have yet to encounter a convincing objection to these basic principles of Meinong's object theory, however they are logically regimented. In confessing my Meinongian sins, I acknowledge those venial transgressions, of which mistaken critics of Meinong's object theory would continue to accuse, backgrounded, in Francis Bacon's colorful image, against an outmoded wooden idol of the theater, but concerning which I continue to see no good cause to repent.[29]

[29] Bacon 1863, 8, Book One, Aphorism XLIV: 'Lastly, there are Idols which have immigrated into men's minds from the various dogmas of philosophies, and also from wrong laws of demonstration. These I call Idols of the Theater, because in my judgment all the received systems are but so many stage plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion.'

Chapter 18
Meinongian Dark Ages and Renaissance

18.1 Meinongian Anathema

It is customary for those on the outside of an intellectual mainstream to complain about the lack of acceptance and inability to understand why others think so differently about what seems to them obviously true. Increasingly, today, there is less need to do so and fewer occasions for apologizing about an interest in Meinong and developing a Meinongian applied logic for this or that analytic task. Meinongians can and anti-Meinongians cannot understand the possibility of naming and making reference in other ways and truly predicating constitutive properties of nonexistent objects. The intended objects, as Meinong would say, with incomplete or impossible so-beings, the same intensional property-based Leibnizian self-identity conditions that existent intended objects are expected to satisfy.

Meinongians are still sometimes wrongly portrayed as irresponsible ontologists, positing the some-kind-of existence of nonexistent objects. If Meinong had ever proposed such a thing, he would indeed deserve to be of less than historical interest. Meinong, as we have now seen from several perspectives, never dreams of any such absurdity. A critic could read Meinong to find out what he says, but life is short, and if there were anything to Meinong's thought, there would not be such general condemnation of his object theory. One actually hears such things said, and it is undeniable that phenomenological intentionalism, Meinongian or otherwise, irrespective of its defects or merits, does not seem to be the direction analytic philosophy has preferred to go. Meinong is denigrated as lacking a robust sense of reality, and his solution to the problem of the existent golden mountain and existent round square in terms of a distinction between characterizing constitutive and extraconstitutive properties deserves more serious consideration than it is usually accorded.[1]

[1] See Jacquette 2010a, 22–64.

D. Jacquette, *Alexius Meinong, The Shepherd of Non-Being*, Synthese Library 360,
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Meinong's distinction nevertheless goes back at least as far as Kant's differently designated but essentially identical distinction between 'predicates' and 'non-predicates' of the 100 gold Thalers argument, in the 'Ideal of Pure Reason' section of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. There Kant wields the distinction against the 'ontological' argument for the existence of God, specifically in Descartes and Leibniz, with Anselm, notably, not mentioned. It is astonishing the extent to which ill-wishers for Meinongianism outside the object theory fold latch onto the problem of the existent golden mountain or existent round square as dooming Meinongian logic and semantics to logical incoherence. Meinong once again tolerates no such thing, and offers the basis for excluding Russell's putative counterexamples as overlooking an essential Meinongian distinction between constitutive and extraconstitutive properties.

The final insult is when Meinongians are told that a Meinongian object theory offers all the advantages of theft over honest labor. This phrase originated with Russell, but in *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (1971 [1919], 71), he uses it in a very different context to scold unnamed persons who propose to introduce *entities* to the *ontology* merely by 'postulating' their existence. That description cannot reasonably be thought to apply to Meinong, even if Russell's barb is aimed primarily at Meinong. Meinong does not postulate the *existence* of nonexistent entities or nonexistent intended objects. He includes nonexistent objects in an ontically neutral extraontology or referential semantic subdomain of intended objects whose defining constitutive properties collectively are relevantly predicationally incomplete or impossible. Meinong philosophically facilitates a theory of meaning in which we can refer to and truly predicate constitutive (*Sosein*) properties of intended objects, like the golden mountain and round square, along with the Eiffel Tower and the Taj Mahal, regardless of their ontic status. He never proposes, hints or suggests that the golden mountain and round square in any sense *exist*, or have any type of *being*, but only that we can refer to them, name, count, quantify over, truly predicate constitutive properties of, them, etc., *despite* the fact that they do not exist. The justification for this semantic, but, significantly, not ontic largesse, is that nonexistent intended objects satisfy intensional property-based Leibnizian identity conditions with their uniquely distinctive complements of constitutive properties, just as existent intended objects do in additionally belonging to the general ontology.

18.2 Theft Over Honest Labor?

In one sense, perhaps, it is true. Meinongians do steal everything that is not nailed down in extensionalist logic and semantics. Extensionalism, except for generalized extensionalist philosophical ideology, is swallowed whole by intensionalism in comprehending its object theory referential semantic domain of existent *and* nonexistent intended objects.

There is a greater more comprehensive intensional referential semantic domain for a Meinongian logic than any existence-presuppositional classical extensionalist

logic and semantics that includes all existent and nonexistent ideally intended objects. Nonexistent as well as all existent objects, by virtue of satisfying intensional constitutive property-related identity conditions, are available theoretically for purposes of reference, naming, describing, counting, quantifying over, and the like, in thought and language, including logical and set theoretical operations, in understanding intended referential and predicational meaning in all types of propositional expression. An existence-presuppositional purely referentially extensionalist referential semantic domain, in contrast, cannot recognize distinct nonexistent intended objects individuated by their possession of distinct totalities of constitutive properties. Hard-core referential semantic extensionalism does not usually have a good reason for refusing to acknowledge or admit nonexistents to a general referential semantic domain. The future lies there, in the direction of moderation and accommodation, even for primarily extensionalist-oriented logics. There are two ways by which to define a Meinongian object theory domain. One is phenomenological, by referring to actual or potential acts of intending or projections of actual into possible intendings of objects that are thereby given entrance into the semantic domain by virtue of an existent or ideal object-intending intention. The logic then encompasses all the ontically neutral intendable objects we can ideally think about. The other comprehension principle is mathematical, in the sense of considering every distinct possible combination of constitutive properties for objects under Leibnizian self-identity principles, each distinct one of which is then correlated with a distinct nominalizable intended object. It is, effectively, as I once heard Peter Simons remark, Leibniz with the brakes off.[2]

If the theft over honest labor quip is meant to say that Meinongian referential intensionalism does not have as much work cut out for it as Fregean referential extensionalism, then the present selection of studies is meant to argue *a fortiori* against that unsupported allegation. A rise of intensionalism would not mean that logicians could not continue the serious honest labor of extensionalist logic. Many logicians may continue to feel that it is there that logic has its proper home, and that intensional objects are to be shunned and sneered at in genuine logic, except when there is no other choice. Nor should we forget that there are still logicians who prefer syllogistic reasoning over first-order symbolic logic, or Boolean algebraic logics that in turn subsume and expand upon an ancestral Aristotelian term logic. One understands the attitude. Logic wants to be rock solid, foundational even for mathematics. That means that cognitively, not necessarily politically, conservative thinkers are attracted to logic, and these thinkers like their logic classical and they like it to stay put, as developed by the subject's great founders. For the purposes classical logic serves, who could dispute its priority? That, however, does not necessarily mean that logic's referential semantic domain must consist of existent objects only. Or that its admirable starting point is its final destiny.

[2] During the introductory remarks at his presentation at the McMaster University conference, May 2005, on Russell versus Meinong: 100 Years After 'On Denoting', The Bertrand Russell Research Centre, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, May 14–18, 2005.

18.3 Meinongian Logic and the Extensionalist Alternative

If existent physical reality seems too weak even to provide interpretations and semantic domains with the abstract truth-makers of mathematical theorems, then *minima mathematica* are reluctantly countenanced. This is the Putnam-Quine indispensability argument for including some abstract entities in an otherwise austerely nominalistic referential semantic domain.

The metaphysical problems are solved, in the sense that the pressure to reconcile Platonic *abstracta* with Aristotelian primary substances as constituting the nature of reality, is relieved in the most streamlined minimalist ontology, if mathematical objects are considered as ontically neutral intended objects in the extraontology of a neo-Meinongian referential semantic domain. Abstract intended objects are thereby made available for reference and predication in mathematics, but we need not say that they must exist in order to be referred to, named, have constitutive properties truly predicated of them, counted, quantified over, and the like. Similarly for physical objects, as they enter into scientific and philosophical explanations. We have accordingly considered quantum indeterminacies at the submicroscopic level that seem to imply predicational incompletenesses among the physical foundations of physical reality. Extensionalists, on the other hand, can do nothing to prevent intensionalists from assuming that extensionalist logic is at most a proper part of a more encompassing intensionalist logic.

There are many independent reasons for choosing Meinongian object theory with a minimally modified classical syntax over a purely extensionalist existence-presuppositional logic and semantics. The logic of fiction in a Meinongian framework meshes in smooth conjunction with the logic of false science and history, and of nonexistent idealizations like the perfect fulcrum and the average salesman. That classical logic does not suit every purpose of discourse for which a logic is presupposed should not astonish. Classical logic is already supplemented with such devices as identity predicates, modal operators to express the alethic status of propositions, their necessity, possibility or contingency, among other modalities, definite descriptors, property abstraction operators, among others. The question is to which logic we should turn when we run into expressive and inferential limitations and counterintuitive consequences of assuming that the referential semantic domain for logic should consist of existent entities only.

18.4 Nonexistent Intended Objects in the Teleology of Action

What, then, do we do about the fact that we, a team of philosophers, at this moment, now intend to change a lightbulb? At the moment when we decide to change the lightbulb, our having changed the lightbulb is only a distant intended and at present nonexistent object of our collectively intending to act. It is the intended object of

our collective intention to change the lightbulb that does not yet and may never actually happen to exist. We intend to act, which is no guarantee that the intended object of our projected and as yet not undertaken action will succeed in realizing the state of affairs that the decision intends. We may be too incompetent, or there may exist no lightbulbs, or greater events may somehow intervene. However the question is answered, the same basic explanation must hold for any contemplated action, decision making, planning and implementation of actions for which agents are considered causally and morally responsible. Having accepted that actions are intentional, that they intend a future and at first nonexistent state of affairs which an agent builds resolve and resources in order to bring about by taking the first step in a loosely speaking 'rational', if not always effectual, means-to-intended-end practical reasoning chain, it follows immediately that actions via decisions to act always intend nonexistent 'Meinongian' (although we could say now with equal justice, intensional 'Leibnizian') intended objects. The lightbulb's being changed is the philosophers' collective intention, which, at the moment of intent, independently of any efforts at its realization, does not yet and may never happen to exist.

If theft over honest labor means that intensionalism avoids the complicated implausible reductions and analyses, paraphrastic involutions and other devices to get around the fact that we can refer to Sherlock Holmes and we truly predicate of him the property of being a nineteenth-century London detective, and that we falsely predicate of the same intended object the property of being a nineteenth-century Russian lesser noblewoman, then we need to understand whether and in what sense, if any, the apparently superfluous work-arounds in extensional logic and semantics are supposed to be philosophically motivated and justified. Do we need to have such things explained? Holmes satisfies the Leibnizian self-identity requirements as well as any existent intended object, albeit with far fewer constitutive properties in his Meinongian so-being. Still, Holmes has his properties, you have yours and I have mine. There is really nothing to complain about. We exist and Holmes does not. Why, however, short of what Meinong spoke of as 'the prejudice in favor of the actual', should it ever be assumed that therefore only we existent entities can be referred to, counted, quantified over, and the like, whereas Holmes cannot? In saying this, we do not attribute any diluted weak kind of *being* or *existence* to Holmes, so that he can at least stand as the subject of true constitutive property predications. If Meinong is right, then we can and do in fact speak of Holmes, despite the fact that Holmes is only the nonexistent fictional intended object of thoughts of author and readers, and others in the chain of communication by which his name and some of his constitutive properties are disseminated among a linguistic social community, and does not exist in any sense at all. When we speak of *existent* objects we exclude Holmes.

The fact that we can make intuitively good sense of the sentence just preceding is proof in itself that we can refer to Holmes. We can include him in or exclude him from the subdomain of existent entities subsumed by a maximally comprehensive Meinongian object theory referential semantic domain of mind-independent existent and nonexistent objects. We work with nonexistent intended objects all the time, and there is good reason to think that those objects are but a tiny fraction of the

total combinatorially available on Leibnizian identity principles, when applied to any and every set of properties, consistent and complete, in the case of existent physical and abstract objects, or altogether beingless inconsistent or relevantly predicationally incomplete ideally intended objects.

Meinongian dark ages there were, roughly as Ryle dates them, and on into the late 1970s. Until which time Meinong's project of developing an object theory alongside mathematics and metaphysics was frequently misunderstood, ridiculed and rejected without the sort of hearing we would extend to any philosopher with something thoughtful and adventurous to say. The work of Chisholm, Routley (Sylvan) and his circle, Parsons and others, eventually broke through the embarrassed silence that had surrounded Meinong in analytic philosophy. Writers interested in conceptual analysis and rigorous argument began to recognize the value of Meinong's logically and semantically intuitive ideas, and did not hesitate to work out symbolic logical formalizations. What encourages more recently is that, for all its orthodoxy and visceral commitment to existence-presuppositional referential extensionalism, contemporary analytic philosophy is beginning to grasp the limitations of a purely referentially extensionalist semantics, on the one hand, and, in the process, becoming increasingly sensitive to the intuitiveness, simplicity, unity, and other attractions for general semantics of an ontically neutral extraontology of existent and nonexistent intended objects. There are signs, accordingly, that analytic philosophy is turning more often to a serious reconsideration of Meinong's ontically neutral semantically fully general object theory logic.

18.5 Ontic Neutrality in the Semantics of Pure Logic

There is no call for Meinongians to protest a tough swim against the mainstream in contemporary analytic philosophy. The mainstream itself is capable of undergoing a gentle transformation that is more congenial to the logical, semantic, ontic, and more metaphysical inclinations of new generations of thinkers. They are discovering Meinong and appreciating object theory as comprehending combinatorially the ontically neutral intensional referential semantic domain that formal symbolic logic always deserved. It is the domain of all existent and nonexistent intended objects, plus perhaps an exceptional unintendable object, of all distinct ideally intended objects that can be thought about, and maybe one that cannot be intended, if being even ideally intended is a constitutive property. Nonexistent Meinongian intended objects satisfy the same intensional Leibnizian identity conditions as existent and abstract intended objects, although they do so generally in each case with only a small handful of properties.

That limitation, too, is not unavoidable, while still falling short of relevant predicational completeness. There is nothing to prevent a Meinongian from nominalizing the set of all properties of an existent entity, such as the Taj Mahal, *minus* exactly one relevant constitutive property and property complement pair from the Taj Mahal's so-being. Imagine that the Taj Mahal-minus is all the

properties of the existent Taj Mahal *except* for the constitutive property of being radioactive *and* its complement. The Taj Mahal itself is presumably non-radioactive, at least not to any appreciable degree, but the pretend Taj Mahal-minus is neither radioactive nor non-radioactive. Hence, the Taj Mahal-minus does not exist. It nevertheless comes very close to filling all the relevant predicational requirements of the existent Taj Mahal, if we can subtract exactly one constitutive property and its complement from a relevant predicationally complete existent object like the Taj Mahal, in order to arrive at an incomplete nonexistent Meinongian object. Realistically, there is no expectation that finite thinkers such as ourselves could approximate cognitive command of either the sum total of constitutive properties of the Taj Mahal or the Taj Mahal-minus, where only the former actually exists. The difference is designedly so minimal that there is no point in calling attention to the fact that in applications of Leibnizian identity principles we have fewer constitutive property and property complement pairs to consider in full knowledge of an object's self-identity conditions.

There is always new work in pure and applied logic of a generic Meinongian sort involving referential semantic domains of nonexistent as well as existent actual and abstract intended objects. There are previously unanticipated branching ways of thinking about and formalizing Meinong's ideas, that enrich our understanding of the logic underlying an intentionalist Meinongian object theory semantics, ontology and extraontology. The opportunities for Meinong studies and for the further formal development of Meinongian ontically neutral logic and general semantics look more promising than ever, since the early days when Meinong first began his philosophical researches in *Gegenstandstheorie*, as the underlying semantic framework of a Brentanian empirical philosophical, phenomenological, intentionalist, and in other ways experimental scientific psychology and philosophy of mind.

Appendix: Object Theory Logic and Mathematics: Two Essays by Ernst Mally (Translation and Critical Commentary)

Introduction

Presented below are translations of two essays of the Austrian logician, philosopher, and experimental psychologist, Meinong's student, Ernst Mally, originally delivered at the Third International Congress of Philosophy in Heidelberg, Germany. Both essays conclude with discussions between Mally and Kurt Grelling. Mally was a contributor to logical investigations in the field of *Gegenstandstheorie*. In these essays, Mally introduces a vital distinction between *formal* and *extra-formal* 'determinations' (*Bestimmungen*), and he argues that formal determinations are not part of the identity conditions for intended objects, but provide the basis for a theory of pure logical and mathematical relations. Mally then proceeds to develop a formal logic of formal and extra-formal determinations, whose interrelations of ontic and modal predications provide an analysis of fundamental object theory concepts.

Mally (1879–1944) shared many of his teacher Meinong's philosophical interests, and can be considered a collaborator in Meinong's efforts to advance the cause of intensional semantics and scientific empirical intentionalist phenomenological psychology. Unlike Meinong, who had no special competence in formal symbolic logic, Mally was a talented logician. Meinong was trained first in music, then in law and history, turning to philosophy and psychology only later in life under the charismatic influence of Brentano. Mally was well-versed in mathematics and mathematical logic, and made a variety of contributions to logic in the Meinong school, and is often cited with some justice as the originator of deontic logic.[1]

[1] Mally's early development of a proto-deontic logic appears in his 1926; 1971, 228–324. See Mokre 1971, especially 17–8. Wolenski 1998. Morscher 1998. Lokhorst 1999. Weinberger 2001. Lokhorst and Goble 2004.

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Mally's Logical Contributions

Mally complemented Meinong's efforts to develop object theory as a semantic outgrowth of Brentano's intentionality thesis in philosophy of mind. The inspiration for object theory, as we have amply seen, is owing primarily to Brentano, in his 1874 *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*.[2] Brentano argues that psychological phenomena can be distinguished from purely physical phenomena by virtue of the intentionality, 'aboutness', or object-directedness of the psychological, and the nonintentionality of the purely physical. Meinong accepted a version of Brentano's thesis, but, like others of Brentano's students, departed from Brentano's view in one crucial respect, by denying that intended objects of thought are *immanent*, literally contained within the mental acts by which they are intended.[3]

Meinong projected a theory of mind-independent objects that might or might not actually be intended by existent thoughts, and offered a taxonomy of many different kinds of ideally intended objects. If every mental act is directed toward an intended object, as Brentano maintains, even if not every object is actually intended, then Meinong set the stage for a theory of several categories of objects. These include ordinary existent physical or spatiotemporal objects, and subsistent abstract or Platonic objects, following the distinction between existence and subsistence that Meinong may have inherited from his teacher Brentano's detailed study of the medieval Catholic philosophical tradition, and in particular from the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, as objects with being, as well as more exotic beingless objects that are neither existent nor subsistent, but ontically homeless.[4]

The latter category of objects, for which Meinong is more famous and notorious, include incomplete objects, the nonexistent intended objects of fiction and false sciences, such as Sherlock Holmes, Anna Karenina, the golden mountain, phlogiston and the planet Vulcan, and impossible objects, such as the round square and greatest prime. Meinong regards incomplete objects as lacking at least one constitutive property or its complement from their characteristic so-being, holding that an object's so-being is logically beyond or independent of its being or non-being. After all, why should we not be able to consider an intended object in such a way, independently of its ontic status? The interesting aspect of Meinong's object theory, and its implications for logic and philosophical semantics, centers on its opposition to referentially extensionalist assumptions concerning the existence of whatever entities can be referred to, named, described, counted, quantified over, and the like, and that can stand as the intended objects of true or false predications of constitutive properties.[5]

Meinong and Mally, along with others in their scientific philosophical circle, explore the contrary semantic advantages of a domain of intended objects that

[2] Brentano 1973, 88–9. Jacquette 2004b, 121–4.

[3] Jacquette 1991b, 2006.

[4] Meinong 1904a discusses the (Scholastic) *Sein/Bestand* distinction, which he may have inherited from Brentano's studies of Aquinas and surrounding thinkers.

[5] Jacquette 2001b.

includes, but is not limited exclusively to, existent entities, and that comprehends any putative intended objects, including some that contingently do not exist, provided they satisfy intensional constitutive property-related identity conditions. The Meinongian referential semantic domain comprehends in its ontically neutral generosity, all intended objects, actual and abstract, those that are consisent but incomplete in their intensional self-identity conditions, like the golden mountain, and others that are not only relevantly predicationally incomplete but metaphysically impossible, like the round square. Meinong and Mally in particular insist that object theory involve mind-independent objects that, despite their lack of being in either category of actual or abstract existence, can be thought about and referred to, and, most important of all, that can serve as the intended objects of true and false constitutive property predications. They held the same to be true even of objects that are never actually considered, which may still be intendable in the sense that they are ideally or could be intended, but have in any case whatever properties they may have independently of whether or not they are ever actually intended.

To prove the latter claim, in his essay, '*Über die Unabhängigkeit der Gegenstände vom Denken*' ('On the Objects' Independence from Thought'), Mally offers a diagonal argument involving a self-non-applicational construction similar to the Russell and Burali-Forti paradoxes, concerning the extreme case of a definitionally unintendable object. Such an unintended object must be comprehended by an objective rather than actually intentional generalized Meinongian domain principle, one that associates an intended object intensionally individuated with every possible combination of constitutive properties. If there is such a combination of properties, including the property of being unintendable, then the object will be unintendable, and as such altogether constitutively mind-independent. Meinong was sufficiently impressed with Mally's efforts to prove the existence of unintendable objects that he devoted a discussion to what he referred to as 'defective objects' (*defekte Gegenstände*). The question of whether in such circumstances we do not after all intend the object theory objects we describe as unintendable is one of the interesting logical and conceptual puzzles that Meinong and Mally investigate.[6]

1908 Heidelberg Congress

The two essays translated into English for the first time below were presented by Mally at the *III. Internationalen Kongress für Philosophie zu Heidelberg*, Germany, 1–5 September 1908, and subsequently published in the Congress reports.[7] Mally's

[6] Mally 1914. Mally's paper is translated with a critical commentary by Jacquette 1989d. For discussion, see Jacquette 1982.

[7] Mally 1909a, b. To assure thematic continuity in presenting the topics of the two papers, I refer to Mally's essay appearing on 881–6 as the 'first' essay, and that appearing on 862–7 as the 'second' essay.

essays consider interesting implications of Meinongian object theory for logic and mathematics.

The logician and mathematician Kurt Grelling is the only person in attendance recorded as raising questions in the discussion included at the end of each paper in the official congress *Bericht*. He poses some serious challenges of a fairly general nature at both paper sessions. As indicated here in summary, Mally is not shaken in his commitment to the importance of an object theory logic and mathematics, and even for its value in the development of a probability calculus, and he responds to Grelling's grilling with admirable aplomb.

Mally's First Paper

In his first paper, Mally draws a crucial distinction between formal and extra-formal determinations (*formale und ausserformale Bestimmungen*). The distinction is adopted by Meinong under a modified terminology (*konstitutorische und ausserkonstitutorische Bestimmungen*), in English, constitutive and extraconstitutive, nuclear and extranuclear, in some translations and terminologies, as essential to Meinongian object theory. It provides the basis for an answer to Russell's later problem about the existent golden mountain and existent round square.

Mally argues, in connection with a mathematical illustration involving 'the parallelogram' that 'nothing changes', if we add to the characterization of the object the 'formal' properties or 'determinations' 'being incomplete' or 'otherwise', other than simply being a parallelogram, which as such is otherwise 'entirely undetermined'. We refer to the same object, 'the parallelogram', without further qualifying the object in such a way as to distinguish as intendable mind-independent Meinongian objects 'the parallelogram' from 'the incomplete parallelogram', or the 'otherwise entirely undetermined parallelogram'. The formal properties added to the object's most basic designation simply as 'the parallelogram', according to Mally in the first conference essay, do not serve to single out an intended object other than 'the parallelogram', to which formal determinations are gratuitously superadded in a way that is referentially inert or epiphenomenal.

Thus, it emerges that for Mally as for Meinong a *Bestimmung* is an identity-determining or -establishing property for an object. When the independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* thesis, accepted by Mally and Meinong alike, is supplemented by the qualification that the properties entering into an object's *Sosein* are exclusively extra-formal or extraconstitutive, then object theory avoids a host of obvious counterexamples that are typified by Russell's problems of the existent golden mountain and existent round square.[8]

[8] Russell 1905a, 482–3.

Russell asks, on the strength of Meinong's thesis that an object's so-being is logically independent of its ontic status, whether the existent golden mountain is existent, golden and a mountain, despite the fact that no golden mountain exists, and whether the existent round square is existent, round and square, despite the fact that no round square can possibly exist. Russell argues, reasonably enough, that if the golden mountain is golden and a mountain, and the round square round and square, then the existent golden mountain, by parity of application of the independence of so-being from being, should be existent, golden, and a mountain, and the existent round square existent, round, and square. Meinong answers, with background qualifications, that the existent golden mountain, like the existent round square, is existent, even though it does not exist. Russell throws up his hands at this point, abandoning his prior interest in Meinong's object theory, and his criticism has led many readers influenced by his philosophical authority afterward to conclude on such thin grounds that object theory is hopelessly logically inconsistent.

By restricting Meinong's thesis of the independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* to exclusively extra-formal constitutive properties, Meinong and Mally are able to forestall any comparable objections.[9] They do so provided, as seems not only sensible but unavoidable, that the property of being existent (and, similarly, nonexistent, subsistent, nonsubsistent, possible, impossible, necessary, nonnecessary, determined, undetermined, complete, incomplete, and the like) are properly categorized as formal, extraconstitutive, or extranuclear properties or determinations, rather than as extra-formal, constitutive, or nuclear.[10] In the event, when responding to Russell's criticism, Meinong invoked a rather different distinction between formal or extraconstitutive properties that have or fail to have an additional qualification which he spoke of as 'the modal moment' (*das Modalmoment*). Meinong holds that we can attribute the watered-down formal or extraconstitutive property of existence in constitutive form to the dagger by which Macbeth murders King Duncan, but not to the dagger he later hallucinates, within the drama of Shakespeare's play, even though in a larger sense both daggers are fictional and hence nonexistent. Attributing existence to the 'real' dagger in the play by which the king is assassinated, does not imply that it exists in the way that attributing existence to Shakespeare as a real existent person does, according to Meinong, because it is a 'watered-down' (*depotenzierte*) formal or extraconstitutive property lacking the modal moment that is thereby truly attributed only to an existent dagger.[11]

[9] *AMG* VI, 176–7. Findlay 1995, 176, as previously remarked, proposes the English equivalents 'nuclear' and 'extranuclear' for Meinong's distinction between *konstitutorische und ausserkonstitutorische Bestimmungen*. Mally 1912 also introduces a distinction between multiple ways in which objects can have properties that provides the basis for an object theory logic that stands as an alternative to his own prior 1908 distinction between formal and extra-formal determinations.

[10] Routley 1980, 496. Jacquette 1986, 1996a, 80–91. Meinong *AMG* VI, 266. Also Findlay 1995, 103–4.

[11] Meinong's solution to Russell's problem of the existent golden mountain is presented in *AMG* V, 278–82.

Meinong's solution has both attractions and drawbacks that in turn encourage supporters and critics. Defenders of object theory have frequently observed that Meinong had in hand a simpler solution to the problem, in the form of a resolute adherence to the more fundamental distinction between formal and extra-formal or constitutive and extraconstitutive properties. It is a logical distinction, originating with Mally's first 1908 Heidelberg International Congress of Philosophy paper.[12]

Logic of Determinations in Mally's Second Essay

In the second paper, Mally develops a rudimentary formal logic of determinations, including both formal and extra-formal. He devotes most of his attention to formal determinations, treating them as predications directly attributable to objects at any level of abstraction, from concrete physical entities to determinations themselves. Attribution is expressed by means of simple syntactical juxtaposition, and his logic includes a few truth functional operators, notably propositional negation ($-$); logical addition (+) (disjunction), which he introduces for completeness sake, but does not really use; logical multiplication (.), also expressed by means of juxtaposition, as in ordinary algebra, (conjunction), a conditional ($<$), by which he designates logical dependence, and an identity relation ($=$).

It is important to see that the order of juxtaposition in Mally's logic of determinations is precisely reversed from what has since become conventional in modern formal predicate logic. Where it is typical today to write Fa to indicate that object a has property F, Mally, somewhat anticipating combinatory logic, more generally expresses by ab or $a\,.\,b$ the attribution of determination b to any 'basis' (*Grund*) or 'substratum' (*Substrat*) a. Moreover, there is no sensitivity in Mally's logic to type theory stratifications. Rather, a and b can be any object theory objects or any determinations, which in principle are capable of determining one another. It is interesting to note that Mally regards object theory relations among determinations as logically prior to propositional logic. He claims, but in this context does not attempt rigorously to prove, that propositional logic can be derived from the principles of object theory determinations he articulates. He interprets identity as biconditional equivalence, which he maintains is customary.

With this formal apparatus in place, Mally proceeds to lay down a series of axioms concerning the interrelations among especially formal determinations. Along the way, he defines special terms, generally chosen for their similarity to German formal predicates from the Greek alphabet, to represent being (*Sein*) by sigma (σ), possibility (*Möglichkeit*) by (μ), and similarly for necessity (*Notwendigkeit*) (ν), and accidentalness (*Zufälligkeit*) (ζ). Mally asserts, but again, in the roughly 20 min of presentation time he seems to have been allowed for his talk, does not try to prove, a principle of double negation and of associativity,

[12] See Routley 1980, 496.

and uses his notation to express a number of relations he finds intuitively unexceptionable concerning the iterative being, possibility, and the like, of being, possibility, and the other formal determinations. Clearly, he takes the opportunity at the congress to announce ongoing work in what at that time were unpublished results that he and Rudolf Ameseder, another Meinong student, had been developing. The idea seems to be only to give a brief indication of a much larger project in which he is engaged, as often happens at professional meetings, to advertise and alert others to a research agenda in its preliminary stages.[13]

Conclusion

Mally's two papers are nevertheless of logical and philosophical, as well as purely historical, interest. They provide the foundations for a formal theory of ontic and modal predicates, and they demonstrate the extent to which such a logic can be framed by means of elementary logical and predicational devices. That such a logic, invariably higher-order, is now known if sufficiently developed to be, if syntactically consistent, semantically and deductively incomplete, does not detract from the importance of Mally's venture. For the logic, even in the relatively nascent form in which Mally presents it in the second paper, enables him to express his ideas about the formal and extra-formal determinations of objects. By displaying their structural interrelationships in a logical notation, Mally is able to refine and confirm his intuitions about their role in a further elaboration of a fully generalized object theory.[14]

[13] As far as I have been able to determine, no jointly authored paper on object theory logic was ever published by Mally and Ameseder. Undoubtedly, the most complete logical treatment of object theory Mally published, although as a solo effort rather than collaboration, is his 1912, and the unpublished *Grosses Logikfragment* (see note 1 above). The only paper Mally jointly authored with Ameseder was in psychology rather than logic 1910 [1902]. Nor are there any papers in manuscript jointly authored by Mally and Ameseder in the *Nachlaß* Mally at the Universitätsbibliothek Graz. Mally did not publish or leave behind any essay with the title referred to in the Congress proceedings, 'Elementen der Gegenstandstheorie'. Meinong nevertheless also mentions the essay as forthcoming in his *Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften*, *Alexius Meinong Gesamtausgabe*, V, 202 (S. VI of the original published text of the *Stellung*): 'Vielleicht wird mancher Leser der nachstehenden Untersuchungen nicht ohne alles Interesse davon Kenntnis nehmen, dass die unten S. 3 Anm. 2 erwähnte gemeinsame Arbeit R. AMESEDERS und E. MALLYS inzwischen so rüstig gefördert worden ist, dass ihre Veröffentlichung unter dem Title 'Elemente der Gegenstandstheorie' seitens der Dürrschen Verlagsbuchhandlung in Leipzig noch für das laufende Jahr in sichere Aussicht genommen werden konnte. (Graz, März 1907)'. It is tempting to suppose that many of the logical principles that Mally mentions in the first paper are contained in the unpublished essay coauthored with Ameseder, although, in lieu of a manuscript for their lost paper, there is no way to be certain.

[14] [Mally] In *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Erkenntnistheorie*, edited by A. Meinong. Leipzig 1904 [Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth].

Mally, Object Theory and Mathematics

Ernst Mally

Translated by Dale Jacquette

[881] We associate the word 'something' *par excellence* with the widest concept under which all and everything belongs; it may be a thing or a property or a state of affairs; it may exist or not exist. Where this word is linguistically inappropriate, however, it is permissible to use the word 'object' ["*Gegenstand*"] for it. [Alexius] Meinong explains object theory as the *a priori* science of objects, insofar, indeed, as it concerns objects in general as well as various specific instances of these.

The objection has now been raised that one can recognize nothing *a priori* about objects, because one cannot even know *a priori* whether there are objects. It is certain, now, for example, that, *if* an *a* is the same as a *b*, and *b* is the same as a *c* (in the same respect), then *a* must also be the same as *c*, regardless of whether or not we have ever encountered such objects in experience, and in this sense [the knowledge of this] is *a priori*.

Insofar as one explains object theory as an *a priori* science of objects generally, so mathematics is grasped along with it, because it also secures *a priori* knowledge about objects in a special domain. I have tried to give a more exact characterization of the relationship between these sciences in my essay "*Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie des Messens*" ['Investigations in the Object Theory of Measurement'].[15] Now I hope today to have completely fulfilled this task, having further pursued the topic together with Rudolf Ameseder in our soon to be published "*Elemente der Gegenstandstheorie*" ['Elements of Object Theory']. An appropriate characterization of a convenient example will be attempted.

[882] In mathematics, the parallelogram is defined approximately as a rectangle with pair-wise parallel sides, and from this definition there is then derived by means of well-known theorems other properties of parallelograms, such as, for example, the identity of any two opposite angles, the identity of opposite sides, and the like. One is accustomed to designate the first so-called distinctive properties of parallelograms in the definition as the constitutive ["*konstitutiven*"] [properties], which are thereby deducible as the consecutive ["*konsekutiven*"] features of existing concepts, and more exactly of a concept-object ["*Begriffsgegestandes*"]. The pure mathematical (geometrical) treatment of this object exhausts itself entirely in the derivation of its consecutive attributes from its constitutive [properties]. Since this derivation happens naturally to be deductive, *a priori*,[16] that is also how the knowledge of their

[15] [Mally] Not inductively; extracting instances through experience from several individual objects.

[16] [Mally] The designation derives from Meinong, *Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften* [*On the Place of Object Theory in the System of the Sciences*], Leipzig [Barth] 1907.

object theoretical nature is attained. One could perhaps summarize the constitutive and consecutive properties of an object approximately as its formal ["*formalen*"] determinations ["*Bestimmungen*"]; it is always from certain complexes identified with their totality by means of formal closures through which the rules of formal logic are derivable.

Besides its formal [determinations], a concept-object still has other determinations, which are equally knowable *a priori*, and which are therefore part of object theory. Here we have cited only *one* example. The parallelogram as concept-object, as that which is thought of initially and immediately by means of the quoted definition, and may be designated approximately as a "parallelogram *par excellence*" or "*in abstracto*", is an incompletely determinate, or in short an incomplete object;[17] other than having the properties of being a rectangle and having parallel opposite sides, it is altogether undetermined, with respect, for example, to the size of its angles and the like. This fact, which is naturally of greater significance for the type of being that such an object can approximate, as it should be considered here, does not belong to the object's formal determinations. One recognizes this easily, if one attempts to include such formal determinations in the definition of the parallelogram. [883] If they [the formal determinations] of the parallelogram were constitutive or consecutive, then this operation on the object, to which the definition corresponds, would change nothing. [Translator's note: that is, adding the qualifications 'incomplete' or 'otherwise entirely undetermined' neither adds nor subtracts anything from 'the parallelogram', and makes no difference to its identity or identity conditions.] The new definition (II) now states: "Rectangle with pair-wise parallel sides, otherwise entirely undetermined", or "incomplete object parallelogram". Now while the original definition (I) comprehends "the parallelogram" as the closest object which serves as representative of a whole domain of single concrete objects, namely all particular parallelograms, definition (II) comprehends an object that is so determined that there belongs to those domains only *one* object that is adequately represented, namely the "Parallelogram" (as "Abstractum"). The determination of incompleteness, which actually includes the comprehended concept-object in [definition] (I), does not approach it more closely, therefore, as a constitutive determination; rather, the entire identically determined object, of which it [the determination] is constitutive, is essentially something different than that specified by definition I. Now, where this determination of the parallelogram is not constitutive, it is also not consecutive to it; for if it were, then it ought to be possible to unify it with other matching appropriately chosen formal determinations of the parallelogram to provide an entirely new definition equivalent to (I).

There is therefore, as this example shows, also extra-formal determinations of objects, determinations additionally belonging to mathematical objects; these, however, fall outside of the pure mathematical mode of handling objects,

[17] [Mally] Admittedly, the different 'special object theories' are then not jointly grasped [*mitbegriffen*]; they receive special, separate treatment anyway, however, to the extent that this is not already done (as in the case of mathematics).

consideration is at most incidentally related, but certainly does not belong to the proper content of the mathematical sciences. That these facts about their nature are also *a priori* recognizable establishes them as belonging to an extra-mathematical domain of object theory, a domain, by the way, into which the remaining *a priori* special sciences or "special object theories" are also divided.

The objection has been raised against the thought of an object theory that it is a superfluous conception, insofar as everything that is included in this science, inasmuch as it is not mathematics, is already handled by logic. Our examples on the contrary appear to afford an especially easy answer to this objection. [884] For we can say, the fact that the incompleteness of the concept-object has been described actually involves nothing but a concept: if we grasp this concept, we explicitly postulate only the properties cited in the definition of the object that we intend, and we permit all others besides these, without implying thereby that any parallelogram actually has *only* the properties we have postulated. This finally is true: nothing that is in fact "*a* parallelogram" is in any respect undetermined. Nevertheless, it is clear, and illuminated, indeed, without further elaboration, which in any case we cannot enter into here, that something corresponds to the concept of the parallelogram, something is exactly attributed, to which even the thought-of properties as fully postulated comprehends "*the* parallelogram", which of course can never be "*a* [particular] parallelogram". All the same, in what manner this "abstractum" *is*, or, generally, whether it is, it is something we think about; we recognize it, it is an object of our thought, and therefore it is quite certainly an object. Provided now that the logic of our thought deals immediately and not virtually with objects, and they are (potentially) thought of, the above-mentioned extra-formal determinations ["*außerformalen Bestimmungen*"] of objects do not belong to their corresponding directly targeted treatment.

The cited objection could only be maintained if logic is not the theory of correct thinking, as a majority of logicians still believe, but rather an (*a priori*) theory of objects, and in fact of objects as such, without regard to the fact that they, while we deal with them, are also thought of. In fact, this view of logic also has its representative—Mr. Itelson by word of mouth is personally known to me as such a one.—Notably that which for many is already thought to be included under the name 'algebra of logic' or 'logistic'. All this is nevertheless straightforward—insofar as I have insight into the contemporary view of these things—the formal side of objects strongly requires the other alternative [of treating logic as an *a priori* theory of mind-independent objects]. The "algebra" of logic essentially agrees with mathematics and is distinguished from it only by virtue of its generality, with which it is made accessible from supposed (constitutive) [885] determinations of any type of complete consecutives. However, if the domain of logistic is also extended to extra-formal facts, then this science concerns itself with that to which a *general object theory*[18] aspires and is developed; in which case, a dispute about names is no

[18] [Mally] Compare [Ernst] Schröder, *Algebra of Logic* [*Algebra der Logik*], Leipzig, 1890; or [Louis] Couturat, *Algebra of Logic* [*L'Algèbre de la logique*]. Scientia, Nr. 24.

obstacle, when, the various sides the general field of study covers are in basic agreement among themselves about what is essential, namely, that it makes good sense to pursue a science within the general problematic [*Fragestellung*] of object theory.

Discussion

[Kurt] Grelling: 1. What I find lacking in an object theory that is supposed to include everything, is something that permits *a priori* statements about objects, metaphysics, for example, causal law.

2. It is not yet clear, if I have understood Mr. Mally, that one can formulate parallelogram theorems that do not only follow from his definition, but rather require derivation axioms, and are therefore synthetic.

It is generally advisable not to blur the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments. It very usefully distinguishes various object theory domains.

3. The use of the word 'object' ["*Gegenstand*"] by Mr. Mally involves an arbitrariness. If Mr. Mally says: "Parallelogram is a rectangle with pair-wise parallel sides", then he defines the *concept* [of a] parallelogram. This is also an object, of course, but not of one with parallel sides. In this object, however, nothing is undetermined. If I now append [the qualification] "otherwise completely determined", then I do not further limit the sense of the above definition. Under such an object, a rectangle with pair-wise parallel sides that is otherwise completely undetermined, I can think of nothing at all. These words no more designate an object than does the phrase 'wooden-iron' ["*hölzernes Eisen*"].

E. [Ernst] Mally (summary): Since the time assigned for this session has long since been exceeded, I only want to make the following brief remarks: What one accuses of indeterminacy or sketchy descriptions ["*Schwanken*"] of the object-concept, is nothing but the uncertainty, by which it [886] necessarily approaches absolute generality. There is no unclarity in the use of the word 'object', whether this is said directly of an object, or directly of a class. Each class is also precisely an object, and concerning it in object-theoretical investigations I am completely clear, whether I speak merely of a "class" or of individual things belonging to the class.

Mally, Basic Laws of Determination

Ernst Mally

Translated by Dale Jacquette

[862] If *a* and *b* signify two propositions, then, in the algebra of logic, as is commonly known, the sign-combination *ab* indicates that the two propositions or

sentences must have a *shared* value; that is, that according to these sentences *both* matters of fact ["*Tatbestände*"], states of affairs ["*Sachverhalte*"] or objectives ["*Objektive*"] must exist; $a + b$, in contrast, signifies, that *a or b* must exist.[19]

There is now a third type of combination of propositions, that is, states of affairs, 'objectives', or determinations, which, so far as I can see, is not represented in these systems, but which, if one sets aside the above applications of the multiplication-symbolism, then it is very simple to develop the multiplication symbol in an entirely consistent manner to represent the laws of the consequence-connections holding between determinations of being [*Seinsbestimmungen*]. The most essential details can be given briefly, which are presented at length in connection with R. [Rudolf] Ameseder's and my jointly authored but as yet unpublished work, "Elements of Object Theory".[20]

1. It is accordingly stipulated for present purposes that:

$$a \cdot b \text{ or } ab$$

   signifies: *a* has the determination *b*. Then it is first of all clear that the determination ["*Bestimmung*"] or the determinator ["*Determinator*"] *b* is always an [863] objective or state of affairs, a being ["*Sein*"] or so-being ["*Sosein*"], while the substratum ["*Substrat*"] *a* is also an objective, but can otherwise be any arbitrary object. Here, however, the particular case is considered in which the substratum is also an objective. [Term] *a* signifies, for example, the redness [being-red] [*Rotsein*] (of any object), *b* the non-being, whereby *ab* is read: "the redness (of the considered object) has the determination non-being"]; that is, "redness is not, does not subsist [*bestehe nicht*]".
2. Consider now in particular the following existence-determinations [*Seinsbestimmungen*]: *Being* [*Sein*], represented by σ[21], *non-being* [*Nichtsein*] by means of $-\sigma$, *possible-being* [*Möglichsein*] or possibility by μ.
3. If objective *b* follows from objective *a*, then this relation is indicated by

$$a < b.$$[22]

   This inscription can also therefore be read as: "*a* implies *b*" or "*a* is the basis [ground or condition, *Grund*] of *b*".

[19] [Mally] To us it is indeed not probable, but it is in no way precluded, that this issue may have, but until now unfortunately has not already received as we would have wished a correct treatment in the extensive logical literature.

[20] [Mally] Use of the minus-sign does not of course signify the implicit assumption of an arithmetical connection between σ and $-\sigma$.

[21] [Mally] In connection with Couturat, as previously cited.

[22] [Mally] This and the previous proposition embody a contradiction. $\sigma\sigma = -\sigma \,.\, -\sigma$ expresses: if being exists, then non-being does not exist (of any arbitrary object) and conversely; $-\sigma \,.\, \sigma = \sigma \,.\, -\sigma$ expresses: non-being exists, then being does not exist, and conversely.

If both $a < b$ and $b < a$, then this relationship of equivalence, as is customary, is represented by

$$a = b.$$

Thus, for example, the equilaterality of a triangle is equivalent to its equiangularity.

As immediately evident or as basic laws are now cited:

4. If $a < b$ obtains, then so does $b < a\mu$. That is, if the consequence obtains (b), then, possibly, so does the basis (a). (The consequence does not exclude the basis.)
5. If $a < b$ obtains, then so does $b \,.\, -\sigma < a \,.\, -\sigma$. That is, the negation of the basis follows from the negation of the consequence.
6. If $a < b$ obtains, then so does $xa < xb$. That is, if a is a basis of b, then the determination a of every arbitrary substratum x as a basis of the determination b for the same substratum.
7. For each *objective* a there holds:

$$a\sigma = a,$$

that is, if a has as its being [*Sein*] "state of affairs", then state of affairs a *exists*, and conversely.

[864] If a in particular is a being-determination, then it holds moreover that

$$a\sigma = a;$$

For example, when $a = \mu$ then $\sigma\mu = \mu$. In particular, therefore, there obtains

$$\sigma\sigma = \sigma.$$

Being (σ) thus has the character of a *module* that of considered objective-combination [*Objektivverknüpfung*].

8. $-\sigma \cdot -\sigma = \sigma$,
   which is the basic law of *double negation*.[23]
9. If b, c are being-determinations, for arbitrary a, then there holds:

$$(ab)c = a(bc),$$

which is the principle of *associativity*. For example, $(a \,.\, -\sigma) \,.\, \mu = a(-\sigma \,.\, \mu)$. Incidentally, the proposition also remains valid when b signifies an *arbitrary determination*, and equally for a so-being ["*Sosein*"], such as being red.

[23] [Mally] For example, if one speaks of the "exclusion" ["*Ausgeschlossensein*"] of a state of affairs.

10. If $b\,.\,{-}\sigma < a\,.\,{-}\sigma$, then one obtains, if one applies principle 5, $(a\,.\,{-}\sigma)\,.\,{-}\sigma < b\,.\,{-}\sigma\,.\,{-}\sigma$, or, from 8 and 7, $a < b$. Here, therefore, not only $b\,.\,{-}\sigma < a\,.\,{-}\sigma$ from $a < b$ follows by (5), but also conversely, so that $a < b$ is equivalent to

$$b\ .\,{-}a < a\ .\ {-}\sigma.$$

The previous principles (4–9) are so self-evident as to naturally have only minimal interest; of greater interest, however, is the fact that they are necessary and sufficient to derive all functional being-determinations of the three being-objectives (σ, $-\sigma$, μ), and, if the principle of the syllogism "if $a < b$, $b < c$, then $a < c$" is accepted, then all consequence-relations between the being-objectives and their (multiplicative) connections can also be developed.

11. If one inserts σ for a and for b in 4, then one obtains:

$$\text{from } \sigma < \sigma \text{ there follows } \sigma < \sigma\mu \text{ or } \sigma < \mu.$$

which, incidentally, is also immediately evident.

12. If one applies basic law 5 to this relation, then one obtains:

$$\mu\ .\ {-}\sigma < {-}\sigma.$$

In $\mu\,.\,{-}\sigma$, that is the nonbeing of possibility, one therefore has one a being-determination, from which nonbeing follows; they appear together in [365] thought as an impossibility, often directly playing the role of a simple being-objective, that is, not thought of in the explicit form cited, and designated as a result by means of the simple sign υ.

13. If $-\sigma$ is inserted as substratum on both sides in 12, then there results (from 6)

$$-\sigma\ .\ \mu\ .\ {-}\sigma < {-}\sigma\ .\ {-}\sigma \text{ or}$$
$$-\sigma\ .\ \mu\ .\ {-}\sigma < \sigma \quad \text{or, because } \mu\ .\,{-}\sigma = \upsilon: \quad {-}\sigma\ .\ \upsilon < \sigma.$$

In this way, therefore, the non-being of the possibility of non-being or the impossibility of the non-being of a being-determination is obtained, which occurs as the *ground of being* and is consequently referred to as *necessity*. It is designated by ν.

14. From $\sigma < \mu$ there follows, if $-\sigma$ is inserted on both sides as substratum,

$$-\sigma\,.\,\sigma < {-}\sigma\ .\ \mu \text{ or}$$
$$-\sigma < {-}\sigma\ .\ \mu.$$

In $-\sigma\,.\,\mu$, the possibility of the non-being or of the possible-non-being, one therefore has a being-determination, which follows from non-being, just as possible-being follows from being. There arises also through the negation of necessity:

$$\nu\,.\,{-}\sigma = {-}\sigma\ .\ \mu\ .\ {-}\sigma\ .\ -\sigma = {-}\sigma\ .\ \mu,$$

that is, it is equivalent to non-necessary-being; understood in this form, it is called ordinary *accidentalness* [*Zufälligkeit*] (ζ).

One therefore has the following series of being-determinations:

$$\nu < \sigma < \mu \text{ and}$$
$$\upsilon < -\sigma < \zeta.$$

If one introduces as being-null [zero-being, "*Seinsnull*"] the total uncertainty regarding being, as it inheres for example in an object, which could equally be or not be (according to the probability of 1/2), then, although it can only be hinted at here without rigorous proof, the two series can be combined into *one*, in which each element [*Gliede*] of the first stands opposed to the second, so to speak, as a "differentiated entirety [unity]" ["*entgegengesetzte Größe*"]. Also this series, since it is not continuous, lends itself generally to being constructed in remarkable analogies with the series of the real numbers.

[866] The completed sentences above have been advanced as "basic laws of determination". In fact, what appears here as the symbolized connection $a \,.\, b.$ reflects what one is actually inclined to understand by "determining".

In $-\sigma \,.\, \mu$, for example, $-\sigma$ is defined or determined by means of μ, and, indeed, the determination (the "determinator") μ is not permutable with the object which it determines, its "substrate" $-\sigma$: $-\sigma \,.\, \mu$ is not equivalent to $\mu \,.\, -\sigma$. What essentially distinguishes this connection, the "determination", from the other represented connection by means of the multiplication symbol, is the "adjunction" ["*Adjunktion*"][24] of determinations. This is then available as holding between $-\sigma$ and μ, if both together subsist [*bestehen*] (in something); that is, if something (x) does not exist but it is (nevertheless) possible. The adjunction can now be considered, if combined together with the determination, which is shown by means of the sign +, whereby therefore the [determinative] connection $-\sigma \,.\, \mu$ ("non-being is possible" or "the possibility of non-being") is the *adjunctive* $-\sigma + \mu$ object, to be read as "non-being and possible-being" or $x \,.\, (-\sigma + \mu)$; that is, "something (x) does not exist, but is (at the same time nevertheless) possible". One could then say: in the connection made by means of adjunction there stands (for example) under the various determinations of an object, among others, the same determinate "something" within the connection, regardless of their respective conditions, which is also the adjunctive (additive) complex, constituting the same underlying "something" that stands as their common "substrate".[25]

[24] [Mally] Compare Schröder, previously cited, where clearly the name "adjunction" is used as equivalent to "determination".

[25] [Mally] It is explicit that a metaphysical presupposition concerning the existence of a "substance" ["*Substanz*"] is in no way included in the alternation of the substrate concept. The previous remarks appear capable of clarifying and resolving the conflict between the Schröder-isch and the Wundt-ish concept of "determination". — Determination is admittedly achieved by means of apposition (adjunction) of determinations to other determinations, but the previous *determinations* are not determined, that is, defined, by means of a new determination, but rather by means of each "something" that confronts all as a general "substrate".

Discussion

[Kurt] Grelling: The main thing to notice is that whatever advantage the new formal language is supposed to have over Schröder's or Peano's [logics] did not emerge from the lecture. Specifically, the meaning of the signs still seems not sufficiently sharply defined. It appears to me as if the speaker did not precisely distinguish between propositions and objects.

E. [Ernst] Mally] (summary): Here, naturally, I can offer only general and suggestive answers to these remarks, for which I incidentally express my best thanks. First of all, it seems to me that the ambiguity of the symbols is not a disadvantage, because through it the explication, "*a b* means that the *determination* (proposition) *b* belongs to an arbitrary *object a*", is held in fixed limits; so to speak, it is properly defined, and the certain, univocal representation of *all* cases of the being-determined [*Bestimmtseins*] or the determination of an object is principally facilitated.

What the *benefit* of this representation confers, I believe I can answer, in that it clearly establishes the actual "structure" of an object as determined by its determinations directly through the articulation of a "something" which they all comprehend, and in particular it fixes the important distinction between the connection of the determinations with one another and their "substrate". In this [Wilhelm] Wundt's errors are not perpetuated, but on the contrary he teaches us how to avoid them.

The being-determinations, which were considered here, are in no way metaphysical; possible-being is called, for example, nothing other than, as that being-determination which is implied in being, without implying that they are actual. Furthermore, the consequence relation is no relation between psychic acts; that *b* follows from *a* should not be taken to mean anything other than "if *a* exists, then *b* exists"; that something is "necessary" means only that a matter of fact subsists [*bestand*], that it is implied. — These consequence relations can now be obtained, and it is nothing trivial to derive their laws from basic propositions. The fertility of these considerations for the further advance of knowledge, admittedly, must first be proven. Here, of course, I can only look ahead to future developments; I hope, however, that these investigations will be of benefit for example in the founding of probability theory.

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