

INGARDEN vs. MEINONG ON THE LOGIC OF FICTION

At the turn of the present century one problem, the so-called problem of the existence of the world, lay at the center of philosophical argument. The dominance of those who took the idealist side in this dispute, both in Germany and in England, was then rapidly being brought to an end with the works of Brentano, Meinong, Frege, Moore, and Russell, all of whom can be seen as having expressed, in their different ways, reactions against one or other form of Hegelian idealism. Yet this problem is no longer among the vital concerns of present-day philosophers. This is not because the realists have simply won the battle, such that the whole idealist phase in the history of philosophy from Kant to Bradley could justifiably be discounted as an unfortunate detour from the high road of Aristotle and the Scholastics, Leibniz, Frege, and 20th century realism. But certainly it is true that philosophers no longer pose any direct question concerning the (mode of) existence of the real world. One might perhaps say that a form of *empirical* realism has come to be taken for granted on all sides, whether or not this is regarded as consistent with some kind of idealist position on a higher (“transcendental”) plain.

We might expect, therefore, that there is little of value to current philosophy to be found in a work¹ devoted to this issue, devoted, indeed, to the painstaking establishment of the validity of the realist position through some fifteen hundred pages of argument. The work in question was written by a Polish phenomenologist and student of Husserl, Roman Ingarden—at a time when the idealism-realism dispute had already ceased to occupy the attentions of those philosophers now recognized as the forbears of the analytic movement—as part of Ingarden’s response to his teacher’s move away from the realism of the early *Logical Investigations* to the transcendental

¹ *Der Streit um die Existenz der Welt*, in three volumes, the second in two parts: vol. I, *Existenzialontologie*, Tübingen, 1964; vol. II, *Formalontologie*, part 1, *Form und Wesen*, part 2, *Welt und Bewusstsein*, both Tübingen, 1965, vol. III (posthumously prepared for publication; incomplete), *Über die kausale Struktur der realen Welt*, Tübingen, 1974. Original Polish version of vols. I and II, Krakow, 1947–48. Partial English translation of vol. I under the title *Time and Modes of Being*, Springfield, Ill., 1964.

idealist position which we find in Husserl's later works.

We are all familiar, however, with important philosophical texts whose significance resides elsewhere than their authors had supposed. And Ingarden's work has, I want to suggest, precisely this quality: for it is only the *by-products* of Ingarden's work which promise to yield its true value for present-day philosophy. In particular it has value for the new, reformed ontology which has begun to flower in recognition of the possibilities for hitherto unattainable precision in this field, through the exploitation of the resources of formal logic.² For the book contains a mass of individual ontological insights ordered within what must be the most detailed—and the most adequate—ontological system in the whole literature of philosophy. Thus the work not only considers ontological problems raised by the notion of time (the modes of being of and the relations between past, present, and future existents), problems of causality, problems of the nature of relations and properties, states of affairs, events, actions, processes, and higher-order wholes (sets, heaps, as well as biologically and socially unified wholes). It deals also with specific ontological issues raised by the tradition: e.g., the bundle theory of objects (as sets of properties), the 'form'-'matter' relation, the concept of transcendence (e.g., of the external world to individual consciousnesses), and the nature of the ontological discipline itself. And it deals further—when considered in conjunction with Ingarden's other works in this and related fields—with problems in the theory of reference, the nature of meaning, the functions of language, and also with the issues raised by works of fiction and by the ontological correlates (if any) possessed by such works in the realm of 'purely intentional objects.'³

It is these last-mentioned issues which I wish to consider in the present paper. I shall sketch an Ingardenian approach to the ontology or, when appropriate formal machinery has been introduced, to the logic of fiction, comparing this with the Meinongean ap-

² Work in formal ontology goes back to Frege, Russell, and the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*. The most important current work includes e.g., investigations initiated by Davidson on the logic of events, cf. also N. B. Cocchiarella's studies of second order logic and of the discipline of formal ontology as such. For references see my "An Essay in Formal Ontology," *Grazer Philosophische Studien*, VI, 1978.

³ See Ingarden's *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, Halle, 1931; English translation, Evanston, 1973; the just-mentioned aspects of Ingarden's thought are dealt with by G. Küng in his "Ingarden on Language and Ontology," *Analecta Husserliana*, II, 1972, 204-17.

proach to the same group of issues.

The parallels between Ingarden and Meinong are many. Both fall within the sphere of Brentano-influenced philosophers: Meinong directly and Ingarden through his contacts with Husserl and Twardowski. The two philosophers share many problems, especially in the field of ontology (Ingarden in fact makes frequent reference to Meinong's works, especially in his earlier writings). Both were, like Frege (but unlike the later Husserl), *realist* philosophers, though Ingarden's realism was, as I hope to show, the more subtle of the two. And most importantly perhaps, both saw the need for a nonreductivist ontology, that is, for an ontology which would not seek to 'explain away' or 'paraphrase out' our talk about entities of certain kinds in terms of talk about other, more favored kinds of entities (e.g., material objects). Thus neither philosopher suffered from the prejudice in favor of real, concretely existing objects which has been so prevalent amongst analytic philosophers up until the present decade, and nor did they share the related prejudice in favor of the natural sciences at the expense of disciplines of other types (social science, say, or literary theory). In consequence they both shared the recognition that there are certain kinds of deliberate, critical concern with literary works within which fictional objects as such play a central role as referents. They saw—in modern parlance—that works of literary criticism, of literary history, etc., involve quantification over, e.g., fictional characters as individual objects, just as, say, works of electron physics involve quantification over (are ontologically committed to) electrons. And they saw also that even outside such 'theoretical' contexts we meet the same kind of ontological commitment to fictional characters as intersubjectively accessible objects of our acts. *For there is no way in which we can achieve a faithful reading of a fictional work without presupposing from the start that it is correlated with its own specific field of fictional characters.*

What has not been seen by proponents of reductivist theories of fiction is that this presupposition on the part of a given appropriately qualified subject cannot be regarded merely as some sort of *working hypothesis*, eventually to be dismissed as something insubstantial (spurious, illusory) in comparison with the "genuine" product of a particular reading (conceived, at worst, as the reader's own enjoyment). To see why this is so, a further comparison with the case of physics may perhaps be helpful: It was with the aid of the hypothetical conception of the atom as an absolutely simple, corpuscular entity that specific research programs were conceived, pro-

grams which led, eventually, to a more adequate, noncorpuscular atomic theory. Now in this case the purported ontological correlates of the original 'working hypothesis' (the 'corpuscles') *can* be dismissed as having enjoyed a purely heuristic significance. But this is not so in the case of the ontological correlates of those on-going 'hypotheses' which are projected in our readings of works of fiction. For the latter are (in faithful readings) absolutely secure against the kind of ontological overturning characteristic of scientific advances: there is no way in which we could reasonably claim to have 'discovered' that characters of a particular work fail to satisfy the canons of ontological rectitude. Such a claim could rest only on an assumption taken out prior to any individual commune with actual fictional texts, rest, that is to say, only upon just that kind of metaphysical presupposition which it is the philosopher's duty to reject.

For the same reasons both Ingarden and Meinong allow a place in their ontologies also for numbers and mathematical and abstract objects in general, for institutional entities such as universities and nation states (as entities founded upon but distinct from the totality of individual subjects, buildings, etc., which support them), and for certain other kinds of nonreal or nonmaterial entities.

Where Meinong and Ingarden differ is that Meinong allows no place for the crucial characteristic of fictional objects that they are *created* at determinate points in time (i.e., by the sentence-forming acts of the author of the appropriate work). Meinong defends instead a wholly counterintuitive picture of fictional objects as having been 'picked out' from an all-inclusive domain.⁴ Ingarden, in contrast, defends the much more reasonable position according to which fictional objects have an ontological status exclusively as the correlates of determinate networks of conscious acts on the part of the author of the appropriate work and of subsequent readers.⁵ We might say

⁴ Cf. Meinong's statement of his 'principle of the unlimited freedom of assumption':

In regard to every genuine or, so to speak, ordinary determination of so-being, it is in my power, according to the principle of unlimited freedom of assumption, to pick out — by means of adequate intention — an entity which in fact has that determination of so-being.

Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit, Leipzig, 1915, as trans. by R. Grossmann, *Meinong*, London, 1974, p. 160.

⁵ Thus a fictional object has ontological status only in the time subsequent to the laying down of an appropriate 'access route' — i.e., through the sentences of the relevant work, sentences which will determine the acts of the appropriately qualified reader as having an ontological correlate with a precisely determinate structure.

therefore that where Meinong defends a 'classical' logic of fiction involving commitment to a 'paradise' of superfluous entities having no more than ornamental value, the logic of fiction inherent in Ingarden's work is sharply constructivist, having affinities with the ontology underlying the constructivist abstraction theory developed by thinkers such as Lorenzen and Thiel.⁶

A correlate tendency in the Meinongean approach to the ontology of fiction is that it tends to underestimate the radical dissimilarity in ontological structure between real and fictional objects. Perhaps the most important such difference turns on the quite peculiar *ontological incompleteness* which is enjoyed by the latter. Certainly it is true that in the case of real objects (e.g., our contemporaries) and historical figures our *knowledge* is always incomplete, owing to the fact that it rests on only a finite quantity of information where the *objects* of our knowledge have (or had) an infinitely complex array of determinations. But the incompleteness involved here is *purely* epistemological: if we know only that Harold the Nth lost an eye in the battle of X, but not *which* eye, than we do not suppose that after the battle Harold himself was ontologically structured in such a way that the missing eye was indeterminately neither right nor left. To countenance such an ontological indeterminacy in objects of the past would involve too radical a warping of our frame of reference to real objects as this is extended from the field of coexisting objects into the field of that which no longer exists. With fictional objects however we have to come to terms — at least in our theory — with just this kind of ontological incompleteness.⁷ But it is important that this characteristic of incompleteness of fictional objects raises its head exclusively on the level of theory. This is because *every* experience of objects which we undergo is characterized by its own (usually epistemological) incompleteness: even the most adequate perception

⁶ Cf. e.g., Lorenzen's "Equality and Abstraction," *Ratio*, 4, 1962, pp. 85-90, and Thiel's "Gottlob Frege: Die Abstraktion," in *Grundprobleme der grossen Philosophen: Philosophie der Gegenwart* I, ed. J. Specht, Göttingen, 1972, pp. 9-44, and in *Studien zu Frege*, M. Schirn, ed., Stuttgart, 1976, vol. I, pp. 243-264. Note that a thorough-going abstraction theorist would argue that there is only *one* kind of "ticket" for the introduction of new objects, namely an appropriate equivalence relation, and that the objects introduced are not, in any case, to be taken *ontologically* seriously.

⁷ This is because real objects, e.g., real human beings, and the fictional characters modelled after them have the possibility of an infinite number of determinations; not all of these determinations can be "filled in" on the basis of only a finite number of sentences such as are found in a work of fiction.

of a real object, for example, is always one-sided. Thus we can do no other, in our pretheoretical commune with objects of any kind, than ascribe all inadequacies in our knowledge to the side of ever-present epistemological incompleteness. As we shall see, Meinong's ontology too allows a place for 'incompleteness' on the side of the fictional objects themselves. But for Meinongians the completeness/incompleteness dichotomy is not recognized as a radical opposition; it is seen rather as a *spectrum*, and a spectrum, moreover, which is such that every position is filled, atemporally, by one or other potential 'object of assumption.'

Since Meinong fails to take seriously the fact that fictional objects, like institutional objects of other kinds, are created in time, this implies that he is committed to an ontology of objects which is clumsily over-generous. Indeed it may not be too much to say that the massive over-generosity of Meinong's own *Gegenstandslehre* has had serious negative consequences for the subsequent history of philosophy, for the excesses of Meinong's own nonreductivist theory of entities became associated in the minds of philosophers with the discipline of ontology as such. Thus it came about that reductivist theories of various kinds came to be accepted as the norm throughout the philosophical community.

What is worse, perhaps, is that even against this over-rich theoretical background Meinong is still incapable of coming to grips with quite central problems in the ontology of fiction. This can be seen particularly clearly on the basis of an elegant formulation of the Meinongian approach to entity theory recently developed by Terence Parsons.⁸ According to Parsons we are to conceive *all* objects, whether real or fictional, possible or impossible, as represented by *clusters of properties*. Thus

Hannibal = cluster (or set) of Hannibal's properties

Jimmy Carter = cluster of Jimmy Carter's properties

Hamlet = cluster of Hamlet's properties (i.e., as determined by Shakespeare's text)

Meinong's golden mountain = cluster {*golden, mountain*}

Meinong's round square = cluster {*round, square*}

The absolutistic generosity of Meinong's ontology is to be accounted

⁸ See → "A Prolegomenon to Meinongian Semantics," *Journal of Philosophy*, 71, 1974, pp. 561-580 and "A Meinongian Analysis of Fictional Objects," *Grazer Philosophische Studien*, I, 1975, pp. 73-86.

for by the fact that objects are associated with (identified with?) *every* cluster of properties—not merely with those which are somehow actualized in the real world or (e.g.,) in one or other concretely existing work of fiction. That is to say, the given list is to be regarded as having been continued in some systematic way until all combinations of properties on the right-hand side have been exhausted, such that each would then correspond to an 'object' on the left. Such 'objects' then fall into two classes: (i) those which correspond to 'complete' clusters of properties,⁹ some of which would exist in the real world, some of which (say, the cluster correlated with a green-haired Jimmy Carter) would fall short of existence of any kind. (ii) Those which correspond to clusters which are *incomplete*—and the Meinong-Parsons theory is at least in this one respect adequate as an ontology of fiction, since it satisfies the requirement mentioned above, that all objects of fiction should be recognized as suffering from an intrinsic ontological incompleteness.

There are other respects, however, in which the theory shows itself to be inadequate to the job in hand. For not only is the underlying ontology committed, from the point of view of a theory of fiction, to far too *many* objects—it is also, for particular cases, committed to far too few: that is to say, the framework is insufficiently delicate to capture certain nuances characteristic of fictional works. This can be shown by means of a very simple example:¹⁰ consider the (one sentence) novel:

Schaub was a dragon who had ten magic rings.

According to Parsons' rules we have

ring 1 = cluster {*ring, owned by Schaub, magic*}

but then also

ring 2 = cluster {*ring, owned by Schaub, magic*}.

That is to say: ring 1 and ring 2 are identical—and similarly of course for the cases of rings 3, 4, 5,

This failure to account for the particular diversity involved is not merely a result of some artificiality in the example chosen: it results, rather, from the crudity of the notions of property and list/cluster/set

⁹ In a sense of 'completeness' parallel to that which was introduced above. For reasons expressed in note 11 below we are reluctant to assume a perfect identity of the two notions.

¹⁰ Adapted by Parsons from an example by David Lewis; see "A Meinongian Analysis," p. 82.

which form the basis of Parsons' theory.¹¹ This in turn rests on the fact that the theory has been developed within a wholly artificial set-theoretical framework where the overriding criteria are those of mathematical elegance and simplicity—not criteria of phenomenological (nor ontological) adequacy to any sphere in which the theory would eventually be applied. Note, however, that we are not criticizing the use of formal methods as such: an adequate ontological theory will have a complexity so great as to be expressible only by appeal to some correspondingly adequate technical language. But this complexity will itself have a certain quasi-empirical nature, to the extent that ontology comes to resemble certain scientific theories (such as, say, chemistry or theoretical biology) more nearly than those branches of mathematical logic hitherto developed.

One further point in which Parsons' formalization of the Meinongean approach approximates to an adequate theory turns on the fact that, as Ingarden was the first to point out,¹² fictional objects possess a quite peculiar *double property-structure*. This is reflected in the fact that we encounter two quite different sets of statements about fictional characters, with two quite different kinds of truth-behavior. The first set, containing what we shall call A-statements, consists of metalevel statements about fictional characters as such, typical of those which are to be found in critical and theoretical texts. (Examples would be: 'Sherlock Holmes was presented by Conan Doyle in novel N as a violin-playing detective'; 'Sherlock Holmes is an inadequately developed character'; etc.). B-statements are statements to be found in the novels themselves or—within certain limits—statements deducible from the latter by appeal to logical and scientific laws.¹³ Now our account of the structure of fictional objects must reflect (i) the fact that A-statements may be true, unconditionally, and that such statements satisfy the law of excluded middle; and then also (ii) that we can acknowledge B-statements as in some way 'correct' or 'incorrect' only if we interpret the predicates involved more or less

¹¹ This is something which Parsons promises to refine in a future paper (cf. *loc. cit.*, p. 76), though the sketches he gives of his intended refinements suggest that he will continue to associate (ontological) properties too closely with (linguistic) predicates. Note that Meinong's own original theory of properties (or better: of individual accidents) was much more subtle (cf. Grossmann, *op. cit.* Ch. I), though correspondingly difficult to capture within a formal ontological theory.

¹² Cf. *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, p. 120ff *et passim*.

¹³ See J. Woods, *The Logic of Fiction*, Paris and the Hague, 1974, §13, for an indication of the kind of limitations involved.

metaphorically. Thus consider the B-statement: 'Sherlock Holmes was a detective,' properly acknowledgeable as *correct*, even though the fictional object designated by 'Sherlock Holmes' was not a detective in the strict sense of the term—since only flesh-and-blood human beings may qualify for the status of detectivehood. We must also note that B-statements fail to satisfy the law of excluded middle, in the sense that there are incorrect B-statements which are such that their negations, too, are incorrect. (Consider, e.g., the statement-pair: 'Hamlet was left-handed,' 'Hamlet was not left-handed'). This failure corresponds to the ontological incompleteness of fictional objects mentioned above as a factor in both the Ingardenian and the Meinong/Parsons approach to the ontology of fiction.

(i) and (ii) together imply that whilst we may associate with each true A-statement concerning a given fictional object some determination intrinsic to the object itself, B-statements—precisely the statements which determine the 'properties' of Parsons' cluster theory—must be dealt with in a quite different way. Ingarden's suggestion is that we develop a conception of fictional objects as radically distinct, in their property behavior, from real objects of the material world. Fictional objects are to be conceived, he argues, as possessing two distinct ranks of properties, or rather, one rank of *properties* in the strict sense, corresponding to true A-statements, and a second rank of merely *ascribed characteristics*, corresponding to correct B-statements. Any resultant incompatibility is made harmless by the fact that members of each group are acceded to within distinct contexts: it is only on the theoretical level that we accede to rank A properties, where it is exclusively rank B characteristics which hold our attention during any actual reading of the work.

Now Parsons too, as we said, is committed to a double structure view of fictional objects. But note how inadequate is his double structure theory in comparison with that which has been developed by Ingarden. Parsons' two ranks of properties are: set-theoretical properties (*is included in, is nonempty, intersects with, and so on*), which correspond to our A-properties, being seen as possessed by the fictional objects themselves; and properties determined by the sentences of the novel in question (= our characteristics). Note first of all that this double structure is possessed also by real objects in Parsons' theory, for real objects too are identified as particular sets. The radical heterogeneity between real and fictional objects is therefore masked. In the Ingardenian framework, in contrast, A-properties consist precisely of those formal and intentional ('nonexistence entail-

ing') properties¹⁴ characteristic of fictional objects as such: *is a fictional object, was created by Conan Doyle in 1883, is presented in work W as short and fat, etc.*, and the radical difference between the manner in which material properties are *associated with* fictional objects and the manner in which such properties are *possessed by* real material objects proper is thereby brought into light, something which is quite excluded within the Meinong/Parsons framework.

Underlying this tendency of the Meinongean approach to mask the ontological differences between real and fictional objects is a conception of fictional objects as possible entities. Thus Doyle is seen as describing, in his Holmes novels, a world which is a possible alternative to this, the actual world in which we live. Holmes differs ontologically from e.g., Jimmy Carter only in that Holmes happens not to exist in the actual world: he is a *pure possibile*. This is not to suggest that Parsons logic of fiction is consistent with a *possibilia* ontology for fictional characters. For it seems clear—on the assumption that objects can be identified as sets of properties at all—that only those sets which are *complete*, in the sense determined above, can qualify as either possible or actual realia. A Meinongean who wanted to develop a *possibilia* ontology of fiction against the background of Parsons' theory would therefore find himself committed to a view of fictional objects as intrinsically complete, determined in every respect down to the lowest possible differences, on the basis of a finite number of sentences in a literary work!¹⁵

The *possibilia* view suggests a conception of fictional objects as cows in a distant field, works of fiction being regarded as telescopes which enable us to gain access to and distinguish features of these peculiar groups of neighbors. Ingarden's work however, which has been supported by recent arguments of Kripke and Woods, points to the absolute untenability of this conception of fictional objects. The arguments involved can be most easily expressed, perhaps, if we appeal to the notion of *admissible transition* from one object, state, or event to another related object, state, or event. The following present themselves, on the basis of our present knowledge of the laws of (e.g.)

¹⁴ Cf. Cocchiarella, "Existence entailing attributes, modes of copulation and modes of being in second order logic," *Noûs*, 3, 1969, pp. 33-53.

¹⁵ See Woods, "Fictionality and the Logic of Relations," *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy*, 7, 1976, pp. 51-63, and ch. 2 of *The Logic of Fiction*.

physics, as valid examples of admissible transitions:

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|-----------------------|---|--|
| Jimmy Carter (alive) | → | Jimmy Carter as corpse |
| Jimmy Carter as youth | → | Jimmy Carter as trappist monk |
| this drop of water | → | a totality of free oxygen and hydrogen molecules, etc. |

The following, on the other hand, present themselves as transitions which are inadmissible:

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Prime Minister | | |
| Gladstone | → | a transcendental number |
| this table here | → | that table there |
| this rabbit here | → | a tiger, a bar of gold, . . . , etc. |

Note that these transitions are divided into admissible and inadmissible ontologically, and not as a reflection of our knowledge at any given stage; for even though appeal must be made to that knowledge in drawing up an exemplary list of cases of either kind, the line between the two kinds of cases is something to be discovered by our experiments, and not created. Thus it can be that a transition which seems, at one state, clearly inadmissible, say

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|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| John's heart beating | → | John's heart beating |
| inside John's body | | inside Tom's body, |

may reveal itself as—in itself—admissible as a result of advances in medical technique (but only in those cases where both John and Tom are alive subsequent to the putting into practice of those advances).

The argument concerning the purported status of fictional objects as *possibilia* should now be clear.¹⁶ Objects are *possible* only if they occur as the second term of some admissible transition, where the first term is an object in this our actual world. Inspection reveals that this account is satisfied by all of those objects (states and events) which we should normally accept as possible existents (for example, Jimmy Carter's fourteenth child). Now clearly

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|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| the flesh-and-blood | | a fictional character, created |
| product of human | → | as a result of the actions of |
| sperm and egg | | author, printer, publisher, etc. |

is an inadmissible object-to-object transition: the most that we can allow is that some flesh-and-blood human being and some fictional character could be *namesakes*, never that they could be identically

¹⁶ It rests on intuitions concerning our use of designatory expressions developed by Kripke in his "Naming and Necessity," in *Semantics for Natural Languages*, Davidson and Harman, eds., Dordrecht, 1972, 253-355, 763-69; cf. also Woods, *op. cit.* and—from a different, no longer purely linguistic point of view—Ingarden, *Der Streit um die Existenz der Welt*, vol. I, § 11.

the same object. One consequence of these arguments is that fictional objects, being excluded from the realm of *possibilia* (and therefore, *a fortiori*, from the realm of actual existents) are *necessarily non-existent*—something which must be carefully distinguished from any claim to the effect that fictional objects necessarily lack any ontological status whatsoever.

It is not our purpose here to present a complete account of Ingarden's own positive views concerning the ontological status of fictional objects. These are presented in great detail in Ch. IX of *The Controversy over the Existence of the World* (see note 1 above) and in his book on *The Literary of Art: An Investigation on the Borderlines of Ontology, Logic and the Theory of Literature* (see note 3), a work which contains, incidentally, a 200 page centerpiece on the theory of meaning, many of whose insights have since been rediscovered by analytical philosophers of language. Let it suffice here to say that a logical formulation of the Ingardenian ontology of fictional objects would possess—in contrast to the Meinong/Parsons system discussed above—the following components:

(i) It would be *constructivist*. That is to say, fictional objects—and other kinds of institutional object (e.g., works of art in general, nation states, etc.)—would be *indexed* temporally and, where relevant, by associated work. This is in reflection of their being created *ex nihilo*, by particular acts of an author (or, in other cases, e.g., by acts of parliament, acts of war, etc.).¹⁷ No sentence involving the *use* of a proper name of a fictional character can express a true proposition in times prior to the temporal index of that character. Note that whilst the quantificational machinery associated with institutional object names and variables must, for an Ingardenian, be constructivist, the logic involved may well be embedded in a classical quantification theory for real object names and variables. Syntactic 'dualism' would thus reflect the ontological dualism involved in supposing that whilst fictional objects are created by acts of consciousness, real existent objects of the material world are ontologically independent of all such acts.

(ii) An object is distinguished from its stock of properties (i.e., in the case of a fictional object, from its double stock of properties and

¹⁷ It is this structure of indices and not, e.g., the laws of set theoretic identity or close variants thereof, which will eventually determine the criteria of identity for fictional objects which are to be built into the formal ontology at present under consideration.

characteristics). Thus syntactically speaking object-names are distinguished from the names of (e.g.) sets of properties associated with them. Note that in making this requirement we do not commit ourselves to the possibility that an object may exist (or have any kind of ontological status) independently of its actual stock of properties, nor indeed that properties may exist except as the properties (individual accidents) of determinate objects.

(iii) For the case of fictional objects in particular we have shown that it is necessary to distinguish properties *possessed by* the objects in question, from *characteristics* which are merely *associated with* those objects. It seems that we must restrict the normal syntax of attribution ($P(a)$, $R(a,b)$, etc.) to the former case, introducing some alternative mode of representation for characteristic-association.

Whether a logic of fiction satisfying these conditions can be developed which would have a facility equal to those logics already proposed, e.g., in allowing the expression of shared philosophical insights, is an open question. None of the given conditions need involve any radical overhaul of our basic logical machinery, indeed it seems that they would make themselves felt principally in the form of an unwield complexity in the system which resulted, but this, as we have argued, is no just ground for complaint. For the criteria of mathematical elegance—and mathematical deviance—for their own sake are out of place in the realm of formal ontology as a descriptive philosophical discipline.

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