

Kompositionalität sehr plausibel. Auf der anderen Seite scheint sie mir für die Bedeutung (im Sinne Freges) der Ausdrücke, - aufgrund der von Frege zu wenig berücksichtigten indexikalischen Ausdrücke - sehr unplausibel. Puntel aber unterscheidet nicht zwischen Sinn und Bedeutung und führt keine weiteren unterschiedlichen semantischen Werte an, sondern spricht von *dem* semantischen Wert eines Satzes. Dieser semantische Wert ist für ihn die Proposition, die vom Satz ausgedrückt wird. Nun kann man wohl zustimmen, daß eine Proposition - in irgend einem Sinne dieses unklaren Wortes - *ein* semantischer Wert eines Satzes sein könnte. Warum muß die Semantik aber einem Ausdruck nur einen Wert zuschreiben? Im Falle eines Satzes kommen viele Sachen in Frage, die semantisch nicht ohne Relevanz sind: (1) die linguistische Bedeutung (das, was in einer guten Übersetzung invariant bleibt, was man lernt, wenn man eine neue Sprache lernt); (2) die Intension, oder der Sinn, oder die Proposition, wie man es nennen möchte; dasjenige, was aufgrund der linguistischen Bedeutung sowie der Äußerungsumstände Wahrheitsbedingungen hat und somit wahr oder falsch sein kann; (3) die Wahrheitsbedingungen selbst; (4) der Sachverhalt, die Sachlage oder Situation, die vom Satz beschrieben wird; (5) die Tatsache, falls der Satz wirklich wahr ist; (6) die Menge der Gegenstände, worüber der Satz etwas aussagt; (7) der Glaubenszustand des Sprechers bezüglich dessen was er sagt; (8) der Wahrheitswert des Satzes; (9) das, was den Satz wahr macht, falls er wahr ist; der oder die Wahrmacher des Satzes. Ich will nicht leugnen, daß manche dieser Werte weniger wichtig als andere sind, oder daß man nicht das eine oder andere reduzieren oder eliminieren oder darauf verzichten könnte. Ich will nur zeigen, daß die Voraussetzung, es gäbe *den* semantischen Wert, äußerst begründungsbedürftig ist. Im Allgemeinen meine ich, daß die Wahrheit eines wahren kontingenten Satzes aus einem komplexen Zwischenspiel von Satzbedeutung, Satzteilbedeutungen, Äußerungskontext und Wahrmachern resultiert. Zwar gibt es hier Regelmäßigkeiten, aber man kann weder eine Kompositionalität des Referenzgegenstandes noch eine korrespondenzartige Isomorphie finden. Ich muß auch zugestehen, daß ich Propositionen unliebsame Abstraktionen finde, wogegen ich Urteile, Glaubenszustände sowie Äußerungen und Inschriften eher als Ausgangspunkt nehmen möchte, aber diese ist eine schwere Option und ich bestehe nicht darauf für diese Kritik. Auf jeden Fall, die wirkliche Semantik von wirklichen Sprachen ist nicht so einfach und nicht so schön, wie sie in den Logiklehrbüchern präsentiert wird. Denn dort hat man meistens eine einfache Modelltheorie, die unter dem (dann) unglücklichen Titel "Semantik" läuft.

#### Die wiedergewonnene Welt

((7)) Hat man keinen guten Grund, das Kontextprinzip "in aller Konsequenz" (Puntel) zu vertreten, gibt man ebenfalls die Idee auf, daß ein Primat des Satzes eine Reduktion zu einem einzigen semantischen Wert, nämlich zur Proposition führt, so kann man getrost die Existenz der Welt an sich behaupten, mindestens scheint mir ihr keine Bedrohung von

der Wahrheitstheorie her zu bestehen. Die Welt an sich ist die Gesamtheit der Dinge an sich, inklusive der Tatsachen an sich, falls man darunter die Wahrmacher an sich versteht. Und da jedes Ding mindestens eine Wahrheit wahr macht, nämlich die, daß es dieses Ding gibt, ist die Welt somit gleichfalls die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen und die Gesamtheit der Dinge. Ob diese Gesamtheit selbst ein Gegenstand irgend einer ontologischen Kategorie ist, scheint mir fraglich; sie ist eher ein Sammelsurium aus diversen Kategorien. Zu sagen, die Welt an sich existiere, besagt dann lediglich, daß es mindestens ein Ding an sich gibt und nicht, daß es einen *Gegenstand* namens "Welt an sich" gibt. Trotzdem schön, daß es sie auch in diesem Sinne gibt.

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#### Puntel on Truth, Or: Old Idealistic Wine in New Semantic Bottles

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((1)) I shall devote myself exclusively in what follows to Puntel's claim to have produced a 'general theory' capable of doing justice not only to the logical and semantical moments of truth but also to the ontological aspects of this notion and indeed in a way which serves to elucidate also our relevant common-sensical conception. Thus I shall refer only to Puntel's theses 2-7, where this general theory is presented. Puntel rightly sets himself in opposition to those who would approach the theory of truth exclusively in terms of resolving the familiar paradoxes. Such approaches have all too often issued in little more than partial (trick-)conceptions of truth, in which the original truth-relation itself is no longer recognizable. His own conception is in this respect much more ambitious and if only for this reason deserving of careful attention.

#### Ad Thesis 2

((2)) Puntel distinguishes two linguistic levels: the level of ordinary speech, and the level of theorizing thereupon. He tells us that the former *understands* what it means by 'true' or 'truth': we do, after all, communicate with each other on this level and we communicate successfully. Thus he holds that 'truth' is on the level of common sense not in need of clarification or explication. Common sense does indeed operate with the notion of truth as something unproblematic. Something similar applies also to a whole range of notions central both to common sense and to philosophy, for example to notions like *time, mind, person, life*, and so on. Yet in regard

to all of these notions we ought more properly to say that common sense has certain *accepted views*, views which do not change and which seem to be distributed widely across different times and cultures. Such views are trivial; indeed in many cases they are trivially *true*. (Examples: time can be divided into past, present and future; mind is distinct from but somehow related to body; a brick is not a person; a brick is not alive; whether it is true that John is hungry depends on the state of certain relevant parts of John's body, and so on). In addition to the truths captured in such accepted trivialities, however, there exists a range of questions associated with the given notions, questions formulable in the language of common sense, in relation to which *common sense has no official view and can have no official view*. Thus for example common sense has no official view on questions like: what is time? how does mind relate to body? when do persons begin to exist? Nor, it will be clear, does common sense have an official view on the question: what is truth?

((3)) The principal task of the theorist of truth from this perspective is, then, not that of moving up to a higher linguistic level and thereby explaining or elucidating what is accepted somehow inchoately on the lower, common-sensical level. For the most fundamental problems of the theory of truth can be formulated already in perfectly common-sensical terms. Rather, it is one of extending and filling in the gaps in that conception of truth which exists and functions successfully already in the world of common sense. As we shall see, the tendency of Puntel to move up and down, back and forth, between different linguistic levels, rather than concerning himself strictly with the truth-relation itself and with our common-sense understanding thereof, proves fateful to the success of his ultimate venture.

#### Ad Thesis 3

((4)) Common sense is clear that the truth of 'John is hungry' depends at least in part on the state of John's body, a part of 'reality' (of the '*Wirklichkeit (in irgendeinem Sinn)*') referred to in Puntel's thesis 3(1)). Thesis 3(2), too, is perfectly acceptable: one sort of entity (utterances? sentences? beliefs?) is, as common sense normally supposes, *true of* bits and pieces of reality. 3(3) is pleonastic. 3(4) is false, at least as far as common sense is concerned, for it might perfectly well be true that Fritz is *somewhat* bald, or that Dirk is *in some star-system or other* both of which seem, on the face of it, to be highly *indeterminate* truths. In his elucidation of (4) in paragraph ((23)) Puntel makes a still more questionable claim to the effect that an entity can be qualified as true only if all other relevant properties (consistency, acceptability, etc.) are presupposed as given. The following are, however, perfectly acceptable utterances: 'Alonzo's theory is true, but the fact that he starts from those axioms makes it completely unacceptable', 'Giuseppe's theory is true, but we know, alas, that it must always remain incomplete', and further such utterances can be produced at will.

#### Ad Thesis 4

((5)) It is that which is expressed by a sentence which is the bearer of truth. Thus it is true *that John is hungry*. Puntel calls a bearer of truth in this sense a 'proposition'. Such a proposition is in the market for being true, he tells us, only if it is capable of being *actualized* (uttered, thought, believed, or what one will) by a cognitive subject. On Puntel's view, then, it could never be true *that there no longer exist any cognitive subjects*. It could never be true *that the universe is an empty universe*. The reader will be rightly suspicious of a framework within which such grandiose consequences can be drawn from so unassuming a starting-point.

#### Ad Thesis 5

((6)) Standard (Tarski-style) semantics is associated with an ontology which sees the world as divided into objects considered after the pattern of (discrete, tidily demarcated, not further analysed or analysable) *elements of sets*. Such objects have properties and stand in relations, but only in the sense that they are members of certain sets of ordered 1- or more-tuples. To exemplify an attribute is to be a member of a certain set.

((7)) Puntel is right to insist that this ontology is highly questionable as the basis of a theory of truth which will do justice to the crucial thesis 3(1), that *truth has to do with reality*. For reality is not an abstract set-theoretical structure of the sort just described. That John is hungry consists not in his being a member of the set of hungry objects; rather it consists in certain non-abstract states and events involving his bodily parts.

#### Ad Thesis 6

((8)) What makes it true that John is hungry is a complex of attributes of John and of his bodily parts. These attributes are constituents of reality; they occur or obtain at a certain time and place. This, at least, would be an account of the matter in keeping with ontology, with common sense, and with the just-mentioned thesis 3(1). Puntel's own statement of this matter in thesis 6(2) reads thus:

The proposition - the direct semantic value of the sentence - is to be determined as an attribute realized in a world.

One initial problem here is this 'in a world'. Are there *other* worlds, *other* realities in the spirit of thesis 3(1), so that some truths would be true not of this reality but of some reality next door? More important still is Puntel's unsupported assumption to the effect that propositions in this ontological sense can be identified, without further ado, with those 'contents of declarative sentences' referred to under thesis 4.

((9)) That John is hungry consists, we said, in certain non-abstract states and events involving his bodily parts. This much, perhaps, is in keeping with Puntel's identification (for logically simple sentences) of sentence-content and realized attributes. What, however, of a false sentence like 'John is made of anti-matter'? Can we identify the content of this sentence with any realized attribute or attribute-family? Yes, Puntel blithely argues - with a realized attribute that belongs not to this world, but to some other, neighbouring world.

((10)) Propositions in this sense, now, as attributes-realized-in-some-world are the primary entities of Puntel's theory. Puntel holds firmly to the Fregean context principle to the effect that is only in the context of a sentence that linguistic expressions have any sort of semantic value. From this it follows, in Puntel's eyes, that propositions themselves cannot be understood as combinations of more primitive or more simple entities (thus also not in the usual manner e.g. as combinations of abstract universals and substrate-objects).

((11)) A primary or simple proposition is, Puntel tells us, the 'realization of an attribute "at" a locus, or more precisely: "as" a locus in a system, i.e. in a world: the system (the world) consists then in (its) "occupied" loci, i.e. out of the attributes realized in the given system (in the given world).'

((41)) In his *Grundlagen einer Theorie der Wahrheit* Puntel gives us further elucidation of this 'locus' hocus pocus. His idea, there, is that each world or region of reality can be understood as a system or totality of loci or *Stellen* at which properties or relations (blueness, wetness, happiness, love) are realized. A proposition is a blueness here, a wetness there. Such attributes *in re* - something like the moments or tropes or individual accidents of the tradition - he sees as the most fundamental bits of worldly furniture. Indeed universals exist only *in re*, i.e. only in such propositions.

#### Ad Thesis 7

((12)) Individual objects of the usual sort, including selves, are special sorts of configurations or 'bundles' of 'primary *Verhalte*'. Events and processes, too, are reduced to configurations of primary *Verhalte*, for example to the massive unstructured configurations expressed by utterances like 'Fire!' or 'Storm ahead!'

((13)) This means, Puntel argues, that predication can be understood in a new way, 'quite different' from that of the 'whole philosophical tradition and wide stretches of analytic philosophy'. Unfortunately he does not tell us *how* this is to be achieved, though we are presumably to interpret him as moving in the direction of something like the theories of Castañeda, or Armstrong, or Johansson, or indeed of theories embraced already at earlier stages in the philosophical tradition, for example by Meinong and by Stumpf in some of their writings, perhaps even by Spinoza - none of whom is however mentioned here.

((14)) Thesis 7(2) reads:

"World" is to be determined as totality of propositions (or as maximal proposition) of a certain sort. The so-called real world is the totality of obtaining (= real) propositions or the maximal obtaining proposition

- a thesis which is to be understood, Puntel tells us, against the background of the literature on possible world semantics. As to what 'real' or 'obtaining' might mean, here, we are given no indication.

((15)) On older views, in keeping with common sense, truth is conceived as a relation between truth-bearers and some part or fragment of the world. In the Puntel-framework, however, this idea of truth as a correspondence-relation can no longer arise. For such a relation requires two terms, truth-bearer on the one hand, and truth-maker on the other, the latter being that in virtue of which the former is true. These two terms have however been identified, in Puntel's theory: his 'propositions' are to do service for both. That it is not entirely unproblematic, even for logically atomic sentences, to identify *that which is expressed by a sentence with the realization of an attribute at a locus of a system* seems not to have troubled our author. Yet one immediate consequence of such an identification is that all sentences now partake equally in the possession of an ontological correlate (some relevant 'attribute-realization' in some relevant 'system'), irrespective of whether they are true and false. Even the most outrageous of sentences, for example 'John has just eaten a cardinal number' becomes guaranteed an ontological correlate of its own. Indeed, a whole 'system' of such correlates. We become, as it were, overwhelmed with 'systems' or 'worlds', whose connection to reality seems all but lost, in a way which seems to owe not a little to the neo-idealist theory of 'world-making' embraced, of late, by Nelson Goodman.

Truth, of course, comes all too cheaply under this dispensation. A proposition is true, for Puntel, and I quote: "if it is a 'member' or 'constituent' of a world".

((16)) From where, then, do we derive the common-sensical idea to the effect that truth is a *relation* between two distinct terms or entities? From the fact, as Puntel would have it, that one and the same proposition can have either an 'indeterminate' or a 'determinate' status. It has the former when it serves merely as the content of some declarative sentence, where the relevant world is not yet fixed or specified. It has the latter when the relevant world is fixed or specified, and *to ascribe truth to a proposition* is according to Puntel to give it a fixed or determine status in this sense: *'to specify to which world or worlds it belongs'*. Even bearing in mind the technical character of Puntel's term's 'proposition' and 'world', here, this thesis is astonishing indeed. It implies that when I affirm, for example, that it is true that John is hungry, then what I am in fact doing is surveying the infinite totality of worlds or systems of realized attributes and fixing upon that world to which John and his present hunger belong. To the untutored eye, however, I seem much rather to be making an affirmation

of much more restricted locus (restricted, precisely, to John and his hunger).

### Conclusion

((17)) Can we conclude that Puntel has produced a theory that is able to do justice not only to the logical and semantical aspects of truth but also to the common-sensical conception of truth and to the ontology classically associated therewith? Unfortunately not. Certainly his efforts in the direction of a theory of truth based on immanent or realized universals are to be welcomed, and Puntel comes closer than most analytic philosophers in doing justice to the role played by immanent universals in the build-up of the world. His ideas on truth, however, get off the ground only because he has first reduced the world to a gigantic sentence- or (verb-)shaped construction. Thus he sees the stock of primary propositions as a reflection of the stock of attributes we have in our language; it follows for him that worlds are language-dependent, something which holds even of the actual world. Or rather: there are as many different actual worlds as there are different language-systems. The Puntel-world is treated under the perspective of a linguistic idealism, treated, indeed, as just one of an infinite family of alternative (linguistic) worlds and this takes away any ontological interest his treatment of realized universals might have possessed as the basis of a theory of truth. Each Puntel-world is held together by logical relations only lightly disguised (this is the content of Puntel's talk of 'maximal propositions' e.g. under thesis 7). Thus we find nothing of the causal, mereological and other relations with which common sense and ontological theory are familiar. Thus we must conclude that Puntel has not, after all, done justice to the idea that it is things and events and their dispositions and characters in this world which make our sentences true. Rather, a sentence like "John is hungry" is made true, on his conception, by something which belongs properly to the logico-linguistic sphere, on a view of the world which stems, like that of Castañeda or Goodman, from the efforts of a logician to do ontology in ignorance of the fact that there is a difference between ontology on the one hand and the hypostatization of logical entities on the other.

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## Theorie der Wahrheit und psychologische Forschung

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((1)) Die Perspektive, die von mir hier eingenommen wird, basiert zum einen auf der Grundlage meiner eigenen empirischen Forschung in der (Sozial-) Psychologie, zum anderen möchte ich nicht nur kritisieren, sondern auch Konsequenzen aus den Darstellungen des Kollegen Puntel ziehen.

((2)) Ich halte es für außerordentlich bedeutsam, daß wir uns, angeregt durch mehrere Arbeiten Puntels, wieder verstärkt um die Bedeutung unseres Zieles - der Konstruktion wahrer Theorien - kümmern. Dabei hilft mir jedoch weder Puntels Artikel noch sein Buch (das einen leserabschreckenden Preis besitzt) sehr viel weiter. Gerade an den Stellen, an denen wir uns besonders herumschlagen, nämlich wie eine Proposition in eine Welt eingliedert werden kann (Thesen 8, 9, 10), wird nichts weiter gesagt. Geht dieses 'Eingliedern' überhaupt, wenn man von einfachen Aussagen absieht? Wie sind theoretische Sätze in einen Maximalsatz eingliederbar?

((3)) Das praktische Forschungsvorgehen sieht hier die Inferenzstatistik vor (Witte, 1980, 1989). Dabei ist die zentrale Erkenntnis, daß letztlich eine "Eingliederung" nicht möglich ist. Bereits bei einem gewissen Maß an Verbindung zwischen  $\rho$  und  $\Sigma$  (These 9) geben wir uns zufrieden. Prinzipiell bleibt die Unbestimmtheit erhalten, ihr Grad nimmt jedoch ab.

((4)) Die in den Punkten ((45) - (48)) gemachten Aussagen halte ich für äußerst wichtig, weil sie häufig vergessen werden. Trotzdem muß der Unterschied zwischen theoretischer Aussage und Datum geklärt werden. Sicherlich ist ein Datum nicht ein Realitätsausschnitt im naiven Sinne, trotzdem gibt es ein Gefälle zwischen Datum und theoretischer Aussage. Dieses ist genauer - auch in einer explikativ-definitionalen TW - zu klären. (Übrigens ist mir das im Buch auch nicht ausreichend geklärt.)

((5)) Als weitere wichtige Punkte, gerade was die Beziehung zwischen Propositionen (theoretischer Sätze) und Welt angeht, bleibt die Frage nach der Konstruktion von (Partial-) Welten durch Partial-Methodologien zu klären, d.h. durch die Art der Erhebung von Daten (verändernd-beschreibend) und dem Anspruch auf Generalisierbarkeit (idiographisch-nomothetisch) werden Ausschnitte von Welten durch die jeweilige Partial-Methodologie (Hermeneutik, Ideologiekritik, Szientistik, Aktionsforschung) konstruiert. In diesem Zusammenhang sind auch unterschiedliche Wahrheitstheorien und -kriterien relevant (Witte, 1987). Interessanterweise bekommen dann das Kohärenzkriterium und die entsprechende Wahrheitstheorie eine besondere Stellung - ob die Wahrheit in den durch die entsprechende Methodologie konstruierte Welt übertragbar ist auf andere so konstruierte Welten (Witte, 1987). Man könnte dann Wahrheit einer Theorie in toto (WTT) von einer Wahrheit einer Theorie relativiert auf eine Partial-Methodologie (WPM) unterscheiden. Erstere ergibt sich nur, wenn WPM für alle Partial-Methodologien gilt. Eine solche Unterscheidung müßte nach meiner Vorstellung in einer Explikation von Wahrheit berücksichtigt werden.

((6)) Neben dem Problem der Konstruktion von Welten durch Partial-Methodologien gibt es auch die Auswahl von Welten, wenn man den Strukturalismus mit seiner Idee der intendierten Anwendungen heranzieht (Westmeyer, 1991). Auch dieses ist zumindest für sozialwissenschaftlich-psychologische Forschung von großer Bedeutung und sollte in einer Explikation Berücksichtigung finden.