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ERRATA

Location	Correction
p. 18, line 6	'objects' should be 'object'
p. 34, note 6, line 12 of note	The first occurrence of 'S' should be '&'
p. 35, line 3	'Außersein' would be better as 'Aussersein'
p. 36, line 7	' $m* \in M$ ' should be ' $m* \notin M$ '
p. 36, lines 8–9	'generaliztion' should be 'generalization'
p. 38, note 10, line 3 of note	'Colloquim' should be 'Colloquium'

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MEINONG, DEFECTIVE OBJECTS, AND (PSYCHO-)LOGICAL PARADOX

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There is nothing so unthinkable as thought,
unless it be the entire absence of thought.

Samuel Butler, cited in Hughes
and Brecht 1975: 63.

I. INTRODUCTION

Alexius Meinong developed a notion of "defective objects" in order to account for various logical and psychological paradoxes. The notion is of historical interest, since it presages recent work on the logical paradoxes by Herzberger and Kripke. But it fails to do the job it was designed for.

However, a technique implicit in Meinong's investigation is more successful and can be adapted to resolve a similar paradox discovered by Romane Clark in a revised version of Meinong's Theory of Objects (Rapaport 1978). One family of paradoxes remains, but I shall argue that they are unavoidable and relatively harmless.

II. SELF-PRESENTATION

In the course of an investigation of "emotional presentation (*Präsentation*)", Meinong (1917) discusses the paradox-prone notion of "self-presentation". According to his tripartite analysis of psychological experiences into a psychological *act*, a *content* of the experience, and an *object* (*Gegenstand*) of the experience, the content "directs" the act to the object. A "presentation" is a bringing before the mind of an object by a content. The activity of "presenting" thus seems to be the converse of "directing": the content

directs the act to the object and presents the object to the act (Meinong 1917K: 4,6; but contrast Lindenfeld 1980: 182).

Self-presentation eliminates the middle-man – the content. It occurs “in the case of internal perception” – “perceiving inner experiences” (Meinong 1917K: 6). An act of internal perception directs *itself* to the object, and the objects presents *itself* to the act. An alternative way of looking at this is to understand such cases as involving a *conflation* of the content with the object. (This turns internal perception into an adverbial phenomenon; cf. Rapaport 1979: 75.) Such self-presentation is potentially paradoxical when the object is itself an act. Meinong’s student, Ernst Mally, discussed such a paradox, which may serve as the focus of this essay.

III. MALLY’S PARADOX

According to Meinong, Mally claimed that

(MT) “the notion [*Begriff*] of a thinking [*Denken*] which ‘refers to itself’ [*sich selbst trifft*], no less than that of a thinking that does not refer to itself, is ‘meaningless’ (*‘sinnleer’*) [*sic*].”

(Meinong 1917: 294, my translation; cf. 1917K: 10.)

Meinong disagreed. His argument against Mally appears to proceed as follows:

(A) “nobody thinks that what is asserted of all judgments, restricted in such a way, might not include [*einbegriffen*] the asserting judgment itself.”

(Meinong 1917: 295, my translation; cf. 1917K: 10f.)

That is, what is asserted of judgments in general *is* asserted of the asserting judgment in particular. If every judgment has a certain feature *F*, then the judgment that every judgment has *F* must itself have *F*, since it, too, is a judgment. (This is the sort of thing that drove Russell to type theory.)

From (A), Meinong seems to conclude that

(B) “such long-established and self-evident statements as that each judgment . . . has an object . . . are not in agreement with” Mally’s thesis (MT).

(Meinong 1917: 295, my translation; cf. 1917K: 10.)

That is, (A) implies that (e.g.) the Thesis of Intentionality of Judgments,

(TI_j) Every judgment has an object,

isn’t compatible with Mally’s thesis. Thesis (TI_j) is an instance of the Thesis of Intentionality,

(TI) Every psychological act has an object.

So, the Thesis of Intentionality isn’t compatible with Mally’s thesis, because (according to (A)) (TI_j) has an object. Moreover, its object is the objective *that every judgment has an object*. (An “objective” is the object of psychological acts such as judging, believing, and assuming.) Thus, (TI_j) “refers to” itself; so, Mally’s thesis must be false, since the notion that (TI_j) refers to itself is not only not meaningless (*pace* Mally) but the Thesis of Intentionality (hence (TI_j)) is a central tenet of Meinong’s Theory of Objects.

Meinong’s argument rests on his Theory of Objects, together with the following assumptions:

(A₁) The object of (TI_j) is that-(TI_j) (i.e., the object of the act of judging that every judgment has an object is: that-(every judgment has an object)).

(A₂) Assumption (A₁) is a case of “self-reference” (in Mally’s sense, whatever that may be).

(A₃) Thesis (TI_j) is “meaningful” (in Mally’s sense, whatever that may be).

There is no reason at present to deny the Theory of Objects. Moreover, (TI_j) is part of that Theory. If Mally was trying to refute the Theory of Objects, then Meinong would appear to have a good counterexample to Mally’s thesis. If Mally was *not* trying to refute it, then he owes us a definition of ‘meaningless’. In the absence of one, let us (for now) accept (A₃).

Next, suppose that I judge that every judgment has an object. My act of judging, if true, therefore has an object. Its object could only be: that-(TI_j). So (A₁) is an acceptable assumption. Only (A) and (A₂) remain to be considered.

What, then, is “self-reference”? What is “reference” (as used here)? According to Meinong (1917K: 10), Mally was concerned with self-presentation. As we saw (Sect. II), that notion can be interpreted as a conflation of content with object, not necessarily of the content/object as conflated with the act. Yet the latter is what it would have to be in the present case. On the other hand, Meinong does talk (1917K: 6) of the thought directing itself, which sounds like an act/content conflation. If we assume that, in general, self-

presentation is content/object conflation, then, in a particular case, it might be act/content/object conflation. This is a good candidate for self-reference.

Now, let us naively ask whether (T_l) is its own object. As an *act*, its object is the *objective* that-(T_l). Can an act be an objective? Meinong's answer is "Yes"; Mally's, "No". So (A₂) is essentially the question at issue! Meinong's argument appears to be little more than a counterexample, viz., (T_l), to Mally's thesis. But that it is a counterexample is precisely the issue (and I would guess that Mally wouldn't accept it).

Consideration of (A) confirms this. For (A) has been notoriously questionable since Russell's time. Mally would probably deny it, perhaps on type-theoretical grounds: judgments about judgments are *meta*-judgments, which cannot fall within their own scope, on pain of contradiction. Since Meinong believes (A), perhaps his position is that a reducibility axiom operates in the mind.¹

To make matters worse, Meinong *also* held the type-theoretical principle

(H) "An object of higher order can never be its own subordinate."
(Meinong 1917K: 11.)

Since objectives are prime examples of higher-order objects, this implies that no objective can have itself as objectum (cf.: no sentence can have itself as subject). That is, no objective can be about itself. This not only sounds like Mally's thesis, but it can be used to *stop* a paradox about self-referring thoughts.²

Meinong sets out the paradox as follows (1917: 298, my translation; cf. 1917K: 13):

It addresses itself to the thought [*Gedanke*] of the 'thinking [*Denken*] (D) which does not refer to itself' with the question whether this thought (D')

1. Another possible interpretation of Meinong is to view his argument against (MT) as proceeding from (B) to (A). But that would be at best inductive, and, while it *may* provide a counterexample to (MT), (MT) could be easily revised. Presumably, (MT) is quite *general*, though it need not be universal.

2. The theory of higher-order objects as presented in Meinong 1978 is complicated and not obviously consistent with Meinong's Theory of Objects as presented in Meinong 1904; cf., also, Findlay 1963: 71ff and Grossmann 1974, Ch. IV. The complexities and inconsistencies are not, however, relevant for my present purposes. Neither is a defense of (H), as will become apparent.

refers to itself or not. If not, then it is precisely for that reason subsumable under the viewpoint of the thinking [*Denken*] (D) which does not concern itself [*sich nicht trifft*], viz., referred to through itself [*durch sich selbst getroffen*]. If, on the other hand, yes, then for that reason it does not refer to itself, because it fits under the viewpoint of the non-self-referrings [*sich selbst Nicht-treffens*].

The paradox is roughly this: Consider all thoughts (D) which are *not* about themselves. (If (H) is true, we would be considering *all* thoughts, of course.) Consider, next, a thought about *them*. Call this thought D'. Now, is D' about D'? If it is, then it isn't (since D' is about all thoughts which are *not* about themselves); and if it isn't, then it is: a paradox! Thesis (H) implies that no thoughts can be their own objects, so it stops the paradox by showing that there could not be such a thought as D'. But Meinong preferred another way out, derived from his examination of the Liar paradox, to which I now turn.

IV. THE LIAR PARADOX AND LOGICAL SPACE

There is no paradox in Epimenides the Cretan's statement that all Cretans lie: it merely shows that some Cretan doesn't lie. A paradox arises, however, when someone says, "I am now lying". According to Meinong, there is "logical space" in which to move around and so avoid paradox in the case of the Epimenides but not in the case of the Liar.

Meinong correctly observes that there is "no difficulty if someone were to say, 'In saying that *A* is *B*, I lie'" (Meinong 1917K: 14). Suppose someone had said, instead, "*A* is *B*", and then "*A* isn't *B*". Call these 'J₁' and 'J₂'. Now J₂ is true (false) iff J₁ is false (true). We have no contradiction since, as it were, J₂ points outside of itself. While Meinong's phrase ('In saying that *A* is *B*, I lie') "points to" itself, it is *separable* into J₁ and J₂, so it doesn't point to *all* of itself: it has logical space.

But "there is, so to speak, no logical space available . . . when somebody simply says, 'I lie,'" (Meinong 1917K: 14). 'I lie' points to *all* of itself; there is no other component of the sentence to be the "recipient" of the possibility of falsehood – to provide the logical breathing room.

It is tempting to accept Meinong's hypothesis that lack of logical

space is a sufficient condition for paradox. One might even hope that it is a necessary condition. But it is neither.

Lack of logical space is not sufficient for paradox, since 'This sentence is about itself' or 'This is an English sentence' lack logical space but are not paradoxical. And it is not a necessary condition, since 'This sentence is false, and ϕ ' (where ϕ is any necessary truth) or the pair of sentences

(α) Sentence (β) is true.

(β) Sentence (α) is false.

are paradoxical but *have* logical space.

Meinong, however, considered sentences with *no* logical space to be "incomplete" or "defective" (Meinong 1917K: 14f), and this led ultimately to his more general notion of defective objects.

V. DEFECTIVE OBJECTS

Purely self-referential expressions which (therefore) lack logical space are "incomplete"; in such cases, "one is confronted with a peculiar defectiveness in the *object* of thought" (Meinong 1917K: 15, my emphasis). What is this defectiveness?

1. *Kalsi's Interpretation.*

According to Marie-Luise Schubert Kalsi, "a defective object . . . is no object at all"; it does "not even have *Außersein*" (Kalsi 1980: 120). Instead, it appears to be something which plays the role of an object when there is no object.

It is difficult even to express this, for what does it mean to say that "there is" no object? That it doesn't exist? That it doesn't subsist? But these are properties that are applicable only when an object of a particular kind is intended in some psychological act. Perhaps this is why Kalsi believes the defective object lacks *Außersein*.

Meinong did toy with the idea that when one apprehends a defective objective, "one is confronted with defective objects which lack even *Außersein*, though this expression is indeed peculiar" (Meinong 1917K: 20). Indeed it is, for (*pace* Kalsi) *Außersein* is the realm of *all* objects of thought (cf. Rapaport 1978: 158). As we shall see later, defective objects need not lack *Außersein* (nor need they be placed in a realm of *Außersein*!).

Kalsi gives three sufficient conditions for the occurrence of such role-playing:

- (K1) "an expression which does not stand for any idea . . . denotes a defective object" (Kalsi 1980: 120).
- (K2) "if an expression is erroneously used to denote a supposed concretum [i.e., a thing "of which [an] intuitive . . . or imaging idea can be had"] of which there is none, e.g., 'circular square,' and which only can be a disconcretum [i.e., a thing "of which [an] intuitive [or, presumably, an imaging] idea cannot be had"], then it also denotes a defective object" (Kalsi 1980: 117, 120; cf. Meinong 1917K: 21).
- (K3) a "thought which does not have an object . . . [is] an experience whose object is defective" (Kalsi 1980: 121).

Expressions which *do* stand for ideas or are *not* erroneously used "denote" the object of the idea whose expression they are (Kalsi 1980: 119; but cf. Parsons 1979 and Rapaport 1981 for more detailed, though different, Meinongian semantic theories). So (K1) reduces to (K3) – of which self-presentation is the prime example (Kalsi 1980: 121) – and (K2) is rather obscure, as Kalsi admits (p. 121).

This interpretation is tempting. Over a year and half ago, I had a very vivid dream that I can still call to mind: it was of something oblong, stretched on a wire rack, with several of these filling up a rectangular board. The dream is not really describable or picturable (or, if it is, the picture would be almost completely abstract). *There are no such things* as were the object of my dream, *even in Außersein* – for what I dreamed was inchoate, although it didn't seem that way to me as I dreamed it.

Dreams would seem to be "imaging ideas"; linguistic thoughts would seem to be (expressions of) "intuitive ideas". Expressions which are meaningless or "random concatenations of letters" (Kalsi 1980: 121) might be the analogue in the latter realm of my dream. I had once thought this could be the resolution of Clark's paradox: the expression for the paradoxical property *SSC* (cf. Sect. VII, below) would be an apparently meaningful but merely random concatenation of words.

Unfortunately, this won't work, for (K3) is inconsistent with the Thesis of Intentionality. *All* acts have objects; hence, no thoughts lack objects. Insofar as defective objects play the role of objects, they *are* objects.

Admittedly, Meinong himself claimed that a defective object was “the object ‘experience without an object, or an experience with a peculiarly incomplete object’ ” (Meinong 1917K: 161). But this is an extremely curious passage. For one thing, it was a note presumably written long after *On Emotional Presentation* and appended thereto posthumously. Secondly, in it, Meinong *explicitly says* that defective objects are objects. Thirdly, he claims that they are *experiences*; this is crucial and will be discussed below. Finally, a highly plausible interpretation of the phrase in single quotes is that what might *appear* to be an experience with no object is *really* an experience with a *peculiarly incomplete* object (i.e., understanding ‘or’ as ‘i.e.’). While this interpretation is consistent with Kalsi’s, neither sheds much light on the peculiar incompleteness. But there is a glimmer of hope. Let us consider the matter more closely.

2. Meinong’s Theory.

Does the defectiveness arise, as Meinong claims, not only in paradoxical expressions, but also in such cases as ‘What I apprehend is correct’? Since there is no *paradox* in this case (although there *is* both self-reference and no logical space), the defectiveness is neither to be identified with paradoxicalness, nor can it be a *sufficient* condition (or a cause) of it. Nor do expressions like ‘this sentence is false, and ϕ ’ (where ϕ is necessarily true – see Sect. IV, above) seem to be connected with the defect, so the defectiveness does not appear to be a *necessary* condition of paradox, either.

Meinong locates the source of the “peculiarity” “involved in the apprehension of immediate objects” (Meinong 1917K: 15) in the tension between two of his principles, viz., the Thesis of Intentionality and the Principle of Logical Priority:

(PLP) The object is always logically prior to the act (Meinong 1917K: 15).

This Principle is closely related to both the Thesis of *Außersein* and to the Principle of the Independence of *Sosein* from *Sein* (cf. Rapaport 1978: 155ff). The “peculiarity” arises from the fact that in self-referential apprehensions which lack logical space, the object *is* the apprehension; hence, the object must be logically prior to itself, which makes no sense. The content appears to behave like a mirror, reflecting the apprehension back to itself, now *qua* object.

Self-reference is reflexive: thoughts about themselves, judgments about themselves – all get entangled in the Thesis of Intentionality and the Principle of Logical Priority. But so do other well-known cases which are not *directly* self-referential, but only indirectly so. A Meinongian example is person A’s thought of B’s thought, where B’s thought is merely of A’s thought cf. Meinong 1917K: 16). Another example (Chisholm 1973: 248) is my wish that your wish come true, when your wish is merely that mine come true. Such acts (for they are not all apprehensions) are *not* peculiar if there is a “stopping point” – if, that is, one of the acts in the sequence has an object which is not itself an act in the sequence. In such cycles, the acts “do not have objects in the way other experiences do” (Meinong 1917K: 18) – i.e., their object is another act which does not have an object as others do. But, by the Thesis of Intentionality, they *do* have objects; so, if, as Meinong says, “in a sense [they] lack objects altogether” (1917K: 18), that sense must be that they lack objects outside the cycle. Self-referential acts with no logical space are simply degenerate cycles. Meinong “call[s] each of these defectively incomplete objects a ‘defective object’ ” (1917K: 18).

Note well that he calls their *objects* “defective”. But each such object is itself an *act*. And each act in such a cycle (including the “first”) is the object of the preceding act, so each such *act* is a defective *object*, and *all* defective objects are such acts.

A defective object, then, is an *act* which satisfies the following two conditions:

Its object is defective.

It is the object of a defective object.

Less circularly, an act *A* is defective iff *A* is a member of a (finite) sequence of acts $A_1, \dots, A_i, \dots, (A_n)$ such that for each *i*, the object of A_i is A_{i+1} (and the object of A_n is A_1 ; when $n = 1$, *A* is self-referential without logical space).

Meinong’s point is that *defective* objects are the source of the trouble that led to Mally’s thesis (cf. Meinong 1917K: 21), but, as we shall see, his point is not sharp enough.

3. Defectiveness and Groundlessness.

It is of interest to note the resemblance of Meinong’s theory of defective objects to Herzberger’s (1970) theory of “groundless” sen-

tences, since extended by Kripke (1975).³ Where S is a sentence, let $D(S)$ be its "domain"; roughly, $D(S)$ is the set of things which S is about — this corresponds more or less to an object in Meinongian terms. If $D(S)$ contains a sentence, we can generalize: where k is an integer, let $D^k(S)$ be the domain of the domain of . . . (k repetitions of this) . . . the domain of S . Then S is groundless iff S is a member of a sequence of sentences S_1, \dots, S_i, \dots such that S_{i+1} is in the domain of S_i . That is S is groundless iff the judgment expressed by S is defective!

Unfortunately, there is a paradox of *grounded* sentences (cf. Herzberger 1970:151). There may also be a paradox of *non-defective* objects (perhaps Mally was on the right track, after all). To present one, some assumptions must be made. Of course, it may be these assumptions — rather than the notion of defective object — that are the source of the paradox. While both the assumptions and the paradox may be worthy of further examination, I shall merely present them here, for there is a much neater way out of the whole messy situation.

The paradox of grounded sentences is that the sentence, 'Grounded sentences are immune to the Liar paradox', is both grounded and not grounded. So, we might expect a paradox of non-defective objects to concern a judgment such as

(J) All non-defective judgments are immune from paradox.
But what is the object of (J)? Does it have only *one* object, or many? *Can* an act have many objects? *Can* a person actually (i.e., physically or psychologically) make a judgment about *all* judgments, or — more generally — can a person actually have a thought about *all* of the members of an infinite class?

In order to get the paradox of non-defective objects started, let us assume, first, that *each* non-defective judgment is an object of (J). And, second, let us make a slight addition, *pro tempore*, to the definition of defective objects to allow for such universal judgments or

3. Meinong seems to have had the misfortune of putting forth ideas before their time which were later independently rediscovered (without attribution to Meinong) and elaborated upon. Here is another example: "Whoever . . . says, . . . 'I believe that [the] harmonically pure can be melodically impure', says at least fundamentally etymologically nothing other than: 'I believe this: [the] harmonically pure can be melodically impure'" (Meinong 1910: 48; my translation). Cf. Davidson 1969, esp. p. 173 n. 13.

thoughts: a universal act of kind K (i.e., one about *all* acts of kind K) is defective iff at least one of its objects is defective in either this or the earlier sense. (For yet other forms of defectiveness, cf. the discussion of groundlessness in Spade 1972: 600.)

Now consider (J). Each of its objects is non-defective; hence, (J) is non-defective. But then (J) is (one of) its own object(s), so it is self-referential (with no logical space); hence, it *is* defective (in the new sense). Thus, (J) is both defective *and* non-defective.

VI. RUSSELL'S PARADOX

Even if defective objects are not paradoxical, they are still odd. One oddity is their name, for the only objects which are defective are ones which are *acts*; so, 'defective acts' might have been a better choice. Odder still, it follows from Meinong's own principles that the object of such a defective act is *not* an act (cf. Sect. III). This is at least as plausible as Frege's claim that the concept *horse* is not a concept; indeed, like Fregean concepts, acts are, in a sense, unsaturated — they need objects to "complete" them. Just as no concept can saturate another, so no act can be the object of an act.

This is implicit in Meinong's theory. He even toys with it explicitly, but then drops it. I would like to resurrect it and show how it fits in neatly with the revised Meinonian theory of Rapaport 1978. To see how, let's turn to Russell's paradox.

Russell's paradox concerns two categories of sets: (1) sets which have themselves as members and (2) sets which don't have themselves as members, and also the notorious set of all sets of category (2): the "Russell-set". While it is the negative character of the second category that is (partly) responsible for the paradox, Meinong focussed on the first.⁴ Since sets are objects of a "higher order" than their members, Meinong's type-theoretical principle (H) implies that there are

4. In the light of what I shall say later, it is of interest to note that $S = \{x : x \in x\}$ is not by itself paradoxical. So, actually, what Meinong does is examine a *different* puzzle concerning S . The puzzle is, essentially, that S is a member of itself iff it is a member of itself; i.e., there is no *independent condition* which tells us whether it is a member of itself. Similarly, $A = \{x : x \in B\}$ and $B = \{x : x \in A\}$ form a "cycle": $A \in A$ iff $A \in B$ iff $A \in A$.

neither self-membered sets nor a set of all (non-empty) non-self-membered sets, thus dissolving the paradox.

A residual problem is *not* dissolved: "The set that contains itself as an element is after all conceivable" (Meinong 1917K: 12), as is the Russell-set. Banished through one door, they merely return through another. Meinong defers his explicit solution of this problem (via defective objects) until after his discussion of Mally's paradox. His discussion of Russell's paradox is rather confusing, but at least one plausible interpretation (I am sure there are others) is to view (H) as a limiting principle on what can be thought. Surely, we *think* that we can think of the Russell-set and its ilk; (H) tells us, however, that we really *can't*. Perhaps the reason we *think* we can think of it is that we *can* think of similar sets which *don't* violate (H) (e.g., non-self-membered sets).

Thus interpreted, (H) appears to conflict with the Principle of Freedom of Assumption, viz., that (within certain practical limits) every object can be thought of (cf. Rapaport 1978: 156). However, an alternative interpretation, which does not thus conflict, is available when Meinong's tripartite act-content-object analysis is extended to a four-part, act-content-*Meinongian* object-*actual* object analysis (along the lines of Rapaport 1978).

On this revised theory, *Meinongian* objects (M-objects) are viewed as being *constituted* by properties; *actual* objects *exemplify* properties; and an actual object α is said to be a *Sein-correlate* of an M-object o iff α exemplifies all (but not necessarily only) the properties constituting o . (In symbols, α SCo iff $\forall F[F c o \rightarrow \alpha ex F]$. Also, $\langle F, G, \dots \rangle$ represents the M-object whose only constituting properties are F, G, \dots . Cf. Rapaport 1978: 165 for details.) To this, I shall add the following: an M-object o will be said to be an *M-object-counterpart* of an actual object α iff $\exists F[\alpha ex F \& F c o]$.

On this theory, the Russell-set and its ilk (e.g., such "conceivable" sets as self-membered ones) are M-objects which lack Sein-correlates on pain of contradiction. E.g., any *actual* set which would be a Sein-correlate of the Russell-set would have to exemplify contradictory properties, which no actual object can do. In other words, the Russell-set isn't a set, or (not to multiply paradoxes beyond necessity) the Russell-set is an M-object-counterpart of a set, which does not exemplify the property of being a set. It is "conceivable", however,

in the sense that it is an M-object; i.e., it is a possible object of thought.⁵

It is important to point out that this interpretation does *not* pretend to offer an *explanation* of the paradox or to isolate its source. It is, however, consistent with any such explanation. This analysis and interpretation of Russell's set-theoretical paradox carries over, more or less, to the others.

VII. THE INADEQUACY OF DEFECTIVE OBJECTS

Meinong's reason for classifying certain objects (or, as I have suggested, acts) as defective was to show the source of psychological paradoxes. But defectiveness is not a sufficient – and only at best a necessary – condition for paradoxicalness.

Defective objects may be peculiar, but they are not always paradoxical. What, e.g., is paradoxical about A's thought of B's thought even if B's thought *is* merely of A's thought? Nor is Chisholm's wish-example paradoxical: *My* wish (that your wish come true) will come true iff *your* wish comes true; *that* is certainly not paradoxical. And, even though your wish *is* that my wish come true, it merely follows that my wish will come true iff my wish comes true; and that's not paradoxical, either (though it doesn't say much about whether my wish will come true).

Consider non-peculiar (i.e., non-defective) acts: My wish that inflation stop will come true iff inflation stops. Inflation can stop (i.e., the object of my wish – *that inflation stops* – can come true) *independently of my wish*. But in the defective case, your wish (the object of mine) *cannot* come true independently of my wish. Similarly, if A thinks of a bird, the bird can be identified independently of A's thought (even if the bird doesn't exist, for *Sein* is independent of *Sein*). But in Meinong's defective-example, B's thought (the object of A's) cannot be identified independently of A's.

What seems peculiar about defective objects (acts) is not that they

5. M-objects *can* exemplify properties. E.g., the Russell-set exemplifies (but is not constituted by) the property of being discussed in this essay. Thus, M-objects are actual objects. The Russell-set, in particular, is: \langle being a set, being such that all and only the non-self-membered sets are its members \rangle ; cf. a similar resolution in Rescher and Brandom 1979:36f.

are paradoxical, but that, apparently, the object of a defective act cannot be identified independently of the act.

Yet even this is true only for certain acts. Suppose A thinks (at time t) that B's (only) thought (at t) is interesting, and B thinks (at t) that A's (only) thought (at t) is interesting. These acts are defective, by definition, but not peculiar. The object of A's act is true iff B's thought is interesting. But that might be true independently of B's thought, for perhaps B *always* thinks interesting thoughts.

In any case, paradoxical acts are at best a subclass of defective objects. Can they be singled out in some way? Mere self-reference won't do the trick: Let T be the thought: This thought is about itself. T does not seem paradoxical. (T is really quite vague; I will argue later that it comes close to expressing a falsehood, on the grounds that no thought can be about itself.)

Let T' = This thought is not about itself. T' seems to have *no* object; we are told what its object is *not*, not what its object *is*. Perhaps, then, it is not a thought at all. Or, if it is, then perhaps its object *is* itself. That would be paradoxical, for then its object would be itself *and* not itself (by its very definition). Or perhaps its object is: all thoughts which are neither identical to T' nor whose objects are (ultimately, in the cyclical-defective sense) T' ; peculiar, but not paradoxical. This case is also too vague to shed much light. (I shall argue later that T' comes close to expressing the truth that no thought can be about itself.)

More promisingly, suppose that A thinks (at t) that B's (only) thought (at t) is true, and B thinks that A's (only) thought (at t) is true. Then A's thought is true iff B's thought is true, iff A's thought is true. Peculiar, but not paradoxical. But should B's thought be that A's thought is *false* (or should A wish that B's wish come true, while B wish that A's wish *not* come true), we have a paradox.

At one time, Roderick Chisholm thought that something very like Meinong's theory of defective objects would block such paradoxes (cf. Chisholm 1966: 107-111). But his analysis, too, at best lumps the paradoxical cases with the merely peculiar and the downright harmless cases (and he seems to have abandoned the approach altogether: cf. Chisholm 1977: 91-97).

It appears that the only "harmful" cases of defective objects (acts) are either (1) ones which ascribe conflicting truth values to their objects, or (2) ones (like T') which, curiously enough, leave them-

selves out of their own object. 'Thought' is not a technical Meinongian term, so let me refine these two cases:

(1) For this case, let us talk of acts of judging. An act of judging would be true iff the object of the act exists or "has Sein" (cf. Rapaport 1978: 166f). Suppose:

A judges (at t) that the object of B's (only) act of judging (at t) has Sein

and B judges (at t) that the object of A's (only) act of judging (at t) lacks Sein.

Now, the object of A's act is the objective: *the object of B's act of judging has Sein*. This objective has Sein, according to the revised Meinongian theory, iff (a) $\exists\alpha[\alpha\text{SC} \langle\text{being the object of B's act of judging}\rangle \& \alpha \text{ ex the property of having Sein}]$ or (b) the property of having Sein *c the object of B's act of judging has Sein*. But (b) is false, for properties are not constituents of objectives.

So we focus on (a): For (a) to be true, α would have to be an M-object which *exemplified both* the property of being the object of B's act of judging *and* the property of having Sein.

So, α would have to be the object of B's act of judging and it would have to have Sein. Now, the object of B's act is the objective: *the object of A's act of judging lacks Sein*. So *that's* α . And it has to have Sein.

I.e., *the object of A's act of judging lacks Sein* must have Sein. And that would be the case iff either (a') $\exists\beta[\beta\text{SC} \langle\text{being the object of A's act of judging}\rangle \& \beta \text{ ex lacking Sein}]$ or (b') having Sein *c the object of A's act of judging lacks Sein*. But (b') is false.

Now (a') is true iff β is an M-object which exemplifies *both* the property of being the object of A's act of judging *and* the property of lacking Sein.

So β must be the object of A's act, viz.: *the object of B's act of judging has Sein*, and β would have to *lack* Sein.

So, the object of A's act *has* Sein iff it *lacks* Sein. A paradox.

(2) For this case, let I = the idea (*Vorstellung*) of all acts which are not (one of) their own object(s). What is I 's object? Suppose (as in Sect. V.3) that I is (part of) its own object. Then I is *not* (one of) its own object(s) (by definition). Suppose I *isn't* (one of) its own object(s). Then it *is* (by definition). Another paradox.

VIII. UNTHINKABLE THOUGHTS

The second of these paradoxes has an interesting resolution, reminiscent of the explanation of Russell's paradox in Section VI. From the viewpoint of the revised theory, if *I* is an *act*, then it is actual and not *constituted* by properties, and, so, it would *not* be in *Außersein* (i.e., it would *not* be an M-object). However, its *object(s)* must be in *Außersein*. Therefore, *I* ≠ *I*'s object. No contradiction arises, for *I* is an empty idea. Indeed, *there is no such idea as I* because its definition makes no sense. And its definition makes no sense because *no* idea can be its own object, since ideas are acts – which are not in *Außersein* – and objects *are* in *Außersein*. In fact, *I* is in *Außersein* (i.e., it is an M-object), but it has no *Sein*-correlate: *I* is *not* an actual idea.

The puzzle is that there are M-objects in *Außersein* which are M-object-counterparts of acts-with-objects. If I think about a (nother) thought *T*, then *T* must be in *Außersein*. *T* may have a *Sein*-correlate, τ ; τ would be an actual thought. So *Außersein* is, perhaps, even more highly populated than one might have thought: not only are there things which don't exist, *there are thoughts which no one can think!*

Such "acts" as *I* are in *Außersein*, but they are not actual (i.e., they have no *Sein*-correlates) on pain of contradiction. The rules of logic of the *actual* world are the limiting factors here (as in the case of the round square; cf. Rapaport 1978: 166).

Thus, in place of the notion of defective objects, we can have the notion of "Meinongian thoughts" – i.e., M-object-counterparts of psychological acts. Meinong's own theory also has these, of course, except that since he does not make a type-distinction between actual and M-objects, he needs to introduce the notion of defective objects. As a matter of fact, Meinong came close to embracing such a type-distinction explicitly: "Consequently, [because of the Principle of Logical Priority] . . . the experience of apprehension cannot possibly be identified with the object apprehended by it. The logical *prius* cannot coincide with the logical *posterius* if one wants to avoid an absurdity" (Meinong 1917K: 15). But instead of developing an act-content-Meinongian object-actual object theory, he introduced defective objects. One advantage, then, of the revised theory is that no such notion is needed.

The general point, then, is that no thought (or psychological ex-

perience) can be about *itself* (and, so perhaps, Mally is vindicated). At best, a thought can be about an M-object-counterpart of itself. "Defective cycles" – $A_1, \dots, A_i, A_{i+1}, \dots, A_n$ – are not really cycles or chains: A_i 's object isn't A_{i+1} , but an M-object-counterpart of A_{i+1} . On the revised theory, defective objects (i.e., alleged acts which have defective objects) are better viewed not as acts at all, but rather as M-objects without *Sein*-correlates.

There is a major objection: suppose I wish that your wish comes true. If your wish *has* (is) a non-defective object, then *my* wish is an actual wish. Otherwise, it is not. But surely it's actual in either case, isn't it? Isn't it a real psychological experience? And even if its object is merely an M-object-counterpart of an (actual) wish, there is still the potential for paradox, as we saw in case (1) of the last section.

I do not think this is a serious problem, but before I say why, I would like to show how Clark's paradox can be handled.

IX. CLARK'S PARADOX

A restatement of the paradox is in order. Let α be a variable ranging over actual objects (among which are all M-objects, since they can *exemplify* properties – cf. n. 5), and let o be a variable ranging over M-objects. Now α is a *Sein*-correlate of o iff α exemplifies all of o 's constituent properties:

$$\alpha \text{SC} o \text{ iff } \forall F [F c o \rightarrow \alpha \text{ ex } F].$$

Let SSC be the property of being a self-*Sein*-correlate:

$$\text{SSC} = \lambda x \forall F [F c x \rightarrow x \text{ ex } F];$$

and let $\overline{\text{SSC}}$ be the property of being a *non*-self-*Sein*-correlate (i.e., of not exemplifying at least one of its constituent properties):

$$\overline{\text{SSC}} = \lambda x \exists F [F c x \ \& \ \text{not}(x \text{ ex } F)].$$

The paradox is that the M-object $\langle \overline{\text{SSC}} \rangle$ both does and does not exemplify SSC. (This can be worked out fairly straightforwardly; for details, see Rapaport 1978, Sect. V.)⁶

6. This was first reported in Rapaport 1978, Sect. V. For the sake of historical accuracy, it should be noted that (as far as I know) Clark discovered the paradox in 1976 (in connection with Rapaport 1976) and *then* extended it (unsuccessfully, in my opinion) to Hector-Neri Castañeda's theory of guises. Cf. Clark

First, let's see if there's an unrevised Meinongian way out. Defective objects won't help, since $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ isn't an (alleged) act, hence not a defective object. But Meinong tried to resolve Russell's paradox via (H), not via defective objects. In the case of Clark's paradox, there is no literal violation of (H), since $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ isn't an object of higher order.

But (H) can be generalized and adapted to the revised theory. Consider:

(H') An objectum can never be (part of) its own constituting properties, i.e., its Sosein.

Now, $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ violates (H'). For, \overline{SSC} is defined in terms of *any* objectum, including, therefore, $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$. So $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ is, plausibly, part of its own Sosein. If one wishes to accept (H'), one can block Clark's paradox along the lines of Meinong's blocking of Russell's paradox. But if one does not wish to accept this excess baggage, the revised theory can handle the problem.

1978; Castañeda 1972, 1978; and Rapaport 1978.

A similar paradox was found in an adverbial interpretation of Meinong (Rapaport 1979). A version of it also *appears* to affect Frege's theory of *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*: Surely, there is some sort of association (*A*) between *Sinn* and properties. E.g., the *Sinn* of 'the morning star' ($s(M)$) is associated with the properties of being starlike (*S*) and being the last such object seen in the morning (*L*): $A(s(M), S)$ and $A(s(M), L)$. *Sinn* are related to properties in yet another way (*H*). E.g., $s(M)$ has the property (*B*) of having a *Bedeutung* belong to it, and $s(M)$ has the property (S_M) of being the *Sinn* of 'the morning star': $H(s(M), B)$ and $H(s(M), S_M)$.

Now consider the properties \mathfrak{F} and $\overline{\mathfrak{F}}$: $\lambda x \forall F [A(x, F) \rightarrow H(x, F)]$ and $\lambda x \exists F [A(x, F) \wedge \text{not-}H(x, F)]$, respectively. Consider the *Sinn* of 'the *Sinn* x which is such that $\exists F [A(x, F) \wedge \text{not-}H(x, F)]$ '. Call this *Sinn* S . Suppose $H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$. Then $\exists F [A(S, F) \wedge \text{not-}H(S, F)]$. But $\overline{\mathfrak{F}}$ is the only property F such that $A(S, F)$, so $\text{not-}H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$. Suppose then that $\text{not-}H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$. Then (plausibly?) $H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$. Hence, $\forall F [A(S, F) \rightarrow H(S, F)]$. But $A(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$; so $H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$.

Also, suppose $H(S, \mathfrak{F})$. Then $\forall F [A(S, F) \rightarrow H(S, F)]$; so, $A(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}}) \rightarrow H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$. Since $A(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$, we derive $H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$, whence (plausibly?) $\text{not-}H(S, \mathfrak{F})$. And if $\text{not-}H(S, \mathfrak{F})$, then (plausibly?) $H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$, whence $\exists F [A(S, F) \wedge \text{not-}H(S, F)]$. But the only F such that $A(S, F)$ is $\overline{\mathfrak{F}}$; so, $\text{not-}H(S, \overline{\mathfrak{F}})$. Hence (plausibly?) $H(S, \mathfrak{F})$.

Whether or not the adverbial and Fregean paradoxes are real is a matter for further investigation. But the resolution to be offered here for Clark's paradox will also resolve both of these.

That alleged thoughts such as *I* can lead to paradox shows us that there are no such thoughts. That $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ leads to paradox shows us that there is no such object in *Außersein* – it is *not* an object of thought. And this can only be because \overline{SSC} is not a property. It is an M-object-counterpart of a property, without a *Sein*-correlate among the *actual* properties. It must be the case that \overline{SSC} has no *Sein*-correlate, by a *reductio*: the assumption that it *does* (viz., assuming that $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ is an M-object) leads to a contradiction. No M-object has a *Sein*-correlate if the alleged *Sein*-correlate would be logically impossible.⁷ The M-object $\langle \text{being the property } \overline{SSC} \rangle$ ⁸ has no *Sein*-correlate, because its alleged *Sein*-correlate – viz., the property of being \overline{SSC} – would be logically impossible. It would be logically impossible because, if it existed, then $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ would be an object, which leads to Clark's paradox.

Is there a less transcendental, more constructive reason why \overline{SSC} isn't a property? In this *particular* case, it is probably because \overline{SSC} is impredicative. Thus, Clark's paradox is ultimately a result of an unrestricted abstraction principle. If not every open sentence corresponds to a property, then there is no paradox. And the antecedent of this is true, since, at the very least, (some of?) the impredicative open sentences do not so correspond.

When the paradox is generalized, this becomes clear:

Let R, S be distinct 2-place predicates such that $\text{Dom}(R) = \text{Dom}(S) =$ the set P of all properties and such that $\text{Rng}(R) =$ some non-empty set M and $\text{Rng}(S) =$ some non-empty set A which is such that $M \subset A$. Let $C \subset A \times M$ such that $(a, m) \in C$ iff $(\forall F \in P) [R(F, m) \rightarrow S(F, a)]$. In particular, $(m, m) \in C$ iff $(\forall F \in P) [R(F, m) \rightarrow S(F, m)]$. Assume $\mathfrak{F} = \lambda x (\forall F \in P) [R(F, x) \rightarrow S(F, x)]$ and $\overline{\mathfrak{F}} = \lambda x (\exists F \in P) [R(F, x) \wedge \sim S(F, x)] \in P$. Assume $\exists m^* \in M$ such that $(\forall F \in P) [R(F, m^*) \leftrightarrow F = \overline{\mathfrak{F}}]$. (Call this (*).) Assume $S(F, a)$ iff '*Fa*' is true.

Then $S(\overline{\mathfrak{F}}, m^*)$ iff $(\forall F \in P) [R(F, m^*) \rightarrow S(F, m^*)]$
iff $(\forall F \in P) [F = \overline{\mathfrak{F}} \rightarrow S(F, m^*)]$.

7. Since actual objects must be logically possible, this also rules out such complex properties as R -&- \overline{R} . Thus, $\langle \text{being round, being non-round} \rangle$ is an M-object, but $\langle \text{being round and non-round} \rangle$ is not. This is a reasonable price to pay (I hope!) for avoiding Clark's paradox. Rescher and Brandom 1979: 32 also pay this price.

8. N.B.: This is *not* the M-object $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$!

By (*), it follows that $S(\bar{F}, m^*)$. Therefore, $\bar{F}m^*$ is true. Therefore, $\sim Fm^*$ is true. Therefore, $\sim S(F, m^*)$.

If $\sim S(F, m^*)$, then $(\exists F \in P) [R(F, m^*) \& \sim S(F, m^*)]$. But, by (*), $F = \bar{F}$. Therefore, $\sim S(\bar{F}, m^*)$. Therefore, $\bar{F}m^*$ is false. Therefore, Fm^* is true. Therefore, $S(F, m^*)$.

So, either F and \bar{F} are not members of P , or $m^* \notin M$. But if $F, \bar{F} \notin P$, then $m^* \in M$. So the main reason a contradiction arises is that not every open sentence corresponds to a property. (For another generalization, cf. Fine, pp. 66ff.)

But – to return to Clark's paradox – surely we *can* think of $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$ – we are doing so right now, aren't we? – so *mustn't* it be in *Außersein* after all? If we're *not* now thinking of it, what *are* we thinking of? Since we *are* thinking, we *must* be thinking of something. One possibility is that we're thinking of something whose constituting property is: being an object of thought whose only constituting property is \overline{SSC} . But if \overline{SSC} *isn't* a property, then (perhaps) this is not a property either. Much more plausibly, when we *think* that we're thinking of $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$, what we are *really* doing is thinking of the *thought* of $\langle \overline{SSC} \rangle$.⁹ This *thought*, however, is an M-object with no Sein-correlate, and there is nothing paradoxical about that.

X. PSYCHOLOGICAL PARADOXES

What are we to do, however, about chains of acts (such as those discussed in Section V) which *do* lead to paradox?

Merely calling them “defective” – i.e., saying that they are acts with defective objects – carries no weight, since it fails to characterize them precisely enough. Nor can we say that they are acts whose objects lack Sein on pain of contradiction, since the assumption that they lack Sein is precisely what leads to contradiction.

There might be some hope in claiming that they are *not* acts, merely M-object-counterparts thereof. Psychological experiences are intentional – they are acts with objects. But there are also other activities which have objects. The difference between an intentional (psychological) act and a non-intentional (non-psychological) activity which has an object is that the object of the former need not exist.

9. I owe this suggestion to Randall Dipert.

So, e.g., a difference between the act of thinking and the activity of driving is that while I *can* think of a unicorn, I *can't* drive a non-existent car. But suppose that I am in a real car which – unknown to me – is on a reverse treadmill, and that things are so rigged up (with fake but highly realistic scenery going by, etc.) that I sincerely *believe* that I am driving the car from one place to another.

One might say that I am *not* driving a car but merely going through all the motions of driving a car (much as mimes go through motions). Defective wishes, it could then be said, are *not* wishes, but merely M-object-counterparts thereof. The tendency to say that a defective wish (i.e., an alleged wish without an object) is an actual wish would be explainable by the tendency to say that such “defective driving” is actual driving. If it's not, then neither is defective wishing actual wishing. I would be going through the motions of wishing, but not really doing it; I would only *think* I was.

This is tempting, since it is consistent with the resolution of the paradox concerning *I* (Section VIII): *I* is an alleged idea which I can't really have. It is just like the Russell-set: I can *think* that I'm thinking of *I*, just as I can write down $\{x: x \notin x\}$ and calculate with it. But I *can't* think of *I*, just as $\{x: x \notin x\}$ *isn't* a set.

Yet obviously I *can* have “defective” wishes and make “defective” judgments. Moreover, I am indeed driving the car; I do believe that I'm going somewhere; and I *would* be going somewhere were it not for the treadmill. But I'm really going nowhere, because – *unknown to me* – *there are countervailing forces frustrating me*. So I'm not *successfully* driving the car.

Now, suppose that I judge that your act of judging is true, and – unknown to me – your act of judging is to the effect that mine is false. I *am* judging, but my judgment is not successful, because of your countervailing one.

Perhaps there is no *problem* to be solved at all. What we have learned is that Meinong's theory of defective objects *won't* do what it's supposed to do and that the paradox about *I* and Clark's paradox *can* both be resolved. Our ability to produce paradoxical judgment-cycles is no more (and no less) serious than our ability to utter paradoxical *sentences*. In a formalized language, one wants to ensure that they cannot be produced; but no such restriction is needed or wanted in natural language: we must simply be careful when we speak or when we construct theories of truth. And the same holds in

the realm of thought — as indeed we should expect it to.

The lesson of the psychological paradoxes is that if we want to avoid them, we must be careful when we make judgments about the truth value of other judgments. But we've known that all along.¹⁰

10. Earlier versions of this essay were presented to the Fredonia Philosophy Department Staff Symposium, the Tri-State Philosophical Association, and the SUNY Buffalo Logic Colloquium. Larry Lee Blackman, Earl Conee, J. Christopher Maloney, and my Fredonia colleagues have provided valuable comments, as has an anonymous referee. Research for this essay was supported in part by a Faculty Research Fellowship from SUNY Research Foundation.

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