

ACQUAINTANCE WITH NON-EXISTING ENTITIES: RUSSELL'S VIEWS  
ON FICTIONALITY<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bertrand Russell was one of the most important founders of mathematical logic and he has contributed to the formulation of a modern semiotics over and above his logical studies in a series of different, generally well-known philosophical essays. Therefore if we want to summarize his special conception we must mention repeatedly some ideas and concepts introduced by him which appear today to be basic in semiotic research. Notwithstanding the fact that some of Russell's writings have absolute authority we cannot here speak of any unanimous and adequate interpretation of his philosophical studies; in spite of the rational and linguistic clarity in the formulation of his ideas the literature on Russell is full of misunderstandings and misinterpretations (cf. Russell (1944)). A reason for these errors can be found in the changing of his philosophical ideas which could hardly be considered as true representatives of a nominalistic system: he started out as a monistic philosopher, and even his first logistic work is characterized by a Platonic ontology, although he abandoned this position in his later studies he felt a sort of nostalgia for this view.<sup>2</sup> We do not intend to give an account of Russell's monist papers, even his later Platonic conception will only be mentioned and analysed briefly in order to make understandable the sense of the later changes. We shall have to summarize Russell's classical theory of denotation with all the new results it brought in ontological, epistemological and semantical contexts. Our main aim is, however, to give a

systematic analysis of Russell's views on fictionality. This investigation should be carried out not only because Russell was deeply interested in fictional texts and had an enormously wide literary and cultural education, he formulated from time to time some items of fiction, the number of which should not be limited to the published volumes Russell (1953), (1954) and (1961), but should include many unpublished stories, among others even a novel;<sup>3</sup> our study is moved by the importance of Russell's remarks which seem to bear a paradigmatic character. We find Russell's semantic ideas concerning fictionality with all the dilemmas and open questions very characteristic of the nominalistic point of view even if in the case of a dogmatic standpoint they were not formulated at all or were worded in such a way that the difficulties disappeared. Russell's different attempt at the definition of fictionality give an insight into the problems of interpretation the nominalistically based theory is confronted with, and point consequently to its advantages and to its risks.

1.1. Before dealing with Russell's ideas concerning fictionality we must have a comprehensive view of his conception determining his semantic decisions. His first contribution to modern logic and semiotics was formulated in Russell (1903), in a characteristic work of the transition announcing the new orientation in logic and mathematics and presenting a denotation theory based on Platonic ontology. We are mainly interested in his new ideas as far as they remained decisive in his later development. The Preface to the first edition of this volume speaks of two main objects: the reducibility of all pure mathematics to a very small number of fundamental concepts and the philosophical explanation of these fundamental concepts which mathematics accepts as indefinable (XV.). From our point of view the latter problem is obviously of main importance.

2.1.1. Russell's book opens with a definition of pure mathematics: "PURE Mathematics is the class of all propositions of the form 'p implies q', where p and q are propositions containing one or more variables, the same in the two propositions, and neither p nor q contain any constants except logical constants." (3.) It follows an explication of the term "logical constant" by means of the enumeration of several examples,<sup>4</sup> however, the central concept, the proposition, cannot in this way be elucidated, a full explanation is delivered during the theoretical explanation of logical concepts. Proposition is primarily introduced as a member of a logical metalanguage, and appears in opposition to logical variable, logical constant, propositional function, etc. A logical variable is a very complicated concept, "... a variable is any term *qua* term in a certain propositional function ... variables are distinguished by the propositional functions in which they occur, or, in the case of several variables, by the place they occupy in a given multiple variable propositional function." (107.) We can distinguish *apparent* and *real* variables, the former appear in propositions, "the variable is absorbed ... the proposition does not depend upon the variable; whereas in 'x is a man' there are different propositions for different values of the variable, and the variable is ... *real*". (13) The notion of a propositional function is explained, but not defined in the following way: " $\phi x$  is a propositional function if, for every value of  $x$ ,  $\phi x$  is a proposition, determinate when  $x$  is given". (19) A proposition can be conceived of syntactically in contradistinction to propositional function: "I shall speak of propositions exclusively where there is no real variable: where there are one or more real variables, and for all values of the variables the expression involved is a proposition, I shall call the expression a *propositional function*". (13) The proposition has over and above this characteristic and essential device:

"A proposition, we may say, is anything that is true or that is false." (12-13.) viz. it disposes of truth-value. Russell formulates a definition of proposition by means of a tautology

/1/

$$p \supset p$$

which holds only for propositions.<sup>5</sup> The logical analysis of proposition by means of the explanation of its further constituents such as material and formal implication, class, etc. is carried out in the way signalized by the quoted definitions which demonstrate Russell's discoveries during his first generalization of modern logic and mathematics, and at the same time the superficiality of some of his theses. As the last ones have been corrected in Principia Mathematica and we do not want to evince the changes which Russell's system underwent during that time we want to disregard an extensive analysis of his logical metalanguage and we want to see briefly how the concept of proposition is embedded in grammatical and semantical contexts.

1.1.2. Russell considers grammar already in this work "as a source of discovery" (42) even if correctness in the use of language must be checked philosophically because the general requirements are not ideally fulfilled in natural language and in its practical use. Therefore he tries to explain the linguistic structure from a philosophic and may we say a general semiotic point of view. At the centre of his investigation again stands the proposition, however, the main difference between the linguistic unit "sentece" and "proposition" is not clearly explicated. In his discussion with Bradley, Russell tries to point out the distinction between proposition and the linguistic unit sentence,<sup>6</sup> however, he cannot elucidate the mutual dependence of the two concepts on each other. In his later studies Russell (1919b) (1940) Russell points to propositions as invariant structure classes underlying declarative sentences formulat-

ed in different languages which have the same meaning, although in the linguistic formulation there exist some rhetorical differences besides the choice of the language; in this way it represents one of the most abstract semiotic structures of a linguistic utterance. As syntactic structures Russell mentions two different sequences:

/2/ a. Subject - verb - predicate

b. Subject - verb - object<sub>1</sub> ... object<sub>n</sub>

/2/ a. can be considered as the classical Aristotelian way of analysis, Russell's contention that relational predicates, i. e. verbs, cannot be reduced to the ancient Subject - copula - predicate formula opens the way to the new mathematical logical analysis of language. However at this stage it is full of difficulties, one of the main problems consists in the fact that syntactical facts, e. g. the existence of various possibilities for the fulfillment of a syntactic function like subject, make a semantic interpretation of these constituents very complicated, even unacceptable. This problem will be solved in Principia Mathematica by means of the introduction of the Theory of Types. At this point the Platonic ontology of this theory clearly manifests itself: the semantic category corresponding to the syntactic category subject is "term": "Whatever may be an object of thought, or may occur in any true or false proposition, or can be counted as *one*, I call a *term*. ... I shall use as synonymous with it the words unit, individual, and entity. The first two emphasize the fact that every term is *one*, while the third is derived from the fact that every term has being, i. e. *is* in some sense. A man, a moment, a number, a class, a relation, a chimaera, or anything else that can be mentioned, is sure to be a term: and to deny that such and such a thing is a term must always be false.: (43) This is a characteristically Meinongian point of view which has a direct influence on a theory concerning fictionality: it is

quite clear that "the pseudo-existents of a novel" (45) partake in this generally assumed existence of the objects. Terms are distinguished as things - the counterparts of proper names - and concepts which are indicated by all other words. "Among concepts ... two kinds at least must be distinguished, namely those indicated by adjectives and those indicated by verbs." (44) The first class is defined as predicate<sup>7</sup> the second is that of relations.<sup>8</sup> This grammatical conception has without doubt contributed to a new interpretation of the grammatical constituents, however, it does not offer a comprehensive overview of the linguistic system and the principles taken into account stand in contradiction to each other.

1.1.3. This contradictory relationship applies first of all to the semantic part of the theory. On the one hand Russell wants to formulate a correspondence theory based on empirical confrontation of linguistic utterances and the real connexions denoted by them, on the other hand, however, he postulates the Platonic or realistic existence of the objects appearing in texts. "Denoting", "denotation" appear in this theory as a second semantic term beside "meaning". Meaning is defined as a symbolic relation standing between single words and their non-verbal content.<sup>9</sup> The proposition is considered as an objective non-linguistic structure, it consists of the entities indicated by the words,<sup>10</sup> and corresponds with the Fregean "Gedanke" concept together with its truth-value.<sup>11</sup> In this sense "meaning" is irrelevant for proposition and for the semantic analysis of this central unit. "But such concepts as *a man* have meaning in another sense: they are so to speak, symbolic in their own logical nature, because they have the property which I call *denoting*. That is to say, when *a man* occurs in a proposition /e. g. 'I met a man in the street'/, the proposition is not about the concept *a man*, but about something quite different, some actual biped denoted by the concept. Thus concepts of

this kind have meaning in a non-psychological sense. And in this sense, when we say 'this is a man', we are making a proposition in which a concept is in some sense attached to what is not a concept." (47) Denotation is clearly introduced as the determining relation between some definite constituent of the verbal equivalent of the proposition and its non-verbal or even verbal referent, a unit formulated in the sense of the correspondence theory. "A concept *denotes* when, if it occurs in a proposition, the proposition is not *about* the concept, but about a term connected in a certain peculiar way with the concept. If I say 'I met a man', the proposition is not about *a man*: this is a concept which does not walk the streets, but lives in the shadowy limbo of the logic-books. What I met was a thing, not a concept, an actual man with a tailor and a bank-account or a public-house and a drunken wife." (53) Denoting can be expressed by predicates and more generally formulated by class-concepts which may appear alone in a simple subject-predicate proposition, but they may also have a great variety of closely allied concepts, i. e. an apparatus for describing the denotation in detail. The examination of denotation is carried out by means of the analysis of these operator concepts which combine predicative concepts in a way to form new denotating concepts. The examples chosen are "*all, every, any, a, some and the.*" (55) Russell's main contribution to denotation in this early work consists in the analysis of the first five mentioned operators by means of propositional logic and the calculus of classes, the definite description *the* had to be separated, because the author had here to be content with some general philosophical remarks concerning the main topic of his later theory of descriptions.

At the beginning of this analysis Russell raises the question: "is there one way of denoting six different kinds of objects, or are the ways of denoting different? And in the latter case, is the object denoted the same in all six

cases, or does the object differ as well as the way of denoting it?" (53) The dilemma spelled out in the first question is the classical problem of reference in medieval logic, i. e. which system should be chosen, the doctrine of distribution or the modes of reference. In the doctrine of distribution the difference of the reference is postulated, however, this solution leads to logical inconsistencies (cf. Geach (1962) 3-46), therefore we accept Geach's conclusion: 'if a theory of common nouns' being logical subjects is to be taken seriously, it must make any (unambiguous) common noun refer in an impartial way to each of the objects that could be so named in a simple act of naming.' (Geach (1962) 46). Russell's conception corresponds to the second theory, but it must be emphasized that this view is historically independent of the medieval approaches, but it agrees with them in pointing out "that denoting itself is the same in all cases" (Russell (1903) 62) and permits or does not exclude the conception of distinctness in the objects denoted by *all men*, *every men*, etc. as various species of reference. (61). The definition of different denoting phrases is given by means of logical operations: "All *a*'s ... denotes a numerical conjunction; it is definite as soon as *a* is given. The concept *all a*'s is a perfectly definite single concept, which denotes the terms of *a* taken all together. ... *Every a*, on the contrary, though it still denotes all the *a*'s, denotes them in a different way, i. e. severally instead of collectively, *Any a* denotes only one *a*- but it is wholly irrelevant which it denotes, and what is said will be equally true whichever it may be. Moreover, *any a* denotes a variable *a*, that is, whatever particular *a* we may fasten upon it, it is certain that *any a* does not denote that one; and yet of that one any proposition is true which is true of any *a*. *An a* denotes a variable disjunction: that is to say, a proposition which holds of *an a* may be false concerning each particular *a*, so that it is not reducible to a disjunction



of propositions ... *some a*, the constant disjunction ... denotes just one term of the class *a*, but the term it denotes may be any term of the class. ... In the case of a class *a* which has a finite number of terms - say  $a_1, a_2, a_3, \dots a_n$ , we can illustrate these various notions as follows:

- /1/ *All a's* denotes  $a_1$  and  $a_2$  and ... and  $a_n$ .
- /2/ *Every a* denotes  $a_1$  and denotes  $a_2$  and ... and denotes  $a_n$ .
- /3/ *Any a* denotes  $a_1$  or  $a_2$  ... or  $a_n$ , where *or* has the meaning that it is irrelevant which we take.
- /4/ *An a* denotes  $a_1$  or  $a_2$  or ... or  $a_n$ , where *or* has the meaning that no one in particular must be taken.
- /5/ *Some a* denotes  $a_1$  or denotes  $a_2$  or ... or denotes  $a_n$ , where it is not irrelevant which is taken, but on the contrary some one particular *a* must be taken." (58-59)

Concerning the definite description *the* we must be content with some general remarks: "The word *the*, in the singular, is correctly employed only in relation to a class-concept of which there is only one instance. We speak of *the King*, *the Prime Minister*, and so on (understanding *at the present time*); and in such cases there is a method of denoting one single definite term by means of a concept, which is not given us by any of our five words. It is owing to his notion that mathematics can give definitions of terms which are not concepts ... An object may be present to the mind, without our knowing any concept of which the said object is *the* instance; and the discovery of such a concept is not a mere improvement in notation. The reason why this appears to be the case is that, as soon as the definition is found, it becomes wholly unnecessary to the reasoning to remember the actual object defined, since only concepts irrelevant to our deductions." (62-63) Russell points out that "the

actual use of identity, though not its meaning, was also found to depend upon this way of denoting a single term." (65)

1.2. We have dealt rather extensively with this Meinongian denotation theory because some of the most essential problems of Russell's later conception are notionally and terminologically prepared in his early views. (cf. Hursthouse (1980)) even if some of his critics (e. g. Geach) are inclined to see in it an erroneous theory that should be distinguished from his later writings. We should like to lay stress equally upon similarity and dissimilarity, therefore we shall compare this starting point with the results of Russell's later development in view of ontological and epistemological determination, and the syntactic-semantic structure of denotation.

1.2.1. The ontological standpoint in Russell's early work is Platonic or realistic, this can be established on the basis of his analysis of the semantic constituents of the proposition: we remember his postulate that the subject of the proposition was a term and this term was conceived as being in each case an existing entity. This is a Meinongian view and its theoretical background should not be explicated within the frame of the present study. However, this work does not appear an orthodox representative of the classical realistic view: with his critic oriented against the Aristotelian Subject-copula-predicate formula presented as the only logic-linguistic structure of our different utterances, Russell proves to be an adversary of the classical substance-attribute conception which is based on the criticized subject-predicate theory.<sup>12</sup> It is highly significant that in the definition of matter Russell does not take the realistic foundation of his theory into account but he tries to give an empiricist characterization of this

entity. "*Material unit* is a class-concept, applicable to whatever has the following characteristics: /1/ A simple material unit occupies a spatial point at any moment; two units cannot occupy the same point at the same moment, and one cannot occupy two points at the same moment. /2/ Every material unit persists through time; its positions in space at any two moments may be the same or different; but if different, the positions at times intermediate between the two chosen must form a continuous series. /3/ Two material units differ in the same immediate manner as two points or two colours; they agree in having the relation of inclusion in a class to the general concept *matter*, or rather to the general concept *material unit*. Matter itself seems to be a collective name for all pieces of matter, as space for all points and time for all instants. It is thus the peculiar relation to space and time which distinguishes matter from other qualities, and not any logical difference such as that of subject and predicate, or substance and attribute." (468). The spatial-temporal determined material units build chains of events underlying physical relations like causality, motion. The non-material particulars are - with the exception of some brief remarks on occupation of time without existence (cf. 471) - not extensively dealt within the frame of this theory so that we do not have the slightest idea the place that chimerae and impossible objects should have in the realm of the being conceived by Russell (cf. Quine (1966) p. 658). Instead of a Meinongian development of this realistic system Russell's main decision in the ontological field consisted in giving up those terms which were not connected with space and time and of whose existence we have no empirical verification through perception, and in confining himself to the study of events and the problems of knowledge, i. e. how do we obtain reliable information about the existing particulars. This turning-point in Russell's ontological conception was a rather complicat-

ed process and if one considers that some constituents of this system were worked out on such a scale as e. g. in the case of the redefinition of matter which was achieved in Russell (1927a) and the theory of knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description which goes back to 1902, one may ask whether we can speak about a coherent system or not.<sup>13</sup> We can detect an inner logic between the different constituents the enumeration of which we begin with the earliest theory concerning the different kinds of knowledge of particulars. The sensible and understandable use of language has, over and above grammatical and semiotical rules, some epistemological predispositions concerning our knowledge of constituents spelled out in the following general principle: "Every proposition which we understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted." (Russell (1910-1911) 209. and similarly Russell (1912) 91.) This principle makes grammar dependent on our knowledge of the external world: we can only speak about objects that we know and the meaning of which is familiar to us by means of linguistic items. This means not only that proper names must denote different individuals, but "our bound variables range over known individuals only" and the "quantifiers range over objects of acquaintance only" (Hintikka (1981) 175.)

Russell admits two kinds of objects that correspond to the linguistic constituents: "There are ... at least two sorts of objects of which we are aware, namely, particulars and universals. Among particulars I include all existents, and all complexes of which one or more constituents are existents, such as this-before-that, this-above-that, the-yellowness-of-this. Among universals I include all objects of which no particular is a constituent. Thus the disjunction 'universal-particular' includes all objects." (Russell (1910-1911) 204.) The postulation of existing universals, which applies to the relation (it is supposed that we are

acquainted with the meaning of it and not merely with instances of it), is a characteristically non-nominalistical feature in Russell's system.

Russell argues that there are two essential ways in which we can obtain knowledge of the non-verbal or verbal content of the constituents in our linguistic system: the first consists in acquaintance, i. e. a direct presentation of the particulars to us (cf. Russell (1910-1911) 201f.) the second in a verbal definite description "the so-and-so" having the distinctive features of this formula, namely the existence of a unique object possessing such and such predicates (Ibid, 205.) In this way Russell's theory of knowledge points to the epistemological frame in which the conception of the perception of objects can be formulated and to a new denotation theory based on the principles of Russell (1905b) and of Principia Mathematica.

1.2.2. Epistemological questions are introduced by the relation acquaintance: they can primarily be formulated according to which objects may appear as referents of the dyadic relation "acquaintance", the *relatum* being always "we", i.e. representants of a socio-culturally defined human community. These objects are, as we know, particulars and universals and according to Russell one becomes aware of both of them by means of sense-data (Russell (1910-1911) 201, 203.). After his early works Russell became a consistent follower of British empiricism, he considered that sense-data and perception are the only direct information we acquire from the world of the objects and therefore they are our means of control of our verbal expressions: We have no data at our disposal giving insight into the material structure of physical appearances except our sense-data, which can be considered as mental events. Russell is of the opinion that we may have "some principle *a priori* without the need of empirical verification", however, the main line of defini-

tion lies in another direction: "We may succeed in actually defining the objects of physics as functions of sense-data. Just in so far as physics leads to expectations, this *must* be possible, since we can only *expect* what can be experienced. And in so far as the physical state of affairs is inferred from sense-data it must be capable of expression as a function of sense-data." (Russell (1914b)). Russell explained this special compresence of physical-material structure with perceptive psycho-physiological connexions by the concept of his neutral monism redefining the relationship of mental and material constituents to each other in the structure of the world: "... the view which I am advocating is neither materialism nor mentalism, but what (following the suggestion of Dr. H. M. Sheffer) we call 'neutral monism'. It is monism in the sense that it regards the world as composed of only one *kind* of stuff, namely events; but it is pluralism in the sense that it admits the existence of a great multiplicity of events, each minimal event being a logically self-subsistent entity." (Russell (1927b) 293.) "While, on the question of the stuff of the world, the theory ... has certain affinities with idealism - namely, that mental events are part of that stuff, and that the rest of the stuff resembles them more than it resembles traditional billiard-balls - the position advocated as regards scientific laws has more affinity with materialism than with idealism." (Russell (1927a) 388.) Physics can never be analysed without taking into account the psychological component of the perception of the physical facts, therefore Russell deals intensively with the contemporary development of psycho-physiological sciences. He turned in first decade of this century to the behaviorism which he found a progressive experimental trend in psycho-physiology, although he could never agree with its dogmatic antimentalism. He formulated his relationship to behaviorism in the following way: "This philosophy ... holds that every-

thing that can be known about man is discoverable by the method of external observation, i. e. that none of our knowledge depends, essentially and necessarily, upon data in which the observer and the observed are the same person. I do not fundamentally agree with this view, but I think it contains much more truth than most people suppose, and I regard it as desirable to develop the behaviorist method to the fullest possible extent. I believe that the knowledge to be obtained by this method, so long as we take physics for granted, is self-contained, and need not, at any point, appeal to data derived from introspection ... Nevertheless, I hold that there are such observations and there is knowledge which depends upon introspection. What is more, I hold that data of this kind are required for a critical exposition of physics, which behaviorism takes for granted. I shall, therefore, after setting forth the behaviorist view of man, proceed to a scrutiny of our knowledge of physics, returning thence to man, but now as viewed from within". (Russell (1927b) 73-74.) Behaviorism can serve as an auxiliary science and we may achieve by means of it a number of interesting results, however, its conclusions must be queried because of the inadequate foundation of the theory. Russell's attack against behaviorism as a final philosophy formulates the inconsequences following from its theoretical and methodological one-sidedness (cf. Russell (1927b) 135, 139.) As to the material or physical side of the inquiry Russell gave up very slowly the Newtonian concept presented in Russell (1903): after the mainly linguistically-logically oriented logical atomism he turned again to the structures of the external world and after having given an outline in Russell (1924) he formulated an intensive analysis of matter in Russell (1927a) which applied already the results of Einstein's theory. This book is conceived on the basis of an elaborated variant of neutral monism, therefore the investigation ends with a part "in which we endeavour to discover a possible

structure of the physical world which shall at once justify physics and take account of the connection with perception demanded by the necessity for an empirical basis for physics. Here we are concerned first with the construction of points as systems of events which overlap, or are 'conpunctual', in space-time, and then with purely ordinal properties of space-time. ... The conception of one unit of matter - say one electron - as a 'substance', i. e. a single simple entity persisting through time, is not one which we are justified in adopting, since we have no evidence whatever as to whether it is false or true. We define a single material unit as a 'causal line', i. e. as a series of events connected with each other by an intrinsic differential causal law which determines first-order changes, leaving second-order changes to be determined by extrinsic causal laws."

(Russell (1927a) 401.) This special view remained Russell's conception concerning physical structure in his ensuing decisive works (Russell (1940) and (1948)). Structure itself may be defined by several relations. There are abstract, logical and mathematical relationships between the constituents of the structure that may be explained by means of a minimum vocabulary (cf. Russell (1948) 267-283.).

1.2.3. These deep changes in the ontological and epistemological structure of Russell's theory had direct consequences for the formulation of his denotation theory. In the early theory presented in Russell (1903) one may mention different "slips on Russell's part" (Geach (1962) 77.) such as the incorrect translation of the formula "any term of an A", the unsatisfactory distinction between 'any' and 'every' at a certain place (cf. Geach (1962) 76-77.) etc. however the main problem with the whole theory consists in the fact that it fails to take into consideration the question of the scope and therefore it must be held to be radically inconsistent: "With a little ingenuity all the examples that gave plausibility to the distinctions between 'any' and 'every',



between 'some and 'a', can be explained by differences of punctuation or scope." (Geach (1962) 105.) Russell's turning-point with respect to denotation is his classical essay Russell (1905b): here he is compelled to revise the requirement to dispose semantic categories, meaning and denotation, each of them pertaining to different constituents of the proposition. The result of this revision is "that the whole distinction of meaning and denotation has been wrongly conceived." (Russell (1905b) 50.) The central idea of the new theory is formulated so "that denoting phrases never have any meaning in themselves, but that every proposition in whose verbal expression they occur has a meaning." (Russell (1905b) 43.) The terminology is new, Russell does not speak any more about denoting concepts, the denoting phrases correspond to the combination of concepts by means of the six words *all*, *every*, *any*, etc. Besides the denoting phrases there is a simple constituent which has directly to do with denotation: "a name ... directly designating and individual which is its meaning, and having this meaning in its own right, independently of the meanings of all other words" (Russell (1919a) 174.). Names, i. e. proper names have the function of designating particulars and in Russell's different periods the particulars were seen as "terms of relations in atomic facts" (Russell (1918-1919) 199.) or as "assigned to any continuous portion of space-time ... every proper name is the name of a structure, not of something destitute of parts". (Russell (1940) 31.) Independently of the different interpretation of this category there is a constant suspicion concerning proper names used in natural language: "The names that we commonly use, like 'Socrates', are really abbreviations for descriptions; not only that, but what they describe are not particulars but complicated systems of classes or series. A name, in the narrow logical sense of a word whose meaning is a particular, can only be applied to a particular with which the speaker is acquaint-

ed..." (Russell (1918-1919) 200, 201.) This view and in general the application of Russell's theory of knowledge to the natural language raise different problems cf. Reeves (1933) and Black (1944). From the vocabulary only egocentric particulars such as "this" may fulfil the strict requirements in designating an object. In contrast to proper names, denoting phrases do not have a constant meaning, it is questionable whether they have significance at all in the concrete proposition. This can be decided by means of a strictly codified translation of the proposition in a logical structure determining its constituents and their relationship to each other. The idea of the reduction of denoting phrases to symbolic logic made most of the distinctions introduced in Russell (1903) outworn concepts: here the scope was fully recognized and differences between the linguistic formulations that cannot be captured in a pure logical system (cf. Lang (1977), Kanyó (1977)) appeared to be of secondary importance. The logical analysis could give a clear logical-semantic interpretation for denoting phrases containing *all, every, no, any, some*, the specific problems of denotation in this case are connected with the use and the semantic sense of variables bound by universal and existential operators. The remaining types of denoting phrases - the first introduced by *the*, the second by *a(n)* - represent highly interesting cases of denotation and are named *descriptions*, i. e. the first *definite*, the second *indefinite description*. It is the definite description that stands at the centre of the theory of description. This formula is formally defined: "a definite description is a phrase of the form 'the so-and-so' (in the singular)". (Russell (1919a) 167.) This definition is unsatisfactory however, - as e. g. Linsky has pointed out in Linsky (1967) 63. the same expression does not refer to a particular in a general statement. In answer to similar criticisms in Moore (1944) 214f Russell deplored his "own carelessness in the use of ordinary lan-

guage. As to this, however, I should say that the whole of my theory of descriptions is contained in the definitions at the beginning of \*14 of *Principia Mathematica*, and that the reason for using an artificial symbolic language was the inevitable vagueness and ambiguity of any language used for every-day purposes". (Russell (1944) 690.) Therefore the resolving of the question "whether a phrase is or is not a definite description (in a given proposition) depends on the logical form of that proposition, on how the proposition is to be analysed". (Linsky (1967) 63.) Definite descriptions are introduced as incomplete symbols. "By an 'incomplete' symbol we mean a symbol which is not supposed to have any meaning in isolation, but is only defined in certain contexts," (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 66.) This means that the apparent grammatical subject expressed by the denoting phrase disappears in the process of the logical analysis and what remains is a complex logical structure of different constituents which have not been transparent in the previous linguistic formulation. In this sense the definite description (e. g. "the author of Waverley") differs from a true proper name i. e. "Scott", being an incomplete symbol it has a meaning in use, but not in isolation. "For 'the author of Waverley- cannot mean the same as 'Scott', or 'Scott is the author of Waverley' would mean the same as 'Scott is Scott', which it plainly does not; nor can 'the author of Waverley' mean anything other than 'Scott', or 'Scott is the author of Waverley' would be false, Hence 'the author of Waverley' means nothing." (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 67.) Therefore there can be no general definition of the meaning of a definite description, but only a definition of the uses of its symbol, i. e. "the propositions in whose symbolic expression it occurs." (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 67.) The definite description itself is formulated as  $(\lambda x)(\phi x)$ , its meaning can, however, be given in respect with a proposition, e. g. 'The author of Waverley was a poet'. "This implies that (1)

Waverley was written, (2) that it was written by one man, and not in collaboration, (3) that the one man who wrote it was a poet. If any one of these fails, the proposition is false. Thus 'the author of "Slawkenburgius on Noses" was a poet' is false, because no such book was ever written: 'the author of "The Maid's Tragedy" was a poet' is false, because this play was written by Beaumont and Fletcher jointly. These two possibilities of falsehood do not arise if we say 'Scott was a poet'. Thus our interpretation of the uses of  $(\iota x)(\phi x)$  must be such as to allow for them. Now taking  $\phi x$  to replace 'x wrote Waverley', it is plain that any statement apparently about  $(\iota x)(\phi x)$  requires (1)  $(\exists x) \cdot (\phi x)$  and (2)  $\phi x \cdot \phi y \supset_{x,y} \cdot x=y$ ; here (1) states that *at least* one object satisfies  $\phi x$ , while (2) states that *at most* one object satisfies  $\phi x$ . The two together are equivalent to  $(\exists c) : \phi x \cdot \exists_x \cdot \phi x = c$ , which we defined as  $E!(\iota x)(\phi x)$ ". (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 68.)  $E!$  is the secondary predicate existence, the above formalized criterion means that there must exist the unique object referred to by the definite description. Russell's two most important definitions for definite descriptions are:

$$14.01. [(\exists x)(\phi x)] \quad \Psi(\iota x)(\phi x) = (\exists c)(x) \\ [(\phi x) \equiv (x = c) \ \& \ (\psi c)] \quad \text{Df}$$

(Whitehead-Russell (1910) 175. We give the definition in a more easily understandable modern transcription.) This definition expresses the above mentioned criteria: there is at least one object  $c$ , there is at most one object  $c$  that satisfies  $\phi x$  and this object disposes of the predicate  $\psi$  as well. Or in Russell's formulation: "... 'the term satisfying  $\phi x$  satisfies  $\psi x$ ' is defined as meaning: 'There is a term  $c$  such that (1)  $\phi x$  is always equivalent to 'x is c'', (2)  $\psi c$  is true'". (Russell (1919a) 178.) The second definition states the existence-criterion:

$$14.02. \quad E!(\iota x)(\phi x) = (\exists c)(x) \quad (\phi x) \equiv (x = c)$$

In Whitehead-Russell (1910) we find, besides this general introduction to definite description, a typology of its forms according to the syntactic category of the predicate determining the argument bound by the iota operator. In the quoted example "author" was reducible to the predicate "write", a transitive verb the grammatical object ("Waverley") of which was given so that the prescriptions applied in general to the argument bound by the iota operator without any distinction with respect to the syntactic role fulfilled by this argument or by the predicate which determines it. If the predicate is a relation, several descriptions may be distinguished. The general case of a descriptive function is  $R'y = (\iota x)(xRy)$  Df. That is, 'R'y' is to mean the term  $x$  which has the relation  $R$  to  $y$ ". (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 232.) The relation itself may be defined as converse of a relation e. g. "less", versus "greater" (cf. 238-241.) or the relative product of two relations e. g. "father" x "father" = "paternal grandfather" (cf. 256-264.). Relations with limited domains and converse domains, e. g. "brother" and "sister" express the same relation (that of a common parentage), with the domain limited in the first case to males, in the second to females" (265. cr. 265-267.). For relations with limited fields cf. (277-278.). Plurality of descriptive functions can be taken into account with respect to the referents and relata of a given relation, thus "e. g.  $R$  is the relation of parent to son,  $\tilde{R}'y =$  the parents of  $y$ ,  $\tilde{R}'x =$  the sons of  $x$ ". (cf. 242-246.) but even a special plural descriptive function " $R''\beta$ " is introduced to mean 'the terms which have the relation  $R$  to members of  $\beta$ '" (279. cr. 279-295.). A number of non-propositional functions existing between two classes, or two relations, or any class and a relation are called double descriptive functions, by means of which new relations and classes can be introduced and lay the foundations for the definition of operation (296-298.) The definition of unit class allows for a new

analysis of definite descriptions. As a new descriptive function we have " $\hat{1}x$ ", meaning 'the class of terms which are identical with  $x$ ', which is the same thing as 'the class whose only member is  $x$ '. We are thus to have " $\hat{1}x = \hat{y}(y=x)$ ". (340.) We can define the number 1 by means of the unit class, it is "defined as the class of unit classes, i. e.

$1 = \alpha\{(\exists x) \cdot \alpha = \hat{1}x\}$  Df. This leads to

$\vdash : \alpha \in 1. \equiv : (\exists x) : y \in \alpha . \equiv_y . y = x$ . From this it appears further that

$$\vdash : \alpha \in 1. \equiv . E! (\hat{1}x)(x \in \alpha),$$

whence

$$\vdash : \hat{z}(\phi z) \in 1. \equiv . E! (\hat{1}x)(\phi x),$$

i.e. ' $\hat{z}(\phi z)$  is a unit class' is equivalent to 'the  $x$  satisfying  $\phi x$  exists'.

If  $\alpha \in 1$ , ' $\hat{1}\alpha$ ' is the only member of  $\alpha$ , for the only member of  $\alpha$  is the only term to which  $\alpha$  has the relation  $\hat{1}$ . Thus ' $\hat{1}\alpha$ ' takes the place of ' $(\hat{1}x)(\phi x)$ ', if  $\alpha$  stands for ' $\hat{z}(\phi z)$ .' (36.)

As to the indefinite description we have no comparable formal analysis at our disposal. In Russell (1905b) we are told that it does not denote many terms, but it denotes ambiguously, i. e. it denotes an ambiguous term. (cf. Russell (1905b) 41.) He analyses the proposition "I met a man" in the following way: "I met  $x$ , and  $x$  is human" is not always false." Generally, defining the class of men as the class of objects having the predicate *human*, we say that: 'C (a man)' means "' $c(x)$  and  $x$  is human" is not always false. This leaves 'a man', by itself, wholly destitute of meaning, but gives a meaning to every proposition in whose verbal expression 'a man' occurs." (Russell (1905b) 43.) Some further explications are to be found in Russell (1919a). Russell sets out from the same example and begins with the following proposal: "let us assume ... that my assertion is true, and that in fact I met Jones. It is clear that what I assert is *not* 'I met Jones'. I may say 'I met a man, but

it was not Jones'; in that case, though I lie, I do not contradict myself, as I should do if when I say I met a man I really mean that I met Jones. It is clear also that the person to whom I am speaking can understand what I say, even if he is foreigner and has never heard of Jones.

But we may go further: not only Jones, but no actual man, enters into my statement. This becomes obvious when the statement is false, since then there is no more reason why Jones should be supposed to enter into the proposition than why anyone else should. Indeed the statement would remain significant, though it could not possibly be true, even if there were no man at all. 'I met a unicorn' or 'I met a sea-serpent' is a perfectly significant assertion, if we know what it would be to be a unicorn or a sea-serpent, i. e. what is the definition of these fabulous monsters. Thus it is only what we may call the *concept* that enters into the proposition." (Russell (1919a) 167-168.) In a word, the indefinite description is explained by means of an existential operator, the uniqueness is not explicitly claimed but it could be assured with the same syntactic means as in the case of the definite description; as for the semantic interpretation the only criterion consists in the significance of the proposition, the involved relationship is denotational in so far as the semantic role of the existential operator and the uniqueness point to effective connexions, however, the content of the relationship itself remains in the generality of concepts (cf. Quine (1939)). We bring our short overview on Russell's early and later conceptions concerning semantics and denotation to an end here. We aimed at a comprehensive summary of his most important notions and ideas without their deeper critical evaluation, it serves as a necessary background to our inquiry into Russell's views on fictionality.

2. Our overview on descriptions ended with the question concerning reality or non-reality of the objects denoted by indefinite descriptions, the discussion of semantical and denotational problems led to fictionality and this is no mere chance: the formulation of the later, classical variant of the theory of denotation was at the same time a continuous reflection on different aspects of fictionality. The formation of this theory can be understood as a revision of Russell's own realistic conception and one of the aims of this revision was to get rid of fictitious entities by means of an adequate methodology. Some months before the comprehensive study "On Denoting" there appeared another article by Russell in *Mind* (Russell (1905a)) expressing already the new theoretic position in the form of a criticism of MacColl. MacColl formulated in MacColl (1905) a logical theory which according to its ontological position can be considered as a Meinongian variant. MacColl wants namely to incorporate among the individuals of logic not only those which denote real existences, but also those which refer to non-existences, "that is to say, (to) unrealities, such as *centaurs*, *nectar*, *ambrosia*, *fairies*, with self-contradiction, such as *round-squares*, *square circles*, *flat spheres*, etc." (MacColl (1905) 308.) and considers classes consisting of real existences, of unrealities and mixed classes; in this way the single null class of algebra is substituted by an infinitude of pure and mixed classes consisting of fictitious elements which require a special treatment and interpretation. This view challenges Russell's new conception concerning semantics and denotation; on the basis of his logical and theoretical insights he has no longer any understanding for Meinongian solutions, and from this point on the special Russellian theory of denotation conflicts with ideas. This theory of denotation is one of the main sources of Russell's views on fictionality, so we are going to inquire into some of the theses concerning some aspects of fictionality set up



on the basis of this theory of denotation in his works.

2.1. An essential problem of fictionality is the *question of existence*. The critical article (Russell (1905a)), begins also with an investigation of the meaning of "existence". Russell states: "There are two meanings of this word, as distinct as stocks in a flower-garden and stocks on the Stock Exchange, which yet are continually being confused or at least supposed somehow connected. ...

(a) The meaning of *existence* which occurs in philosophy and daily life is the meaning which can be predicated of an individual: the meaning in which we inquire whether God exists, in which we affirm that Socrates existed, and deny that Hamlet existed. The entities dealt with in mathematics do not exist in this sense: the number 2, or the principle of the syllogism, or multiplication are objects which mathematics considers, but which certainly form no part of the world of existent things. This sense of existence lies wholly outside Symbolic Logic, which does not care a pin whether its entities exist in this sense or not.

(b) The sense in which existence is used in symbolic logic is a definable and purely technical sense, namely this: To say that A exists means that A is a class which has at least one member. Thus whatever is not a class (e. g. Socrates) does not exist in this sense; and among classes there is just one which does not exist, namely, the class having no members, which is called the null-class." (Russell (1905a) 98-99.) This conception of confronting syntactically and semantically two meanings of "existence" was, however, only a transitory opinion, it was implied by the realist conviction that numbers are objects differing from realia and their way of existence must be distinguished from the existence of things. This distinction was introduced in order to

prohibit drawing consequences from the realia to the class of numbers but it was not intended to dissolve the unity of objects; quite on the contrary, by means of the principle of extensionality a unique way of explication is given for objects belonging to both ontological classes. "Suppose we say: 'No chimeras exist'. We may mean that the class of chimeras has no members, i. e. does not exist in sense (b), or that nothing that exists in sense (a) is a chimera. These two are equivalent in the present instance, because if there were chimeras, they would be entities of the kind that exist in sense (a). But if we say 'no numbers exist', our statement is true in sense (a) and false in sense (b). It is true that nothing that exists in sense (a) is a number; it is false that the class of numbers has no members. Thus the confusion arises from undue preoccupation with the things that exist in sense (a), which is a bad habit engendered by practical interests." (Russell (1905a) 99.) In this way it is understandable that the logical analysis in *Principia Mathematica* puts an end to the ambiguous explicability of this term and the view summarized in (a) is considered as a current but erroneous conception; the unique explication is based on a developed form of the thesis of extensionality which gets a nominalistically based semantic interpretation in the later philosophical writings. But let us see first the syntactical definition: "When, in ordinary language or in philosophy, something is said to 'exist', it is always something *described*, i.e. it is not something immediately presented, like a taste or a patch of colour, but something like 'matter' or 'mind' or 'Homer' (meaning 'the author of the Homeric poems'), which is known by description as 'the so-and-so', and is thus of the form  $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ . Thus in all such cases, the existence of the (grammatical) subject  $(\exists x)(\phi x)$  can be analytically inferred from any true proposition having this grammatical subject. It would seem that the word 'existence' cannot be significantly applied to

subjects immediately given; i. e. not only does our definition give no meaning to 'E!x', but there is no reason, in philosophy, to suppose that a meaning of existence could be found which would be applicable to immediately given subjects." (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 174-175. A similar explication is to be found in Russell (1919a) 178-179.) The sense of this standpoint is that "exist" may appear as grammatical predicate in connection with an apparent proper name, but this constituent cannot be considered as a logical proper name, but only as a description, and existence is not to be evaluated as a logical first class predicate, but as a second class predicate having a description for its argument. The first part of this thesis is based on Russell's theory of knowledge; he is of the opinion in this case that a direct acquaintance is not expressible. The categorical postulation that the proposition 'This exists' has no significance seems rather doubtful, especially if we take into account the considerations in Moore (1936) 186-188.: it seems to be an artificial decision, the principle of acquaintance cannot convince us of the illegitimacy of the use of "this" or of "exists" in the proposition "This exists" which appears to have significance and consequently a propositional meaning. On the other hand this analysis points to a very important syntactical-semantical distinction: "existence" is to be separated from the attributive first class predicates expressing certain properties, this insight has important philosophical consequences (cf. Kneale (1936)) and this has been observed in modern intensional logic as well (cf. Montague (1974), von Kutschera (1976)).

Existence in Russell's sense was defined by means of the equation 14.02 that has been quoted in part 2.23 above. Russell gives the following verbal explication of this definition: "'the  $x$  satisfying  $\phi x$  exists' is to mean 'there is an object  $c$  such that  $\phi x$  is true when  $x$  is  $c$  but not

otherwise." (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 31.) This definition permits the use of an existence-predicate with a description as an argument in cases in which the description can be analysed as an expression which is bound by a non-negative existential operator, and defines the uniqueness of the bound variable i. e. the secondary predicate "exist" can only in that case significantly be applied to a description if there is an object which this description denotes in reality. This means that the condition of the use of the existence predicate is the applicability of the existential operator to the arguments in an extensional sense, i. e. the predicate "exist" can be used in connection with a description if the latter can be interpreted as a class having only one unique real member. This implies a principle of translation which has to be applied to each grammatical apparent proper name and as a result of the transcription it clearly formulates the extensional relations between a class and its unique member in the positive case. In the case that this logical scheme is not assured, i. e. if there are no objects, we are confronted with descriptions which have significance but are to be considered as false because the bound variables do not denote anything. This class of false descriptions or of descriptions with non-existing denotation involves fictitious objects too. Besides fictionality we ought to mention in this context some other types of utterances as well, such as lies, errors, and different strategies or conventions which may obtain in certain connexions a negative evaluation etc., however this would take us from our semantical point of view. Therefore we do not try to define these pragmatic distinctions and in connection with fictionality we shall refer, without further distinction, to this class defined by a non-existing denotation and we do not want to presuppose any general pragmatological rules e. g. whether the speaker considers the objects as fictitious or not or how the interpreter chooses between different possibilities,

etc. We shall consider for the time being the logical language of the analysis as a sort of ideal language in Russell's sense, a metalanguage revealing the inner structure of natural language. (As to "lie" consider Russell (1940) 194.) We have in this sense a clear program concerning fictionality, we have to rewrite the apparent proper names of natural language as descriptions and if the object denoted by the description cannot be explained as a class that has one member the proper name is to be taken as fictitious. In answer to MacColl's proposal about classes of unrealities, centaurs, round squares, etc. Russell explains his standpoint: "Concerning all these we shall say simply that they are classes which have no members, so that each of them is identical with the null class. There are no Centaurs; ' $x$  is a Centaur' is false whatever value we give to  $x$ , even when we include values which do not exist in sense (a), such as numbers, propositions, etc. Similarly, there are no round squares. The case of nectar and ambrosia is more difficult, since these seem to be individuals, not classes. But here we must presuppose definitions of nectar and ambrosia: they are substances having such and such properties, which, as a matter of fact, no substances do have. We have thus merely a defining concept for each, without any entity to which the concept applies. In this case, the concept is an entity, but it does not denote anything. To take a simpler case: 'The present King of England' is a complex concept denoting an individual; 'the present King of France' is a similar complex denoting nothing. The phrase intends to point out an individual, but fails to do so: it does not point out an unreal individual, but no individual at all. The same explanation applies to mythical personages, Apollo, Priam, etc. These words have a *meaning*, which can be found by looking them up in a classical dictionary; but they have not a *denotation*: there is no entity, real or imaginary, which they point out" (Russell (1905a) 100.) The last remark may be completed by

the following analysis: "A proposition such as 'Apollo exists' is really of the same logical form, although it does not explicitly contain the word *the*. For 'Apollo' means really 'the object having such-and-such properties,' say 'the object having the properties enumerated in the Classical Dictionary.'" (The same principle applies to many uses of the proper names of existent object, e. g. to all uses of proper names for objects known to the speaker only by report, and not by personal acquaintance.) If these properties make up the propositional function  $\phi x$ , then 'Apollo' means  $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ , and 'Apollo exists' means  $\exists! (\exists x)(\phi x):$ " (Whitehead-Russell (1910) 31.)

Although logical analysis is not strictly regulated as, for example, categorial grammar is, the main problems are not raised by it. Our principal concern is to find an adequate test by means of which it can be unambiguously decided to which category an item belongs. We rewrite the proper names of grammar and now we must choose all those which cannot be considered as fictional units. A class of the bound variables which prove to be unique and have certain properties can be put together on the basis that I have direct acquaintance with them. These are particulars perceived in space-time such as "my father", "my son", and if self-awareness is allowed even "myself". As each item depends on my personal perception and my own perspective each is idiosyncratically and specially mine: if I speak of "myself" and you refer to me there is an essential difference in the way I am and you are aware of me as mind and body and as source of perception. But the same difference can be maintained with each object of a direct acquaintance, they are introduced as items of a highly individual perceptual process. (cf. in this connection Russell (1910-1911) 206-208.) "A table viewed from one place presents a different appearance from that which it presents from another place. This is the language of common sense ..." (Russell (1914) 84.) The lan-

guage of common sense is however presupposed to be the basis for natural language: its inner content appears to be determined by the structure of our perception. This is the case not only for objects which I am aware of in a direct process of acquaintance, whenever I know some object, even if my knowledge is mediated by a description given by somebody else, my individual perception takes part in this process and determines its subjective character. But if language is to this extent subjective and exclusively determined by individual perception one may raise the question of why and how a communication or an exchange of these highly individual contents should take place, how we can escape a form of solipsism? As to the last problem Russell's characteristic argumentation is the following: "... we can never *prove* the existence of things other than ourselves and our experiences. No logical absurdity results from the hypothesis that the world consists of myself and my thoughts and feelings and sensations, and that everything else is mere fancy." (Russell (1912) 33.) However, "every principle of simplicity urges us to adopt the natural view, that there really are objects other than ourselves and our sense-data which have an existence not dependent upon our perceiving them." (Russell (1912) 37.) Besides the principle of simplicity there is an instinctive belief and the testimony of physics that speak for a reality of the external world even if there is no complete correspondance between our sense-data and the objects of the external world. This opinion shows clearly the insensitivity that Russell had with respect to the socio-cultural determination in the use of signs. This must be emphasised in spite of Russell's numerous, in some respects very instructive socio-logical, historical, pedagogical and political studies some results of which were taken into account in his last comprehensive work Russell (1948), e. g. in the genealogy of sign use by means of animal inference, analogy,

scientific methods, etc. (Russell ( 1948) 198-210.) But even here his fundamental ideas remained the same: sign and language are primarily defined by perception. If the pragmatism dimension of communication is simply overlooked, if the use of signs is considered in the sense of the empiricist and idealistic tradition of the XVIIIth century with respect to an abstract man appearing only through his psycho-physiological faculties and not as being a representative of a historical, sociological and cultural community, then the use of sign loses its proper sense. Communication can only be understood as an interaction between member of a community, a sort of game in which they take part according to the conventional rules of the community. This insight must be used for the definition of the objects we are speaking of, i. e. the definition of fictional objects and their relation to existence, in this case the conventional element is a corrective factor unifying the ways of perception in a certain community in a certain space-time. We think that if we know an object it is not only important whether we know it by direct acquaintance or by a description, but also which model we follow in the perception or generally in the process of awareness. If I am a soldier in a war I do not perceive "a man" in general, but as enemy or friend or neutral person and I act according to norms which appear in peace time inhuman and abnormal. The object is differently perceived in socially or culturally different situations and this means that we never have the true image of facts, as Russell assumes, in language or in perception, perception and image are always conventionally influenced and manipulated.

The role of social and cultural factors is even more important in cases of acquaintance by description. The perceived communication puts a description at my disposal which I can rewrite in the given logical form. In this case I am not acquainted with the bound variable and it depends



on me whether I ascribe to it an existence on the basis of the speaker's personal acquaintance or on the basis of a direct acquaintance by somebody else to which an unbroken causal chain leads from the speaker. If I accept that in both cases the original proposition becomes involved in my beliefs, i. e. the propositional attitude of the proposition changes, it becomes a belief-proposition, an intensional structure that, according to Russell's correct analysis, cannot be characterized by means of the extensional method. (Russell (1918-1919) 216-228.) However, with the intensionality there appear some other difficulties which have been pointed out by several critics of Russell's denotation theory. (cf. Linsky (1967) 67-84. Hintikka (1981)). From our point of view it is very important to see that the belief-system is organized by conventional norms. There is a well distinguishable difference in readiness to believe the statements of foreigners: there are early centuries full of wonders and miracles, later on as scientific control spreads and achieves universal authority they are limited to social strata which hold out for the old beliefs. Fictionality, fictional objects, fictional existence are conjoined to a socio-cultural game in which there is a convention that the speaker need not refer to real persons and other objects in telling a narrative. The appearance of this fictional narrative is certainly secondary to story-telling in which this possibility was not given, where everything had to be considered as true, e. g. in sagas and in myths.

But how can these ideas be approached from the Russellian theory of fictionality and how can they be explained in a formally correct semantics? Russell uses in fact some generic terms such as narrative, novel, drama, etc, but we cannot state any essential regularity concerning theoretical formulation of genres or other textual units having conventionality as their basis. (cf. below the discussion in 3.2.) However there are some other more or less nominalistically

based - in our terminology "Russellian" - studies on fictionality of which we mention two here: Reichenbach (1947) and Lieb (1981) that may point out a way towards conventionally defined fictionality. Reichenbach appreciated Russell's logical work very highly (cf. Reichenbach (1944) and they influenced each other very directly. In Reichenbach (1947) we have the first comprehensive attempt to explain natural language by means of symbolic logic, in this way fictionality is also dealt with. The main novelty in comparison with Russell consists in qualifying the existence of fictionality, i. e. binding it to a certain type or genre of utterances. There are some remarkable disagreements between this approach and Russell's conception, so the relation between the physical level of language and the level determined by direct perceptions has a different order in Reichenbach than in Russell: Reichenbach thinks that physical existence is introduced by the existential operator, i. e. "the sort of existence applying to concrete objects of our daily environment as well as to the objects discovered by the methods of science" (Reichenbach (1948) 274.) constitutes the primary non-fictitious level in language. The objects of perception counting as primitive elements of language in Russell are considered as the first examples of fictitious existence in Reichenbach. "We speak of seeing an object not only if the object is physically present; we say that we see certain objects also when dreaming, or when looking at physical objects of a different sort ... Such objects are fictitious; but it is convenient to deal with them as though they were real objects. We shall call them *subjective things*. The name *immediate things* will be used ... to include both objective things which are perceived and subjective things; thus if a thing is immediate it is left open whether it is at the same time objective." (Reichenbach (1947) 274.) Russell's primitive objects are immediate things, according to the analysis in 3.2. Let us

enumerate first the different sorts of existence without any deeper analysis of the structures introduced by Reichenbach. After a general characterisation we shall deal more thoroughly with one type of fictitious existence. "A second sort of fictitious existence ... extends the domain of existence much farther than does immediate existence. Following the second conception, we speak of existence whenever the assumption of physical existence is not contradictory. We thus introduce a category of *logical existence* ..." (Reichenbach (1947) 276.) "A third sort of existence appears in statements which refer to ... *propositional attitudes*" (Reichenbach (1947) 277.) The next "form of fictitious existence refers to what may be called intentional objects ... When we conceive terms like 'desire', 'plan', 'attempt', as functions, we ... are compelled to interpret" the principle of existential generalization, "as referring to a fictitious existence." (Reichenbach (1947) 280.) The last form of fictitious existence mentioned by Reichenbach is *literary existence* which is defined with respect to "fictitious objects whose existence is assumed when sentences concerning such objects are stated in a book. The fictitious existence of these objects ... is therefore translatable into the physical existence of sentences in a book." (Reichenbach (1947) 282.)

This typology of different sorts of existence is based on an essentially extensional logic of the Russellian type, however the intention to map all the relevant connections of conversational language on to a logical analysis led to the first formulation of some concepts of intensional logics. The formulation itself remained true to the extensional and the Russellian empiricist and behavioristic ideas. As an example we may consider the existence conjoined with intentional objects in the following sentence:

(3) Peter desires to live in New York

As a first step it is formalised in the following way:

$$(3)' \quad (\exists v)_{in} [f(x_1, y_1)] * (v) . ds(x_1, v)$$

"Here ' $f(x_1, y_1)$ ' means 'Peter lives in New York', and ' $ds$ ' means 'desires'. The particle 'to', in this interpretation, is regarded as introducing event-splitting." (Reichenbach (1947) 281.) In a second step the intentional objects are defined in terms of the psychological notion of fulfillment and (3)' is translated into physical existence:

$$(3)'' \quad (\exists z) bst(x_1, z) . [f(x_1, y_1) \supset ff(z)]$$

"Here ' $bst$ ' means 'bodily state' ... ' $ff$ ' means 'fulfillment' (Reichenbach (1947) 281.) and  $\supset$  means a connective implication. However nowadays the translation is not directed to "bodily state" as in the days of behaviorism but to "logically possible worlds". This new concept has not been without objection. The question is raised whether this notion is well founded ontologically. Before this problem became so hotly debated Russell had touched on this topic several times and developed a rather ambiguous standpoint in this respect. Mainly in connection with physics he liked to formulate his ideas with respect to different possible worlds (cr. Russell (1927a) 89. (1914) 190, in connection with ethic Russell (1910)), but his ideas concerning the perceptual foundation of language led him to a consequent negation of the hypothesis of possible worlds: "Logic, I should maintain, must no more admit a unicorn than zoology can; for logic is concerned with the real world just as truly as zoology, though with its more abstract and general features. To say that unicorns have an existence in heraldy, or in literature, or in imagination, is a most pitiful and paltry evasion. What exists in heraldy is not an animal, made of flesh and blood, moving and breathing of its own initiative. What exists is a picture, or a description in words. Similarly, to maintain that Hamlet, for example, exists in his own world, namely in the world of Shakespeare's imagination, just as truly as (say) Napoleon existed in the ordinary world, is to say something deliberately confusing,

or else confused to a degree which is scarcely credible. There is only one world, the 'real' world: Shakespeare's imagination is part of it, and the thoughts that he had in writing Hamlet are real. So are the thoughts that we have in reading the play. But it is of the very essence of fiction that only the thoughts, feelings, etc. in Shakespeare and in his readers are real, and that there is not, in addition to them, an objective Hamlet. When you have taken account of all the feelings roused by Napoleon in writers and readers of history, you have not touched the actual man; but in the case of Hamlet you have come to the end of him. If no one thought about Hamlet, there would be nothing left of him; if no one had thought about Napoleon, he would soon have seen to it that some one did. The sense of reality is vital in logic, and whoever juggles with it by pretending that Hamlet has another kind of reality is doing a disservice to thought." (Russell (1919a) 169-170.) We think that this last opinion corresponds to the nominalistic standpoint. In this context we do not wish to deal with intentional logic, therefore the inner problems of the different kinds of existence as far as they can be considered topics of different philosophical logics will not be discussed here.

Reichenbach followed Russell in formulating "that fictitious objects cannot be given proper names. They can only be described and therefore are expressed by means or variables bound by qualified existential operators. The word 'Hamlet', therefore, is not a proper name, but an abbreviation standing for the description of a fictitious personality." (Reichenbach (1947) 283.) The last remark - a description of a fictitious personality - proves the novelty of Reichenbach's approach and reveals the essence of the extension of applicability of truth and falsehood. Russell was of the opinion: "We experience 'Hamlet', not Hamlet; but our emotions in reading the play have to do with Hamlet,

not with 'Hamlet'. 'Hamlet' is a word of six letters; whether it should be or not be is a question of little interest, and it certainly could not make its quietus with a bare bodkin. Thus the play 'Hamlet' consists entirely of false propositions, which transcend experience, but which are certainly significant, since they can arouse emotions. When I say that our emotions are about Hamlet, not "Hamlet", I must qualify this statement: they are really not about anything, but we think they are about the man named 'Hamlet'. The propositions in the play are false because there was no such man; they are significant because we know from experience the noise 'Hamlet', the meaning of 'name', and the meaning of 'man'. The fundamental falsehood in the play is the proposition; the noise 'Hamlet' is a name'. (Russell (1940) 277.) Russell's analysis acknowledges only one sort of existence which could be qualified in Reichenbach's terminology as immediate existence and tries to explain the significance of a fictitious and consequently false sentence by means of emotions. But this is a rather dangerous and uncontrollable solution; it is undefined in which cases emotions can win against pure rationality and in this way it may institutionalize irrationality in certain fields of life. Instead of that rather difficult approach Reichenbach's consequent extension of truth and falsehood to these special sorts of existence is very convincing. Certainly we must not confound the languages of the different existences: what may appear as existent on the one level is considered empty on the other. This level-relativity emphasizes the one-sidedness and negativity of the Russellian standpoint: fictional sentences considered from the point of view of physical or immediate existence must be held as false, however they are not conceived of as elements of this language, they belong to the level of fictionality which disposes of special criteria of truth and falsehood.

Reichenbach's proposal for the definition of literary

existence was to use the physical existence of sentences in a book. This is a very essential step; in a fictional text there exists only what is introduced as existent or whose existence can be inferred on the basis of the text. In some respects the definition proves to be too loose: being stated in a book does not guarantee that the text is of a literary character. Therefore Reichenbach admits a definition which translates "literary existence into the existence of images and emotions in the reader. The interpretation will lead to a fictitious existence similar to immediate existence." (Reichenbach (1947) 282.) This is Russell's idea and we shall have to say something about it in 3.2. but we must express already here our conviction that it is an essentially weaker solution than the first one as it does not allow any combination of the structure with socio-cultural convention. The combination did not succeed in this case, Reichenbach had to include, besides the definition, general laws accounting for the psychological authenticity of the work: "The behavior of the fictitious persons in their fictitious environment should be so presented that it satisfies the laws of psychology holding for actual persons; in other words, the *laws* assumed for the behavior of the fictitious persons should be *objectively true*. ... A further requirement is that the laws expressed by the behavior of the fictitious persons play an important role in our own lives and therefore helps us to understand human behavior in general." (Reichenbach (1947) 282.) These requirements are too general and too absolute, it is fallacious if one wants to have a general law for life and all kinds of literature, we must rather admit a great number of different codes for literary genres which need not in each respect correspond to the rules of our life. The aspect of relativity has been increasingly taken into account in those works on fictionality which are based on a Meinongian possible world semantics (cf. Kanyó (1980a)), the importance of

the nominalistic contribution is not less, however we cannot give a systematic picture of the development of this research here. There no special fictional objects are looked for, it is rather the way of the linguistic formulation that is in the centre of scientific reflection; fictionality has to be understood as a consequence of the conventional use of language. As a very impressive example we shall briefly mention Lieb (1981). In this reasonably formulated study Lieb lays the foundations for a formal theory of fictionality. He assumes in accordance with Searle (1975) that the fictional text is embedded in pretence which plays the role of a propositional attitude (cf. Lieb (1981) 552.). He wants to include several propositional attitudes, which would serve as criteria of classification and "cut right across literary genres" (552.). There are different formal definitions, the first determines how the referential constituents have to be understood on the basis of the grammar of the language. As a second step the referential constituents appear as the referential-expressions of concrete texts, they have textual meaning, a referential-doxastic meaning which is defined by means of new definitions. If a narrator is involved in the fictional text then the realization of the fictional text is attributed by the author to him, an appropriate place is assigned to the narrator in the formal system and referential expressions that involve a narrator are also correctly interpreted. The most difficult case is the explication of the case in which there are normal proper names embedded in fictional texts, but Lieb's system can stand up to this challenge as he characterizes this case as a complex semantic relation which "involves both the reference relation and the fictionality proviso." (558.) Thus Lieb's well-founded formal system has enough adaptability to deal with problems like dependence on genre, conventionality and it comes very near to the ideas we have formulated in general terms above.



The Russellian definition of fictional existence leads to these reflections. We can establish that it has a double character: as a formal system it may be considered an influential starting point for semantical considerations of fictionality, but as to the philosophical and epistemological interpretation of this system which appeared in reducing language to immediate objects and in declaring fictional existence for falsehood there is a negativity and an absolutized one-sidedness which do not admit the formulation of a coherent theory. As a matter of fact, there are different possible solutions in Russell's writings, the first is an agnostic one and follows from his theory of knowledge: if there is a fictional entity introduced into the elements which according to our knowledge and our beliefs build up the world we have no method at our disposal to indicate that it has practically no reference. Russell is without doubt right in putting for the idea that in the knowledge of different communities there are undetected fictional entities and if we want to rely on the most secure grounds we must take the language of science - first of all physics and psycho-physiology- into account. This analysis again leaves out of consideration the pragmatic dimension of knowledge and beliefs, the socio-cultural rules which determine the emergence and the development of conventions, their manipulation and all the forms of influencing the community. But Russell can provide us with a positive solution as well, that is worth while to be examining intensively.

2.2. In adapting the perceptual phenomena as a basis for the interpretation of language Russell must have assumed not only the existence of perceptions such as can be verified by means of physics, but also the existence of impressions which occur in dreams, in hallucinations, in the imagination, etc. - as Reichenbach has clearly formulated, immediate existence involves subjective existence. This sphere of sub-

jective existence is named by Russell, according to the philosophical tradition, recapitulatively as *imagination*. In this section we want to summarize Russell's views on imagination with the intention of showing whether they can be connected with the theory of fictionality.

The existence of imagination is not unproblematic in modern psycho-physiology: behaviorism, the trend which Russell highly appreciated because of its experimental methods, was extremely antimentalistic and did not accept introspection as a valid psychological method, therefore it led to the negation of imagination. Russell argues in Russell (1919b) for the existence of images and he does not admit the reducing of these phenomena to the pronunciation of words sotto voce as Watson wished to solve this question. An image occurring in visualizing cannot be explained by behaviorist methods, it can at most be rejected, because one can be acquainted with it only through introspection and this method cannot be held for a source of knowledge according to the behaviorists. But Russell sees no principal problem in introspection. Two reasons can be mentioned against this method, one is privacy, the other is the independence of the laws of physics. As for privacy Russell mentions that "we shall have to include among such data" which can be obtained only through introspection "all bodily sensations" (Russell (1919b) 294.), i. e. since there is a class of data that admit by their nature only an introspective observation, introspection cannot be excluded. Much more interesting is the other argument, namely that the data of introspection "do not obey the laws of physics ... I think it will be found that the essential characteristic of introspective data is concerned with *localization*: either they are not localized at all, or they are localized in a place already physically occupied by something which would be inconsistent with them if they were regarded as part of the physical world. In either case, introspective data have to

be regarded as not obeying the laws of physics ..." (294-295). Russell is aware of the challenge and as a reaction he builds up the phantastic idea of a subjective existence which marks a new period in his theoretical interpretation of denotational relations mainly in the years 1914-1927 which can be characterized by Wittgenstein's influence on logical atomism and by the intensive study of behaviorism and psycho-physiological connexions. Russell's main thesis consists of postulating existence for everything insofar as it is built on sensations even if the content of the sensations contradicts the laws of physics. "Phantoms and images do undoubtedly exist in that sense ... if you shut your eyes and imagine some visual scene, the images that are before your mind while you are imagining are undoubtedly there. They are images, something is happening, and what is happening is that images are before your mind, and these images are just as much part of the world as tables and chairs and anything else. They are perfectly decent objects, and you only call them unreal (if you call them so), or treat them as non-existent, because they do not have the usual sort of relations to other objects ... If you imagine a heavy oak table, you can remove it without any muscular effort, which is not the case with oak tables that you actually see. The general correlations of your images are quite different from the correlations of what one chooses to call 'real' objects. But that is not to say images are unreal. It is only to say they are not part of physics. Of course, I know that this belief in the physical world has established a sort of reign of terror ... That sort of attitude is unworthy of a philosopher. We should treat with exactly equal respect the things that do not fit in with the physical world, and images are among them." (Russell (1918-1919) 257.)

The sphere of imagination originally appeared in Russell (1914a) where the external world was interpreted by sense-data and all objects of sense were declared real (cf. 93f.).

In Russell (1914b)) we find the direct connection with the denotation theory: images are here explained as descriptions. Russell expounds in this context that 'illusion' and 'unreality' have to be derived from the fundamental pair 'true' and 'false' which can be applied to propositions and descriptions, "but not to proper names: in other words, they have no application whatever to data, but only to entities or non-entities described in terms of data.

Let us illustrate this by the terms 'existence' and 'non-existence'. Given any datum  $x$ , it is meaningless either to assert or to deny that  $x$  'exists'. We might be tempted to say: 'Of course  $x$  exists, for otherwise it could not be a datum'. But such a statement is really meaningless, although it is significant and true to say, 'My present sense-datum exists', and it may also be true that ' $x$  is my present sense-datum'. The inference from these two propositions to ' $x$  exists' is one which seems irresistible to people unaccustomed to logic; yet the apparent proposition inferred is not merely false, but strictly meaningless. To say 'My present sense-datum exists' is to say (roughly): 'There is an object of which "my present sense-datum" is a description'. But we cannot say: 'There is an object of which " $x$ " is a description', because ' $x$ ' is (in the case we are supposing) a name, not a description." (Russell (1914b) 167-168.) This early contribution to the problem of imagination promises a sort of differentiation of existences in the method of Reichenbach: "Concerning the immediate objects in illusions, hallucinations, and dreams, it is meaningless to ask whether they 'exist' or are 'real'. There they are, and that ends the matter." (168.) This view allows for a positive account of fictionality as it is not to be considered as non-existence but as a particular variant of existence that should be characterized. However Russell who remained true to the notion of imagination did not undertake the systematic discussion of conventional language on a logical

basis and his philosophical interpretation of this problem presents different solutions.

Terminologically we must distinguish between imagination which is applied to the whole mental process and image which represents a constituent of this process. Images are divided according to the fields of sensation into visual, auditory and tactile and we may ignore other kinds of images (Russell (1927b) 184.) Images, imagination should be distinguished from sensations, the differences has been sought generally

"/1/ By the less degree of vividness in images;

/2/ By our absence of belief in their 'physical reality';

---

/3/ By the fact that their causes and effects are different from those of sensations." (Russell (1921) 145.)

But these arguments are not convincing, Russell means "that the test of liveliness, however applicable in ordinary instances, cannot be used to define the differences between sensations and images." (148.) Secondly he points out: "Images cannot be defined by the *feeling* of unreality, because when we falsely believe an image to be a sensation, as in the case of dreams, it *feels* just as real as if it were a sensation." (149.). Therefore the grounds for the distinction are sought in causes and effects, but there are different definitions which try to formulate the essential difference, namely that sensations come through the sense-organs and are connected with the world of physics, while images represent mental processes that are independent from the laws of physics. The multiplicity of definitions shows Russell's inner uncertainty, his first contribution to this topic after its general exposition in two philosophical studies in 1914, Russell (1915), gives two different definitions, and the reader may choose on the basis of his own reflections. The first definition has as its background the

recognition that "Sensation and imagination together ... may be defined as 'acquaintance with particulars not given as earlier than the subject.'" (Russell (1915) 33.) This last definition may be identified with "'particulars given as simultaneous with the subject.'" But such identification presupposes, what must not be assumed without discussion, that an experienced particular must be given as in some temporal relation with the subject. If this can be denied, we may find here an intrinsic difference between sense and imagination. It may be that in the sense the object is given as 'now', i. e. as simultaneous with the subject, whereas in imagination the object is given without any temporal relation to the subject, i. e. to the present time." (Russell (1915) 33.) In this way the following two definitions may be given for imagination and sensation: "'Imagination' is acquaintance with particulars which are not given as having any temporal relation to the subject. 'Sensation' is acquaintance with particulars given as simultaneous with the subject." (Russell (1915) 35.) But Russell is of the opinion that this interpretation may be rejected, the explanation to be substituted here must "allow that imagination and sensation are different relations to objects. ... if images have any given time-relation to the subject, it must be that of simultaneity; hence in this respect they will be indistinguishable from sense-data. We cannot hope ... in this case to explain the 'unreality' of images by the nature of the relation of imagining ... The 'unreality' of images may, on our present hypothesis, be defined as consisting merely in their failure to fulfil the correlations which are fulfilled by sense-data. ... images change in ways which are wholly contrary to the laws of physics; the laws of their changes seem, in fact, to be psychological rather than physical, involving reference to such matters as the subject's thoughts and desires." (42-43.)

After Russell's intensive psycho-physiological studies

this provisory contribution to the theoretical foundations of irrationality was succeeded by a more scientific argumentation: the physiological difference between sensation and image with respect to stimulus that was rejected in Russell (1915) 36. is considered as a possible basis for a definition: "... images have been defined as 'centrally excited sensations', i. e. sensations which have their physiological cause in the brain only ..." (Russell (1921) 150.). They stand clearly in opposition to sensations which are based on the sense-organs and the nerves connecting the sense-organs with the brain. But this explanation does not fit in with Russell's conception, it is replaced by another hypothesis that tries to explain the peculiarity of imagination by means of a special sort of causation which is named mnemonic and is based on mental connections: "... and image is occasioned, through association, by a sensation or another image, in other words that it has a mnemonic cause - which does not prevent it from also having a physical cause. ... Sensations, on the other hand, will only have physical causes." (120-121.) Russell hints at several possible solutions, but his ideas are not satisfactorily expounded in Russell (1921); the most convincing explanation of this topic is to be found in Russell (1927b) which summarizes the different ideas concerning images and generalizes some early conceptions. A central motive of the theory of imagination is that the image depends on earlier sensations, "an image is more or less vague, and has a number of similar sensations as its prototypes." (188.) The similitude and the criteria of resemblance are inquired into and Russell believes that there are "innumerable methods ... by which you can test the likeness of an image to its prototype." (190.) Russell's analysis concludes "that an image is an occurrence having the quality associated with stimulation by some sense-organ, but not due to such stimulation. In human beings, images seem to depend upon past experience, but perhaps in more

instinctive animals they are partly due to innate mechanism. ... an 'image' is an occurrence recognisably visual (or auditory or etc. as the case may be), but not caused by a stimulus which is of the nature of light (or sound or etc., as the case may be), or at any rate only indirectly so caused as a result of association." (192-193.) This conception is practically a generalisation of the theory concerning memory-images discussed in Russell (1921), as images are not only constituents of imagination, but play an important role in memory and in word meaning. As to memory-images they "do not differ in their intrinsic qualities" from imagination-images. "They differ by the fact that the images that constitute memories, unlike those that constitute imagination, are accompanied by a feeling of belief which may be expressed in the words 'this happened'. The mere occurrence of images, without this feeling of belief, constitutes imagination; it is the element of belief that is the distinctive thing in memory." (Russell (1921) 176.) Russell assumes that 'the prototype of our memory-image did fit into a physical context, while our memory-image does not. This causes us to feel that the prototype was 'real', while the image is 'imaginary'. (185). In immediate memory Russell deems to have found something that "bridges the gulf between sensations and the images which are their copies." (175.) It applies to the fading of a sensations: "At the beginning of a stimulus we have a sensation; then a gradual transition; and at the end an image." (175.)

In the complex of meaning and thinking, images again play an important role according to Russell's considerations. One of the main questions is how words or images may occur in the absence of their objects. There is a behavioristic theory with respect to this connection but it is found to be restricted and inadequate, and is replaced by a theoretical approach which is, in spite of its declared anti-conventionalism a pragmatic theory insofar as it arises out of the



use of language and gives definitions with respect to use. After distinguishing the active and passive understanding of a word or image he gives different ways of understanding words:

- "/1/ On suitable occasions you use the word properly.
- /2/ When you hear it, you act appropriately.
- /3/ You associate the word with another word (say in a different language) which has the appropriate effect on behavior.
- /4/ When the word is being first learnt, you associate it with an object, which is what it 'means'; thus the word acquires some of the same causal efficacy as the object." (Russell (1919b) 301.)

The cases apply to a use of language which Russell names 'demonstrative as they point out a feature in the present environment' (301.). However this is not the only use of language, the two sorts of images already mentioned memory-images and imagination-images, lay the ground for other uses of language:

- "/5/ Words may be used to describe or recall a memory-image: to describe it when it already exists, or to recall it where the words exist as a habit and are known to be descriptive of some past experience.
- /6/ Words may be used to describe or create an imagination-image: to describe it, for example, in the case of a poet or novelist, or to create it in the ordinary case of giving information - though in the latter case, it is intended that the imagination-image, when created, shall be accompanied by belief that something of the sort has occurred." (302.)

These two uses are named narrative use and imaginative use, and both of them indicate the use of words in thinking.

"... it is ... the possibility of a memory-image in the speaker "and an imagination-image in the hearer that makes the essence of the narrative 'meaning' of the words." (Russell (1921) 201.) "Images, as contrasted with sensations, are the response expected during a narrative; it is understood that present action is not called for. ... words used demonstratively describe and are intended to lead to sensations, while the same words used in narrative describe and are only intended to lead to images." (202.)

"The 'meaning' of images is the simplest kind of meaning, because images resemble what they mean, whereas words, as a rule, do not." (Russell (1919b) 303.) In this sense images represent a case par excellence for correspondence theory. "That of which an image is a copy is called its 'prototype'; and this, or its parts, ... is always an indispensable part of the cause either of the image, or of its constituents (in the case of complex imagination-image)." (304.) In developing this semantic standpoint Russell speaks of image-proposition and word-proposition and of the possibility of translation from the one formulation into the other, and expounds the thesis that images may apply to particulars and universals as well (cr. 308f. and Russell (1921) 208ff.). In connection with imagination it is the association which plays the determining role. "The essence of imagination ... is the absence of belief together with a novel combination of known elements." (Russell (1927b) 199.) "What causes us, in imagination, to put elements together in a new way? Let us think first of concrete instances. You read that a ship has gone down on a route by which you have lately travelled; very little imagination is needed to generate the thought 'I might have gone down'. What happens here is obvious: the route is associated both with yourself and with shipwreck, and you merely eliminate the middle term. Literary ability is largely an extension of the practice of which the above is a very humble example." (200.)

Another example is a not very impressive Shakespeare-analysis which tries to explain philologically and psychologically the associations involved in the text. "Thus exceptional imaginative gifts appear to depend mainly upon associations that are unusual and have an emotional value owing to the fact that there is a certain uniform emotional tone about them." (201.)

We wished to give a concise summary of Russell's different views on image and imagination without being compelled to deal extensively with his conceptions concerning memory, meaning, belief, truth and falsehood and all the other fields where image and imagination can appear. At the end of this summary we must confess that this picture is rather confused and this is not solely our fault: Russell's theory on image and imagination, this attempt to formulate a positive approach to unreal existences, consists of different proposals which stand ontologically and semantically in contradiction to each other and which, taken individually, prove to be too general and cannot reveal the characteristics of this phenomenon. The problem was originally conceived of on the basis of Principia Mathematica and we find this starting-point very promising in several respects: images are introduced here as descriptions, i. e. expressions denoting one object which must consequently exist. This explanation of images has the sense that images can be presented only as descriptions, everybody taking part in the communication cannot be acquainted with the object of the images, as it is habitually inaccessible for everybody outside of the speaker. Nevertheless the speaker has the possibility of verifying the existence of this object: "... if ... what is given is never the thing, but merely one of the 'sensibilia' which compose the thing, then what we apprehend in a dream is just as much given as what we apprehend in waking life." (Russell (1914) 166-167.) We do not dispose of a register of the real objects, objects are identified by means of sense-data. If

we have sense-data, we must admit that their object exists in the case of dreams, hallucinations, etc. these objects "have their position in the private space of the perspective of the dreamer; where they fail is in their correlation with other private spaces and therefore with perspective space. But in the only sense in which 'there' can be a datum, they are 'there' just as truly as any of the sense-data of waking life." (167.) This analysis is very instructive because it tries to explain a number of idiosyncratic phenomena on the basis of the accepted general solution. This leads, however, to contradictions: it is impossible to allow for the existence of all the objects which can be inferred from our different sense-data, if we want to keep up a coherent view of the world we must reject 'things' which "cannot be combined according to the laws of physics with the 'things' inferred from waking sense-data". (170.) It means that the objects are there and are not there at the same time, the coherence of the system is not satisfactory. There is a positive solution, as we have pointed out in the previous part, where Russell's negative remarks were taken into consideration: on the basis of socio-cultural conventions there may be differentiated several uses of language which, according to the conventions, may have different definitions as to existence. In the number of these different existences there should be included fictionality as well which has primarily a conventional character. However Russell cannot accept this sort of solution as he does not believe in the central importance of conventionality, he believes in a natural process of the development of language and inquires into rather idiosyncratic connections of language which are not primarily communicative and which by their very nature can be systematically accounted for only with difficulty: he deals with private language, the language of dreams, but always in such a way that normality is victorious over excessive deviation and madness. The topics are very difficult and in spite of

Russell's deep insights his treatment remains fragmentary and unsatisfactory. Russell's fundamental methodological problem consists in demonstrating how one and the same thing can be two, i. e. how an image is just the same as a sensation and how they differ from one another. The general answer used to be that image is mental and sensation is material, however this distinction is not important in Russell's philosophy: mind and matter may have the same structure in the sense of neutral monism, therefore some other distinction is needed. An extreme solution is presented in Russell (1915): "If ... imagination involves no time-relation of subject and object, then it is a simpler relation than sensation, being ... merely *acquaintance with particulars*. The object imagined may, on this view, have any position in time or none, so far as the mere fact of its being imagined is concerned. *Sensation*, on the other hand, is a relation to a particular which involves simultaneity between subject and object. Sensation *implies* acquaintance with the object, but is not identical with acquaintance." (43.) The opposition of imagination and sensation goes back to an early reflection: "non-existential occupation of time, if possible at all, is radically different from the existential kind of occupation." (Russell (1903) 472.) The introduction of non-existential occupation of time has the consequence that we must know the objects directly, not by means of sensations, and this conviction should lead us to give up Russell's whole conception with a sensational, interpretational language and to introduce objects on the basis of a realistic ontology and to explore several insights by means of which the objects can be investigated. Therefore we must agree with Russell in rejecting this possibility. But with this proposal he gives up the possibility of introducing arbitrary units as individuals in the language: image or imagination should not be considered as the simplest relation of acquaintance but as a consequence of a sensation-relation.

Therefore image is conceived of as secondary element, namely as a copy of a sensational prototype. This means again a new turning point in the development of the theory: the definition of image in the manner of the word 'meaning' means a break not only with the realistic conception, but with the early ideas expounded on the basis of *Principia Mathematica*; images no longer appear as descriptions considered in the process of presenting and acquiring knowledge, but as vocabularies of a subjective way of expression. Russell presents a theory of meaning new in several respects: he enumerates the different constituents that may have meaning and he considers complex forms such as propositions, beliefs with their objectives, the interrelations of these forms with images, etc. The new element of this theory is that meaning is defined in spite of his anti-conventionalist conviction by features of use, Russell applies here first of all the methods of behaviorism. This meaning conception is not expounded in a formal way comparable to the denotation theory in *Principia Mathematica*, but its main lines are pointed out. The theory is based on the Frege-principle: "The objective reference of a proposition is a function (in the mathematical sense) of the meanings of its component words." (Russell (1921) 371.) Propositions have, however a different dimension which is the characteristic duality of truth and falsehood. This essential semantic duality is inquired into on different levels. Propositions such as linguistic formulations are contrasted with facts. Facts may be positive and negative (as to negative facts cf. Russell (1918-1919) 211ff; and Oaklander and Miracchi (1980)). Facts can be most simply translated by means of image-propositions "which may be believed or disbelieved, but do not allow any duality of content corresponding to positive and negative facts" (Russell (1921) 276.) The word-propositions represent another level, they "are always positive facts, but are of two kinds: one verified by a positive objective, the other by a nega-

tive objective." (Russell (1921) 277.) Russell introduced facts under Wittgenstein's influence: as Quine points out, facts are "non-linguistic things that are akin to sentences and asserted by them ... His facts are what many of us would have been content to call true propositions" (Quine (1966) 664.) Russell himself called them so in his early writings. This solution did not find Quine's approval: "Russell's predilection for a fact ontology depended, I suggested, on confusion of meaning with reference. Otherwise I think Russell would have made short shrift of facts. He would have been put off by what strikes a reader of "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism": how the analysis of facts rests on analysis of language. Anyway Russell does not admit facts as fundamental: atomic facts are atomic as facts go, but they are compound objects. The atoms of Russell's logical atomism are not atomic facts but sense data." (665-666.) We can have no better opinion about the theory of image-propositions: there is no regular structure for this proposition and its constituents given, the terminology worked out for lingual connections which appear according to this theory on another level seem to be metaphorically applied to the visual sphere, and in this way the correlations which surely exist between image and word are put into an unadmittedly close contact. The whole process of translation hinted at several times cannot be discussed with such predispositions. In this way we have different ways of expression which are so complicated that there are no direct connections between them, this applies to the behavioristic relations which try to explain an unconventional subjective form of thinking such as imagination, hallucination, dream, etc. It must be emphasised that these forms are not parts of a socio-cultural communication, nor are they to be considered as a genre of communications, but they are embedded in psycho-physiological processes which have without doubt an important significance in human life, although its characteristics are quite different from

the socio-cultural connection. The relative importance of these elements is different from the point of view of the language system and its use and although it is desirable that all the elements should be taken into account yet they should be given the weight which is their due according to the grammar and the use of language. In this sense the subjective forms chosen by Russell are not to be considered as fundamental linguistic relations; they are, on the contrary, secondary forms belonging to different minimal classes. Therefore we must hold this theory, in spite of the interesting and sometimes even revealing analysis, to be erroneous. If we take one of its most attractive features, the definition of contents of images on the basis of associations, we are aware of the difficulties of the theory. "... a word or image means an object ... when it has the same associations as the object. But this definition must not be interpreted too absolutely: a word or image will not have *all* the same association as the objects which it means." (Russell (1921) 291.) This rather vaguely defined relation is applied on the one hand to explicate consciousness and, generally, the mind: in this connection it is postulated that several images belong to a certain prototype which may be related to each other without the help of the prototype. On the other hand the introduction of the prototype raises the question of whether the mental events are causally dependent upon physical events in a sense in which the converse dependence does not hold. This dependence is the materialistic view of the question, and Russell, who would like to maintain his neutral position, is compelled to declare: "... I think the bulk of the evidence points to the materialistic answer as the more probable." (303.) In this case all that he said about the mnemonic causation as a special cause of images, their mental nature, etc. loses its importance; we believe that the dilemmas can be solved if they are put in the form of an empirically formulated question and we are interested



not in the philosophical but the empirical solution. Associations play an important role in the modern theory of language for instance, Saussure attempts to capture the associations but he takes a conventional system into consideration and he and his followers have incomparably more to say than the philosopher considering expressions. A detailed investigation of Russell's proposals seems to be as devoid of interest in this respect as the analysis of his remarks concerning literary analysis: the research in these fields achieved more valuable results.

And what is the importance of this theory of imagination for fictionality? We must see that imagination can only account for the psychological ability of the narratives, but not for their conventional rules. Therefore a particular uncertainty in evaluating fictional narrative exists: although a special use of the words evoking images in the narrative has been introduced Russell speaks of "a consistent whole composed partly or wholly of false propositions, as in a novel." (Russell (1921) 268.) In this sense the theory of imagination is an unsuccessful attempt to complete the classical denotation theory with a positive approach to unreal existences. The cause of the failure consists in choosing the subjective psycho-physiological elements to interpret language and to postulate a unique homonymous system for language itself. Nevertheless, with the requirement of conventional use of the words there appears the possibility of the delimitation of a genre as a special way of communication. We appreciate this attempt to define these uses of meaning, however we would not like to put these special images - these rather questionable units - at the centre of the definitions, we are convinced that the genre is not determined by the direction towards one or other image, but by socio-cultural conventions that can be mapped into the language by means of different language systems in competition with each other.

3. At the end of our discussion we have to raise the question of how far this conception, which has proved to be in some formal respect very important, in other connections of the interpretation however, erroneous can be considered as characteristic of the nominalistic systems of fictionality, i. e. of the Russellian systems. During the analysis we have had the chance to be convinced that Russell's system cannot be held to be nominalistic in every respect: he postulates universals, and the ontological basis of some of his terms such as negative fact and even fact etc. may be queried. His way of interpreting language with respect to sense-data which are considered as the building stones of material and mental structures of the universe in the sense of neutral monism is not commonly widespread among the nominalists of logico-linguistic semantics. At the same time we must be conscious of the fact that through his theory of description Russell exerted an influence in the interest of nominalism and against Meinongian conceptions and his conception of the imaginary belongs to the same approach. However we do not want to give an appreciation of his role in the history of philosophy, and our points of view have been methodological ones: we pointed out the double approach to fictionality which has the specific appearance of denotation theory and the theory of imagination and which expresses the dilemma to give either a totally negative or a positive solution to fictionality. We have evaluated Russell's denotation theory which corresponds to the negative answer, however we have tried to show that Russell's formulation should be completed in such a way that fictionality could be dealt with, and only Russell's positive solution was rejected, not the positive solution as such. These contradictory impulses stem from the acknowledgement of two principles at the same time, the first is that objects should not be multiplied, consequently we need not assign existence to objects which have been invented; the second is that if something is there

it must be acknowledged, this principle can be fully satisfied in a stratified language system. The problem is that the severe nominalistic methodology prohibits the accepting of some appearances as existents which we believe to know on the basis of our native language and our conventions. What is the way out: criticizing natural language in the name of science and an ideal language or in proving it to be considerate to the naivities of language and conventions? There is no general answer. What we have tried to make understandable in connection with fictionality is that existence should not be sought only in the physical or psycho-physiological sphere but in socio-cultural contexts, in conventions and in different pragmatic factors. These social elements should not appear foreign to nominalism, a nominalist treatment of their complex structures would contribute to their better and simpler understanding. The same applies to fictionality: we are acquainted with these (physically) non-existent figures, and we should give an account of the nature of our acquaintance.

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This study was formulated for the "Semantics of Fiction" - number of Poetics, 11 (1982). editor: Prof. Dr. Hannes Rieser, however, it could not be published because of its length. It represents at the same time a part of my investigations concerning fictionality, as to the central ideas of my conception cf. my study: The Main Views on Fictionality in the Logico-Semantic Tradition, *Studia poetica* 3, pp. 115-124. and another long study about the Meinongian semantics in correspondance with fictionality: *Semantik für*

heimatlose Gegenstände. Die Bedeutung von Meinongs Gegenstandstheorie für die Theorie der Fiktionalität, *Studia poetica* 3, pp. 3-114. The present study should not be considered as a finished work about nominalistic semantics, not even the whole part of the Russellian semantics could be dealt with, the most important failures are Russell's critic on Leibniz and the late development of the interpretation of his logical analysis. These parts will be finished later on, for the time being it appears in this form.

- 2 "My intellectual journeys have been, in some respects, disappointing. When I was young I hoped to find religious satisfaction in philosophy; even after I had abandoned Hegel, the eternal Platonic world gave me something nonhuman to admire. I thought of mathematics with reverence, and suffered when Wittgenstein led me to regard it as nothing but tautologies. I have always ardently desired to find some justification outside human life and to deserve feelings of awe. I am thinking in part of very obvious things, such as the starry heavens and a stormy sea on a rocky coast; in part of the vastness of the scientific universe, both in space and time, as compared to the life of mankind; in part of the edifice of impersonal truth, especially truth which, like that of mathematics, does not merely describe the world that happens to exist. Those who attempt to make a religion of humanism, which recognizes nothing greater than man, do not satisfy my emotions. And yet I am unable to believe that, in the world as known, there is anything that I can value outside human beings, and, to a much lesser extent, animals. Not the starry heavens, but their effects on human percipients, have excellence; to admire the universe for its size is slavish and absurd; impersonal non-human truth appears to be a delusion. And so my intellect goes with the humanists, though my emotions violently rebel." Russell (1944a) 19-20.

- 3 "... in the beginning of the century, I had composed various stories and, later, I made up stories to while away the tedious climb from the beach to our house in Cornwall. Some of the latter have since been written down, though never published. In about 1912, I had written a novel, in the manner of Mallock's *New Republic*, called *The Perplexities of John Forstice*. Though the first half of it I still think is not bad, the latter half seems very dull to me, and I have never made any attempt to publish it. I also invented a story that I never published." Russell (1969) 34.
- 4 "... logical constants are all notions definable in terms of the following: Implication, the relation of a term to a class of which it is a member, the notion of *such that*, the notion of relation, and such further notions ..."  
(Russell (1903/3.)
- 5 "It may be observed that, although implication is undefinable, *proposition* can be defined. Every proposition implies itself, and whatever is not a proposition implies nothing. Hence to say '*p* is a proposition' is equivalent to saying '*p* implies *p*'; and this equivalence may be used to define propositions." (15.)
- 6 "But a proposition, unless it happens to be linguistic, does not itself contain words: it contains the entities indicated by words." (47)
- 7 "Predicates ... are concepts, other than verbs, which occur in propositions having only one term or subject."  
(45.)
- 8 "Every verb, in the logical sense of the word, may be regarded as a relation; when it occurs as verb, it actually relates, but when it occurs as verbal noun it is the bare relation considered independently of the terms which it relates." (52.)

- 9 "Worlds all have meaning, in the simple sense that they stand for something other than themselves." (47.)
- 10 "But a proposition unless it happens to be linguistic, does not itself contain words: it contains the entities indicated by words." (47.)
- 11 "Here the *Gedanke* is what I have called an unasserted proposition - or rather, what I called by this name covers both the *Gedanke* alone and the *Gedanke* together with its truth-value. It will be will to have names for these two distinct notions; I shall call the the *Gedanke* alone a *propositional concept*; the truth-value of a *Gedanke* I shall call an *assumption*." (503.) The last remark is completed by the following erroneous note:  
"Fege, like, Meinong, calls this an *Annahme*: FuB. p. 21."  
As to *Annahme* cf. Kanyó (1980)a. 'Assumption' was not used later in this sense in the Russellian system.
- 12 cf. "Matter, we are told, is a substance, a thing, a subject, of which secondary qualities are the predicates. But this traditional answer cannot content us. The whole doctrine of subject and predicate ... is radically false, and must be abandoned." (Russell (1903) 466.)
- 13 "Coffa (1980) demonstrates an essential differences between the theory of knowledge by acquaintance and Russell's ideas explained in "On Denoting".
- 14 A typical evaluation of it by Quine goes as follows:  
"Now here, in contrast to the class matter, I think Russell even concedes the Platonists too much; retention of the two-place predicate 'is similar to' is no evidence of assuming a corresponding abstract entity, the similarity relation, as long as that relation is not invoked as a value of a bound variable. A moral of all this is that in attention to referential semantics works two ways,

obscuring some ontological assumptions and creating an illusion of others." (Quine (1966) 662.)

<sup>15</sup> cf. "God and immortality, the central dogmas of the Christian religion, find no support in science. It cannot be said that either doctrine is essential to religion, since neither is found in Buddhism... But we in the West have come to think of them as the irreducible minimum of theology. No doubt people will continue to entertain these beliefs, because they are pleasant, just as it is pleasant to think ourselves virtuous and our enemies wicked. But for my part I cannot see any ground for either. I do not pretend to be able to prove that there is no God. I equally cannot prove that Satan is a fiction. The Christian God may exist; so may the Gods of Olympus, or of ancient Egypt, or of Babylon. But no one of these hypotheses is more probable than any other; they lie outside the region, of even probable knowledge, and therefore there is no reason to consider any of them." (Russell (1925) 13-14.)

<sup>16</sup> cf. "... the basis of a language is not conventional, either from the point of view of the individual or from that of the community. A child learning to speak is learning habits and associations which are just as much determined by the environment as the habit of expecting dogs to bark and cocks to crow. ... a conventional origin is clearly just as mythical as the social contract by which Hobbes and Rousseau supposed civil government to have been established. We can hardly suppose a parliament of hitherto speechless elders meeting together and agreeing to call a cow a cow and a wolf a wolf. The association of words with their meanings must have grown up by some natural process, though at present the nature of the process is unknown." (Russell (1921) 189-190.)

Russell's arguments against conventionalism have been definitely refuted in Lewis (1969).

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