Chapter 4

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF THE SYNCRETISTIC THEORY

1.   Synopsis

In this chapter I try to show how the syncretistic theory applies to two further issues: the question of the identity of characters within a literary cycle or, better, the question of whether a *fictum* can migrate from one fiction into another, and the question of whether there are immigrant alien objects in fiction, that is, individuals that migrate into fiction from the realm of concrete (and abstract) actual (or even possible) entities.

Expressed briefly, the answer to the first question is that although, according to the syncretistic theory, there are no fictional characters that migrate from one fiction to another, there is a *general* character which is the *fictum* at the centre of an entire cycle. The answer to the second question is totally negative: there are no (either concrete or abstract) immigrant objects at all in fiction. Stories concern fictional entities only.

2.   Characters in Single Episodes vs. Characters in Cycles

Let me summarize the story of the generation of a fictional being as follows. To begin with, until the make-believe process that there is a certain (concrete) individual which is so-and-so is completed (typically in the course of a broader storytelling process), there is no such fictional being. As stated above, it is not necessary for this process to occur continuously. As often happens with respect to elementary make-believe games, the participants may start a game, leave it and resume it later. Given such latitude, it may also be difficult to assess at what point the game, the make-believe process in question, is definitely over. Sometimes this may depend on an explicit agreement between the

participants; at other times no such agreement obtains and yet the game nonetheless does come to an end. Sooner or later, as in the case of any other game, this game is over. Once it is over, people can start thinking *of* it as the process in which a certain set of properties is made believe to be such that the properties corresponding to its properties are instantiated by a certain, typically concrete individual. As soon as this happens, a fictional entity comes into existence, as made up of that process(-type) together with the very set of properties which that process is then seen as involving. Participants in the game could *not* think of such an entity. Since they are *in* the game, they simply imagine that there is a (concrete) individual having the properties corresponding to the members of the set in question.

The fact that a *fictum* has come into existence once the relevant make-believe game is over, however, does not prevent that game from being revived. Reviving a game is something quite different from merely resuming it because in order for a game to be resumed after an interruption, no special intention is needed. Think of the simplest examples of make-believe games, such as those involving dolls and puppets. Children playing with such props can interrupt their games—for instance, when their mothers tell them to have a snack—and then resume them as if no interruption had occurred. In contrast, if a game is to be revived, a special intention is required. With respect to storytelling games, a new storyteller has to start his or her tale with the intention of *protracting* a previous make-believe process. He or she must intend to pretend that the *very same* (concrete) individual that was thought of in the previous make-believe process as being so-and-so is (also) such-and-such. Intentions of this kind underlie the formation of myths and literary cycles.[1]

However, the new storyteller's intention to protract a previous make-believe game is only a *necessary* condition for *that* game to be revived. It is not in fact a *sufficient* condition for that game to be protracted since that intention (like any other intention) may go unfulfilled. This can happen in different ways. For instance, because that intention is seen as thwarted given the intentions of *further* participants in the new storytelling practice to start a new make-believe process that there is an individual doing such-and-such things,[2] or because what the new storyteller happens to make believe "about" the

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[1] This phenomenon occurs widely in cross-media cycles such as those involving both literature and other fictional media, such as two-dimensional media such as cartoons and movies and three-dimensional media such as sculpture and theatre.

[2] Certainly, these further intentions may also not be automatically fulfilled. In order to establish whether protraction of a game has occurred, what ultimately counts is that agreement between players' intentions and recognitions takes place (see immediately below). In general, as I said above, a make-believe process-type may be seen as coming into existence by means of *diffuse* participation in its original tokening.

individual whose story is being told is too distant (chronologically or qualitatively) from what the original storyteller(s) made believe. Or even further reasons may be imagined. As a result, there is no revival of a previous make-believe game; the new practice amounts to an entirely new game, type-distinct from the first.

Of course it is also possible that the new storyteller's intention to protract a previous make-believe game is indeed fulfilled. This happens when further participants in the game *recognize* that the new game is just the old game protracted. However, although it is another necessary condition, such recognition by the participants is obviously not also a sufficient condition for the game's revival. Nothing prevents the new storyteller in question from making up an entirely new story, albeit resembling an earlier one. Yet the storyteller's intention together with that recognition may well function as *jointly sufficient* conditions for the revival of a make-believe game. Only in this case does the new practice really amount to reviving the old game. In that revival of a game, one often continues to pretend that there is a (typically concrete) individual, the very same individual as the one whose existence was pretended beforehand. So what is revived is an existentially creative make-believe game, in which one pretends *that* the very same, typically concrete, individual which was previously pretended to be $F, G, H \ldots$ is also $I, J, K \ldots$.

Game revival of this kind is a quite typical phenomenon in literature. Expansions of myths constitute typical, but definitely not the only, examples of such revival. Hence, they are not to be confused with another similar, yet distinct, phenomenon that may affect metafictional bits of fiction, in particular those in which one makes believe *of* a previously constituted fictional abstract character that it has certain properties. Suppose one told a story in which Oedipus expresses his delight in having been created by Sophocles long ago since this enabled him to become a model both for later writers and for psychoanalysts. This is a—perhaps extravagant—example of an existentially conservative make-believe game, in which one makes believe of an independently existing item—a given fictional character, Oedipus—that it has certain properties.[3] As will be remembered from the previous chapter, existentially conservative make-believe games typically involve an actual concrete individual. Nevertheless, in (admittedly rare) cases they may also involve actual abstract individuals, hence fictional characters as well.

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[3] Without doubt, a protraction of the existentially creative make-believe game that there is a certain individual may well be joined to an existentially conservative make-believe game about a fictional individual. In *A Samba for Sherlock*, Jô Soares makes believe *that* the concrete individual Sherlock Holmes about whom Conan Doyle had previously made believe that he was a detective, etc. is such that he is cleverer than the fictional character Poirot, who is thus concerned by Soares' *de re* make-believe.

Now, as far as *ficta* are concerned, failure versus success in reviving an old game makes a difference. In the first case (failure), at the end of the new make-believe process we have an entirely new fictional being. This new *fictum* is made up of both the type which that process is a token of and the new set of properties corresponding to those invoked in that process. In contrast, in the second case (success), at the end of the game we have a fictional being broader than the one that became available before the game's revival. This *fictum* consists of both the broader make-believe part of the enlarged storytelling practice, the part covering the revival, and the broader set of properties that is mobilized by pretending throughout the broader part as a whole that there is just one and the same individual having all the properties corresponding to those belonging to that set.

Famous examples of literary situations where we have to consider whether there is just one extended relevant make-believe process(-type) or many different such process(-types)—hence whether over and above the original character there is merely one broader fictional being or simply (possibly many) different ones—are Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Richardson's *Pamela* and Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* and *Shamela*, and even Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

Let me now add another very illuminating example, taken from Italian literature of the Renaissance. As is well known, Ludovico Ariosto intended his masterpiece *Orlando Furioso* ("Orlando Enraged") to be a continuation of Matteo Boiardo's earlier poem *Orlando Innamorato* ("Orlando in Love"). In particular, he wanted to continue making believe that there was a certain individual named "Roland," the very same individual that Boiardo pretends to be one of Charlemagne's best paladins, who fell in love with Angelica, the daughter of the king of Cathay. Ariosto, however, pretends that such individual, Roland, also did other things, such as going insane when he learns that Angelica has fallen in love with the Saracen soldier Medoro. In the second octave of Canto 1 of the epic *Orlando Furioso*, the narrator says:

> In the same strain of Roland will I tell/ Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,/ On whom strange madness and rank fury fell,/ A man esteemed so wise in former time.[4]

Now, if we take Ariosto's intention to be unfulfilled, we have two type-distinct make-believe practices, constituted by the narrations of Boiardo and Ariosto respectively. Hence, we have two entirely distinct fictional Rolands: first, Boiardo's Roland—made up of both Boiardo's

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[4] Transl. by William Stewart Rose (London, 1910; http//sunsite.berkeley.edu/OMACL/ Orlando/1-2canto.htm).

make-believe process-type involving the name "Roland" and the set of the properties mobilized in the narration of *Orlando Innamorato* by making believe that there is an individual having the corresponding properties— and, second, Ariosto's Roland, made up of Ariosto's make-believe distinct process-type with "Roland" and the set of the properties corresponding to those mobilized in the narration of *Orlando Furioso*. On the other hand, if we take Ariosto's intention to be fulfilled, then in Ariosto's narration we have the protraction of a previous make-believe practice performed by Boiardo. As a result, over and above Boiardo's Roland we have a larger Roland, composed of the make-believe process-type started by Boiardo and protracted by Ariosto, with the bigger set of the properties corresponding to the properties mobilized in both of the above narratives. In this example, the second option is definitely more probable than the first. (In fact, we may also say that we have an even larger Roland, stemming from a make-believe practice initiated with the telling of the older, medieval, *Chanson de Roland* and protracted by the storytelling of other authors, including Boiardo, up to Ariosto and perhaps after him. I will come back to this point below.)

In other cases, the first option (discontinuity) is more natural than the second. James Joyce's intentions notwithstanding, are we not more likely to speak of Leopold Bloom as an entirely new character, rather than to see James Joyce's narration of *Ulysses* as enlarging a storytelling practice began by Homer so as to constitute a larger Ulysses than Homer's Ulysses?

Certainly, it is possible that the larger *fictum* turns out to be an impossible object, in some Neo-Meinongians' above-mentioned secondary sense of being an impossible object.[5] That is, since at least some of the properties that constitute its set are incompatible, it is not possible for a concrete individual instantiating all those properties to exist. Yet this precisely fits the protracted make-believe practice in which different authors happen to make believe that the very same (concrete) individual has incompatible properties. Thus, Edmond Dantès plans to escape from Monte Cristo's prison in Alexander Dumas' telling of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, but he does not make the same plan in Italo Calvino's telling of *Il conte di Montecristo* (it is Abbé Faria who does so).

Here a clarification is in order. In the previous chapter I said that necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for two make-believe process-tokens to be instances of the same type are that there be a causal-intentional link between their agents and that they be *de dicto* (or *de re*) identical. Now, I take the protracted make-believe practice to be the protraction of the very same original practice. However, according to the above criterion for type-identity of a make-believe practice, the protracted practice and the original

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[5] Cf. Chapter 1, n. 42.

practice cannot be of the same type. For they are obviously not *de dicto* identical: the original practice makes believe that there is an individual that is *F*, *G*, and *H*, but the protracted practice makes believe that the individual hitherto made believe to be *F*, *G*, and *H* is also *I*, *J*, and *K*. But how can this be possible? If the protraction of a make-believe practice is the protraction of the same game, the original practice and the protracted practice are token-identical: they are just one and the same practice being engaged in. A fortiori, they are also type-identical.

This is entirely correct: the protraction of a certain make-believe game is the (numerically) very same game protracting itself. Yet since we are dealing here with a process, we can distinguish between the process as a whole and its stages. So, we can take the original make-believe practice to be the initial stage of the protracted make-believe practice. If this is the case, we can draw a distinction in type between the former and the latter since the initial stage is definitely not *de dicto* identical with the protracted practice: as we have seen above, the former makes believe that there is an individual that is *F*, *G*, and *H*, whereas the latter pretends that the individual which has up until now been made believe to be *F*, *G*, and *H*, is also *I*, *J*, and *K*.

In my view, this way of expressing the distinction has several merits. First, it allows me to retain the idea that *ficta* are only many-one, not also one-many, set-correlates. In other words, according to the syncretistic theory, it cannot be the case that one and the same make-believe process-type matches different property sets so that different *ficta* are generated out of these matches. But if the original and the enlarged make-believe practices were type-identical, we would obtain precisely this result: one and the same make-believe process-type generate (*inter alia*) two distinct *ficta*, both the smaller and the larger character. This undesired result is circumvented when the original and the enlarged make-believe processes are typologically distinct because then the two distinct *ficta* correspond to these two type-distinct processes.

Moreover, once we allow for a type distinction between the original and the enlarged make-believe practices by taking the former to be a mere stage of the latter, we can also distinguish in the same way between the original make-believe practice and subsequent stages of the enlarged make-believe practice. Consequently, we can also distinguish between different characters of a cycle, each corresponding to a given stage of the enlarged make-believe practice, even if we allow for a character that is larger than all of these, namely the result of the enlarged practice. Returning to the above example of Roland, we would wish to distinguish between, say, the Roland of the *Chanson de Roland*, the Roland of *Orlando Innamorato* and the Roland of *Orlando Furioso*, although we have to admit that there is one and the same make-believe practice occurring the whole time, hence a general Roland— the one of the entire cycle, so to speak. Indeed, we tend to say not only:

(1) In passing from the *Chanson de Roland* to *Orlando Furioso*, Roland becomes more and more insane

where by "Roland" we want to refer to the general Roland, but also:

(2) The Roland of the *Chanson de Roland* is wiser than the Roland of *Orlando Furioso*

where by means of the two singular terms involved we intend to refer to two distinct Rolands.

Incidentally, note that this approach allows us to commit ourselves to distinct *ficta* even when fictional works not conventionally accepted as distinct stem from subsequent practices; when one and the same storyteller interrupts his or her story and only after a long period of time intentionally comes back to it so as to complete it. Because authorial intentions are involved, one can here speak properly not merely of resuming but rather of reviving the old practice.[6] Yet, as above, one can also speak of the second stage of the revived practice as type-distinct from the first stage.[7] *Mutatis mutandis*, the same holds in the case of different versions of what later turns out to be a single work. In both cases, we would again be prompted to say that it is a question of distinct *ficta*, the characters generated respectively out of the first stage/the first version and out of the second stage/the second version respectively.[8] A famous example of the second type comes from Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*: the musician Berget in the 1912 draft version is definitely not the same as the musician Vinteuil in the final published version of the novel.[9]

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[6] Since in such a case only *intra*-subjective factors are in question, one may allow for intentions to protract a previous make-believe practice to be self-fulfilling, hence as being both necessary and sufficient for the revival of a game.

[7] In such cases we tend to take comments such as "Let me continue my story about James the monster, who liked frightening little children" as signalling that a new make-believe practice has actually started; hence that a *fictum* has already been generated whereas a new *fictum* will be generated out of the new practice, both *ficta* belonging to the same larger general character. See n. 31 of the previous chapter.

[8] In the "stages" case only, we would of course also be prompted to speak of a larger general character.

[9] Here the example is particularly relevant since, as some critics have maintained, Vinteuil actually comes out of the "fusion" of Berget and another 1912 character, the naturalist Vington: Vinteuil has (internally) both some of the properties (at least) of Berget and some (at least) of Vington. On this, cf. Bonomi (1994: 66). This also shows that, as will be seen below, the relation R' holding between similar characters is definitely not identity. For, in this case, Berget R'-s to Vinteuil as much as Vington does, yet Berget and Vington are not R'-ed to each other.

Once it is dealt with in the above way, the case of literary cycles is revealed to be of the utmost importance. For with reference to cycles, the syncretistic theory can again show why both the Neo-Meinongian and the artifactualist perspectives on fictional entities give only a partial account of what a *fictum* is.

First, according to some Neo-Meinongians, with respect to a character C belonging to a novel there really is a larger character C^+ belonging to the cycle in which that novel is embedded (to simplify, this novel can be taken as the first in the cycle). This broader character is individuated in terms of the set whose properties are mobilized throughout the *whole* cycle—the C^+-ish properties, to give them a collective name.[10]

Against this perspective, Thomasson has rightly objected that there is no reason for such a broader character to be identical with the set in question (rather than, one might say, with different sets). Indeed, one might wonder why the character in question should be identical with the set having as its members the C^+-ish properties rather than with any other set of properties sharing with the previous set only the C-ish properties, namely the relevant properties mobilized in the first novel of the cycle. Thomasson further claims that there is no way to address this question unless one is able to provide an independent criterion that makes clear which novels effectively constitute a certain literary cycle. Now such a criterion would rely on causal-intentional factors, that is, both on the fact that the storyteller of the new story is acquainted with the previous work and on the fact that such a storyteller intends to refer to the same characters in that earlier work. Once that criterion is adopted, however, literary cycles do not prompt the need to postulate something like a broader character. For, Thomasson concludes, this criterion also shows that the character of the cycle is identical with the character of the initial novel of the cycle.[11]

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[10]   For this solution see Reicher (1995: 113–5).

[11]   Cf. Thomasson (1999: 61–2). She also disqualifies (rightly, in my opinion) the other possible candidate for the character of a cycle that Neo-Meinongians might propose; namely, the smaller character whose properties are the "core" properties shared by the different characters of the different novels. For this raises the insoluble problem of individuating the right "core" properties. Cf. (1999: 57–60). I take this criticism as applying to a different metaphysical proposal which identifies *ficta* with individual essences, that is, with properties that may be possessed by one individual only. For this proposal, see Orilia (2000) and (2002). According to this proposal, a *fictum* F_1 is identical with another *fictum* F_2 of a literary cycle only if they have the same individual essence. However, because it may well be the case that no "core" property, hence no individual essence, is maintained through a cycle, there seems to be no possibility of equating F_1 with a further *fictum* F_3 of that cycle. Yet we may well be prompted to identify this latter *fictum* with F_2, insofar as a further individual essence is mobilized in the corresponding parts of the cycle. The only possibility is to interpret the relation

However, as we saw in Chapter 2, Thomasson acknowledges that the appeal to an intention of the above kind provides only a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for the identity of such a character across literary works.[12] So again, the best Meinongian theory and Thomasson's artifactualist theory each gives only a partial account of what a character that stretches across not a single novel but a whole cycle can be.

Once more, the syncretistic perspective is better able to account for the problem of what the character of a cycle is. According to that perspective, in the case of a literary cycle it is clear both why there really exists the larger character C^+ and why it is characterized by the C^+-ish properties rather than by any other collection of properties sharing with the C^+-ish properties only the C-ish properties. First of all, there really is such a larger character. This character is individuated in terms of a certain protracted make-believe process-type and in terms of a certain set of properties, the C^+-ish properties, that is, the properties corresponding to those mobilized in the protracted make-believe process. To account for this, we can reformulate the identity criterion of a fictional entity as follows: two characters x and y are the *same* character if and only if they are made out of the same, *possibly protracted*, make-believe process-type and the same set of properties, the properties corresponding to those mobilized in that process. Returning to what I said above about the conditions for a make-believe process to be protracted, we conclude that one such make-believe process-type is instantiated iff not only the further storytellers (of the cycle) have the intention of protracting the game inaugurated by the original storytellers (of the initial episode of the cycle), but also that intention has been fulfilled by means of the agreement of further participants in that make-believe game. Moreover, the set constituting the larger character is precisely the set of the C^+-ish properties, for the C^+-ish properties correspond precisely to those mobilized in the protracted make-believe process.

To complete this account, let me add that if the new storytellers' intentions to prolong a certain make-believe process are unfulfilled, or even if that part of the process, *qua* stage in the protracted process, is taken to be type-distinct from the process as a whole, we simply have other fictional characters over and

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subsisting between F_1, F_2, and F_3 not as identity but, rather, as a weaker sameness relation. We will see how to account for this situation in the context of the syncretistic theory.

[12] Cf. n. 61 of Chapter 2. In these passages of her book, in fact, Thomasson seems to suggest that the artifactualist conception must be supplemented by the Neo-Meinongian conception in a way that points toward the syncretistic conception: "Instead of treating [characters] as ideal abstracta distinguished *solely* by their properties, we may get farther by treating fictional characters as historical entities individuated *at least in part* by the circumstances of their creation. [my italics]" (1999: 62).

above the one which came out of the original make-believe process, taken again as a stage in the protracted game, from which it is type-distinct. That is to say, we have as many fictional characters as there are different make-believe process-types—the character C, the character C_1, the character C_2 and so on.

Without doubt, this huge variety of characters may leave one perplexed. Suppose we effectively have at our disposal not just a general character stemming from the protracted make-believe process, but a host of fictional characters each stemming from a particular stage of that process. When we speak of a fictional character *tout court*, for example when we simply say things such as:

(3) Holmes is a detective

which of these particular characters—Holmes, Holmes$_1$, Holmes$_2$ . . .—are we talking about? Or are we talking about the general character?

If we are in fact referring to a particular character of a cycle, it is easy for us to make explicit which of the many particular characters we are talking about: we just add some specification. As already seen in the example of (2), language helps us by providing us with certain specifying descriptions: we talk of the Holmes of *The Adventure of the Empty House*, the Holmes of *A Scandal in Bohemia*, and so on. Yet when we say something as generic as that Holmes is a detective, it is quite likely that we do not want to refer to any of these particular Holmeses. In such a case we are speaking of the *general* character of the cycle, the Holmes who is larger than the one generated by virtue of the initial stage of the relevant make-believe process, and also larger than any of these other particular Holmeses. As I just said, this general Holmes consists of the protracted make-believe process-type occurring throughout the storytelling of the whole cycle of the Holmes stories, together with the set of all the properties corresponding to those invoked in that protracted process.

Nonetheless, this answer prompts a further doubt. If things stand as the syncretistic theory claims, then when people said that Holmes is a detective toward, say, the middle of the period in which Conan Doyle created the Holmes stories, and when people say apparently the same today after the entire Holmes cycle has been completed by Doyle, they are not referring to the same general fictional character. For, whereas the former referred to what in their day was the general Holmes, the *fictum* made up of the make-believe process-type protracted up to that time and of the corresponding property set, the latter, in contrast, are referring to an even larger Holmes, the *fictum* made up of the make-believe process-type protracted up to the end of Doyle's creation and of the corresponding, even larger, property set. By the same reasoning, if tomorrow some new author should take up Doyle's pretense, then

we would subsequently no longer be referring to the general Holmes we are referring to today but to a character that is even larger than this one, and so on. In sum, even with respect to the general character of the cycle, we end up with a host of such characters. Any character of a cycle larger than the original character is the general character of the cycle until the cycle is prolonged and an even larger character arises. Intuitively, this seems perplexing. At this point, one can reply on behalf of the artifactualist: is not the idea that there is just one character throughout a whole cycle more intuitive than this? For one may then say that people refer to that one character at any (past, present or future) moment in the cycle's elaboration.

I admit that, on this issue, the position of the syncretistic theory is allegedly counterintuitive. Depending on whether at t' a character even larger than what was the largest character at t has been generated, the reference of the corresponding singular term does or does not shift. For instance, supposing that the cycle of Roland has been protracted even after Ariosto, then the name "Roland" in (1) *now* refers to a general character different from the one it referred to in the Renaissance period. This seems hard to accept.

First of all, however, let me note that in the end the idea that the artifactualist position on this issue is closer to our intuitions is without foundation. As we saw in Chapter 2, in the artifactualist conception *ficta* possess the properties ascribed to them in the relevant work of literature only *relatively*, that is, according to that work. Because they so possess such properties, they may also lose them when that work disappears. Accordingly, such properties do not contribute at all to the individuation of the *ficta*. Moreover, as we saw in scrutinizing Thomasson's view, in such a conception no further candidate for the genuine individuation of a fictional entity is really provided. Thus, once we face the problem of individuating a character *across* literary works, the artifactualist theory leaves us with no more than the intention of the further storytellers to refer to the previously generated character. Yet, as Thomasson herself admits, this provides only a *necessary* condition for the identity of a *fictum* across literary works. If a new storyteller wrote that Holmes is a rock, in spite of his or her intention he or she would not be referring to the character of the Holmes stories.[13] Besides, since no both necessary and sufficient

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[13] Cf. Thomasson (1999: 68). On behalf of Thomasson, one might suggest that a certain overlapping of properties ascribed to characters in different yet contiguous stories provides another necessary condition for the identity of a character across literary works. More precisely, according to this suggestion a *fictum* F_1 spoken of in work W_1 is the same as a *fictum* F_2 spoken of in a contiguous work W_2 only if F_1 and F_2 share a certain number of properties. Moreover, F_2 is the same as another *fictum* F_3 spoken of in another work W_3 contiguous to W_2 only if F_2 and F_3 also share a certain amount of properties (not necessarily the same amount as that shared by F_1 and F_2). Through transitivity, F_1 and F_3 will also be identical. Together with the "referential intention" requirement, the "overlapping" requirement would

conditions for the identity of a *fictum* are admittedly to be found in the artifactualist's theory and, furthermore, since—as I claimed in Chapter 2—*pace* Thomasson no both necessary and sufficient conditions for its *existence* are to be found either, we are left with the perplexity I already raised in that chapter. By pointing to causal-intentional connections, we can reconstruct a history of the uses of a certain term, say "Holmes." Such a history will lead us back to some initiating uses of that term in a certain storytelling practice performed by a certain person—in this case Doyle. But, if we lack genuine criteria of individuation, what assures us that *there really is* a certain fictional individual over and above those uses?

What is more, it is not true that the syncretistic theory cannot in some way accommodate the intuition that in speaking of, say, Holmes, we are always dealing with one and the same individual. Although this intuition cannot be accounted for at the ontological level of fictional entities, it can be explained at the cognitive level of make-believe. No sooner do we as readers take what we are reading as a new episode of a cycle,[14] than we *eo ipso* ensure that the author's intention to protract a previous make-believe process (roughly corresponding to the previous episode of the cycle) is fulfilled. We therefore join the very same make-believe process that involved the author of that episode. As a result, we share with that author the pretense that the episode deals with the very same individuals (typically, concrete

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probably provide also a sufficient condition. (I owe this suggestion to Marco Nani. A similar suggestion appears to be made by Thomasson herself in a previous work. Cf. Thomasson (1994).) Thus, change in a fictional character would be treated following the model of change in a concrete entity. Such an entity remains the same across time only if it changes gradually by retaining a certain number of properties across any change. Yet this model cannot be applied to *ficta*. For it may well be the case that at the same time two new works W_2 and W_3 arise which are both intentionally related to a previous work W_1 and in which both *fictum* F_2 of W_2 and *fictum* F_3 of W_3 share respectively a set of properties with F_1 of W_1, but these respective sets do not overlap. In this situation, according to artifactualists we have the intuition that F_1, F_2, and F_3 are the same character. We are indeed prompted to say that both F_2 and F_3 are the same as F_1; hence, through transitivity they should also be the same entity. However, following to the present suggestion we would have a situation in which, though F_1 is the same as both F_2 and as F_3, F_2 could not be the same as F_3. Therefore, property overlapping does not seem to provide a necessary condition for identity of *ficta* across literary works. Therefore, the present suggestion does not really improve Thomasson's original position. Nor would appealing to the maintenance of "core properties" be any more successful. Clearly, such an appeal rules out the previous example: in order for F_2 and F_3 to be the same character as F_1, they must not only (possibly in different ways) overlap its properties but also share the same "core properties." Yet it would lead us back to the problem Thomasson herself envisaged of how to individuate such properties. See n. 11. For other difficulties regarding this kind of solution, see Reicher (1995: 105–6).

[14] On audience games of make-believe, cf. Walton (1990: 51, 58–9).

ones) that the previous episode was make-believedly concerned with. We pretend, as does that author, that *precisely those individuals* which were described as doing a number of things in the previous episode are engaged in some further actions. However one such pretense does not of course entail that there really is just one and the same fictional character engaged in the new as well as the old actions. The reason is that pretense always retains one key feature, both in its initiation and in its protraction: it is *non-committal*. As I have stressed repeatedly, if there were nothing other than pretense, however protracted, there would be no fictional individuals at all.

More importantly, what seems to be a defect of the theory turns out to be another of its merits. This, allegedly counterintuitive, view of a variety of increasingly broader *ficta* generated through the protraction of certain make-believe process-types enables me to defend the conception of a *fictum* not only as an abstract entity, but also as an *artifactual* entity. This conception was espoused, but in my opinion, not sufficiently justified in Thomasson's artifactualist approach. As a result, even the alleged counter-intuitiveness of the idea that the reference to a general character of a cycle is continually shifting disappears.

Once a certain make-believe process-(type) is finished, we end up with a certain fictional individual. When that process is protracted, we end up with another, larger, fictional individual. And so on. The provisionally largest *fictum* obtained at the end of any protraction is larger than the previously largest ones, insofar as the set which is one of its components has not only the same properties as the sets which contribute respectively to constituting the previously largest *ficta* but also some additional properties. All these elements show that a fictional character is not only a *created* entity but also a *constructed* entity. Properties—or, better, sets of properties—are the building blocks of any such construction in the following sense. Once the set of the properties corresponding to those progressively mobilized in the relevant make-believe process-type is connected with that very process, a certain *fictum* comes into existence. As regards that *fictum*, the answers to many questions remain indeterminate since, for a vast number of properties and their respective complements, that *fictum* does not possess either. Of course, an answer to each of these questions can be given. Yet providing an answer to any such question actually means having a *fictum* broader than the previous one and, hence, constructing this broader *fictum* on top of it. Indeed, answering such questions means connecting with the protracted game some more properties corresponding to those mobilized in the protraction in addition to a broader set containing the original properties. As a result of this operation, a new *fictum* is generated that is larger than the previous one.

Now, since a *fictum* is a constructed entity, we are justified in taking it to be an artifactual entity; namely, a fictional entity is a product of (human)

manipulation of properties or, better, property sets. Moreover, since properties or property sets are its building blocks, we are further justified in taking it to be an *abstract* artifact; in contrast, the building blocks of *concrete* artifacts are lumps of matter, not (sets of) properties.[15]

Therefore, the idea that each step in this construction leads to a different, on each occasion larger, fictional character finally enables us to conceive of *ficta* as *abstract artifacts*. However, as far as intuitions are concerned, we are now in a position to reverse the situation for it is finally revealed to us that the original intuition that there is just one and the same *fictum* persisting throughout a literary cycle is not so compelling as it originally appeared. In a cycle, the original character may well be seen as nothing more than a stimulus for generating further, definitely broader, entities.

This is particularly evident when the broader entity develops out of a "fusion" of different original characters. There are clear examples of this in mythology. The Jupiter of the early Romans is not at all the same as that of the late Romans as this later Jupiter results from of a "fusion" of the early Jupiter with the Greek Zeus: the Jupiter of the late Romans has (internally) both some of the properties (at least) of the early Roman Jupiter and some (at least) of Zeus. Hence, there is no more reason to say that the late Roman Jupiter is identical with the early Roman Jupiter than to say that it is identical with Zeus. We find other clear examples of this situation also at the other pole of narrative production, in an author's elaboration of an original character. To return to an above-mentioned case, there is no reason to say that the Vinteuil of *In Search of Lost Time* (published version) is the same as the Berget of the (1912) unpublished version of the novel. Vinteuil originates from a "fusion" of Berget and Vington, another personage of *In Search of Lost Time* (1912): Vinteuil has (internally) both some of the properties (at least) of Berget and some (at least) of Vington. Thus, there is no more reason to say that Vinteuil is identical with Berget than to say that he is identical with Vington. *Who* is Vinteuil, Berget or Vington? There is no way in principle to answer this question.

Examples such as these show that the intuition that literary cycles typically involve one and the same character throughout is not only driven by consideration of only a limited number of cases, but also that it is ungrounded even with respect to these cases. We are thus faced with the problem already discussed in

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[15] Deutsch (1991) defends a constructivist approach to *ficta* that bears *some* similarity to the one I here put forward. It is similar in that for Deutsch a *fictum* is constructed insofar as an author stipulates that it has certain properties. Yet it is also dissimilar because, since Deutsch appeals to a version of the Principle of the Freedom of Assumption (see Chapter 1), that stipulation matches the fact that the *fictum* is already there as the individual possessing the properties in question. As a result, in Deutsch's view a *fictum* is an abstract but not an artifactual entity.

the Introduction: an intuition about the identity of fictional characters seems correct only until reflection shows us not only that its scope is limited, but also that it is ungrounded. As a result, even when it is not a question of character "fusion," we have to admit, by parity of reasoning, that a character at the end of a cycle will not be identical with a character at its very beginning.

In fact, I believe that we are in the same situation with respect to fictional entities as we are with respect to mathematical entities. As I implicitly suggested in Chapter 2, there is a close analogy between the constructivist conception of *ficta* and the constructivist conception of mathematical entities. As with *ficta*, the apparent counter-intuitiveness of the constructivist conception of mathematics is grounded only in implicit endorsement of its realist opponent, that is, a nonconstructivist theory of *mathemata*.

As I have said, once a make-believe process-(type) is finished, a *fictum* is generated out of that process together with the property set that process deals with. Properties outside that set are simply not possessed (internally) by the *fictum*. As Neo-Meinongians rightly hold, the *fictum* is therefore incomplete in the sense that, for any property and its complement neither of which belongs to its set, the *fictum* does not possess either. This accounts for what I called in Chapter 1 the "incompleteness" datum, namely the fact that in respect of a property that is neither explicitly nor implicitly attributed to an individual in the course of a narration, it seems meaningless to ask whether the *fictum* in question possesses it. Likewise, according to a constructivist conception of a mathematical entity, it is meaningless to ask whether a mathematical entity possesses a property that lies outside the scope of its construction. For, if this is the case, the entity in question fails to possess either that property or its complement.

Certainly, as far as a fictional entity is concerned, an answer to the above question may ultimately be given. Yet, as we have just seen, providing an answer to such a question means protracting the relevant make-believe process by mobilizing a broader property set; and so, it leads to the generation of a larger fictional entity. This will be an entity distinct from the previous fictional being for, since a *fictum* has essentially the properties it possesses internally, a *fictum* having the property in question internally is distinct from a *fictum* failing to have it internally. As a corollary, intuitions notwithstanding, there is no single *fictum* across a storytelling cycle but, rather, a host of increasingly broader *ficta*. Now, the same holds for constructed mathematical entities. Once the construction of such an entity is protracted, a new larger mathematical entity is generated, larger in that it possesses properties essentially that were not possessed at all by the previous mathematical being.

Notice finally that even in the case of *mathemata*, we may have the intuition that there is just one and the same mathematical entity at every step in

the construction. Yet, since mathematical entities are constructed from properties possessed essentially by them, this intuition is also ungrounded. If I say:

(4) π is an irrational number

and numbers are constructed entities, then, if I state (4) at different stages in the mathematical development of π, at each of these stages in using "π" I refer to a different entity.[16]

A final point remains to be dealt with. Suppose we accept the fact that there are a great many characters stemming from every protracted make-believe practice, either because we agree that each time the practice is extended, a new character comes into being larger than those preceding it or because we agree that a new character corresponds to each stage of the protracted practice. What, then, are the relations between all these characters? In the first case, how is the first Holmes related to the broader Holmes at t_1, the even broader Holmes at t_2, and so on? In the second case, how are all the particular Holmeses related to each other so that they are not simply distinct fictional entities?

Obviously, since different entities are involved, the relationship in question is not one of identity. Moreover, to speak of *different* relationships is more exact as they have different features. In the first case, the relation R involved is not identity because it is asymmetrical: C is R-ed to C^+ but not the reverse. In the second case, the relation R' involved is again not identity, but it is also a different relation from R because it is not transitive: C is R'-ed to C_1, C_1 is R'-ed to C_2, but C may not be R'-ed to C_2. Thus, on the one hand R may be seen as mimicking an inclusion relation. Indeed, the set-theoretical and pretense-theoretical components of C are, respectively, a subset and a stage of the set-theoretical and pretense-theoretical components of C^+. On the other hand, R' is a relation of intentional similarity: C_1 is intentionally similar to C since the agent of the later make-believe process intends to protract the earlier make-believe process and, as a result of that intention, it turns out that there is a certain property similarity between these *ficta*.[17] I call the first of these relations *transfictional inclusion* and the second *transfictional sameness*.[18] Ariosto's Roland is R-ed to any progressively larger general Roland of the paladins cycle

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[16] Wittgenstein explicitly emphasized this similarity between mathematical and fictional beings: see his (1978²: IV§9).

[17] This is the relation that, according to a suggestion previously considered, would be needed to support Thomasson's conviction that there is identity between a character of a certain novel and a character of another novel belonging to the same cycle. Yet, as we have seen, this relation failed in that purpose. See n. 13.

[18] In his guise-theoretical approach to *ficta*, Castañeda claims that a similar relation holds between different characters belonging to the same cycle. He calls that relation "transconsociational sameness." See Castañeda (1989a), (1990b).

but not *vice versa*. Furthermore, the Ulysses of the *Odyssey* is also R'-ed to the Ulysses of the *Iliad*. However, James Joyce's Leopold Bloom is not R'-ed to the *Iliad*'s Ulysses for, in spite of what James joyce's intended, there is too much dissimilarity between these *ficta*.[19]

3.   Are there Other Immigrant Objects in Fiction?

Up until now we have seen that insofar as the make-believe processes that lead to the generation of a fictional being may be protracted, there is a purely metaphorical sense according to which we can say that a *fictum* migrates from one fiction to another. There is in fact literally no migration. A *fictum* characterized as *the* fictional object of a *certain* fiction—*the* Roland of the *Chanson de Roland*, etc.—does not reappear *as such* in any further fiction: it is, so to speak, a *fiction-embedded* character. Yet different fictions cooperate in the construction of a character which is larger than any fiction-embedded character, the *general character*. By referring to such a character, we can (at least partially) account for the intuition that different fictions are about the same character. Consequently, when we say things such as (3) we are not talking about any particular "fiction-embedded" character, the character of *this* or of *that* fiction, but about one such general character.

However, over and above the intuition that in protracting fictions we are always dealing with the very same characters, there is another apparently strong intuition that the syncretistic theory has to face. This is the intuition that fictional works concern not only fictional but also *concrete* individuals, especially actually existing ones. Or, in order for the time being to neutralize any commitment to fictional works, it seems intuitively clear that, over and above existentially creative games, storytelling processes also consist of existentially conservative games in which one makes believe *of* concrete

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[19] As a result of these characterizations, we could legitimately say that only if characters *C* and *D* are both *R*-ed to a further character *E, E* is the *fusion* of *C* and *D*. Yet it is not the case that *all C*'s and *D*'s internal properties are included among *E*'s internal properties, nor that both the make-believe process leading to *C* and that leading to *D* are included in the further make-believe process leading to *E*. For the first process is making believe that there is an individual engaged in certain actions, but the second process is making believe that there is *another* individual engaged in certain actions. So, how could the third make-believe process be the continuation of *both* processes? This is why when speaking of the late Roman Jupiter as the "fusion" of both the early Roman Jupiter and Zeus, or of Vinteuil as the "fusion" of Berget and Vington, I put "fusion" in quotation marks. In fact, both the early Roman Jupiter and Zeus are merely R'-ed to the late Roman Jupiter (but not to each other as there is no intentional make-believe connection between the two). The same holds with respect to Vinteuil, Berget and Vington; see n. 9.

individuals that they possess certain properties. The question is therefore: how does the syncretistic theory account for the intuition that, over and above *native* objects—or, better, "fiction-embedded" fictional entities generated *inter alia* via a certain make-believe process-type—and *pseudo-immigrant fictional* objects—that is the general characters of cycles—fiction also concerns *immigrant concrete* individuals, namely, concrete entities that (actually, if not also merely possibly)[20] exist prior to the fiction itself?

It is important to adopt here Evans' distinction between *conniving* and *nonconniving* uses of singular terms and extend it to sentences.[21] For the time being, let me characterize a *fictional* sentence as a sentence that occurs in a make-believe game insofar as it is uttered in that game. Once this characterization is adopted, it turns out that conniving uses of fictional sentences are precisely those sentential uses which prototypically occur in storytelling processes, as well as in all make-believe games which involve an audience engaged in the same kind of make-believe practice as that which concerns the storyteller(s). In contrast, nonconniving uses of the very same sentences employ these sentences outside of any make-believe practice. Such uses are intended to enable people to speak *about* fiction rather than *within* fiction.

In the next chapter I deal more systematically and in greater detail with this distinction. I refer to it here because the question of whether there are immigrant concrete objects in fiction concerns only *nonconniving* uses of fictional sentences. Indeed, as far as conniving uses of such sentences are concerned, it is indisputably the case that they may be about concrete individuals. Ordinary existentially conservative games of make-believe typically involve such uses. Since in such games one makes believe *of a certain concrete individual* that it is such and such, one will often make the corresponding linguistic mock-assertion about that very individual. For instance, in *War and Peace* Leo Tolstoy mock-asserts:

(5) Prince Andrew looked straight at Napoleon

(or—better—the equivalent in Russian), where by "Napoleon" he refers to the French emperor in order to make believe that a person named "Prince Andrew" looked straight at him. So the question is: what about the nonconniving uses of the same sentences? Do they still concern the very same concrete individuals or are they, instead, about further fictional individuals?

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[20] Cf. n. 48 of the previous chapter.
[21] Cf. Evans (1982: 365–6). Currie (1988), (1990) draws an analogous distinction between fictive and metafictive uses of names and extends it directly to sentences.

As various other philosophers maintain,[22] I think that the latter is the case. First of all, note that once they are over, ordinary existentially conservative games of make-believe may be seen in the same way as existentially creative games, namely as *set-based* existentially conservative games. Making believe of the flesh and blood Napoleon that he has certain properties may indeed be seen as making believe of the set having properties corresponding to the above properties that those properties are instantiated by Napoleon. When it is put this way, the road is open to committing oneself to a fictional entity made up of the above set together with the make-believe process-type in question. Hence, nonconniving uses of sentences such as (5) may be taken as also being about such fictional entities. As we tend to say in such a case, in its nonconniving use (5) is not about the flesh and blood Napoleon but about the Napoleon of *War and Peace*.

This approach will leave many readers perplexed. Certainly, there is a strong similarity between the new *fictum* and the concrete entity the make-believe game is about: the *fictum* possesses many properties internally such that the concrete entity possesses externally either the very same properties or properties that match them.[23] Among those properties are not only some about which the relevant work says that the *fictum* in question possesses them, but also others about which that work implies this possession. For instance, the Napoleon of *War and Peace* is (internally) an emperor as much as our flesh and blood Napoleon is (externally); what's more, the former is (internally) as arrogant as the latter is (externally). Nonetheless, are not stories in such cases intended to speak of the concrete entity and not some surrogate for it? For example, what is the point of *The Clouds* by Aristophanes if not to make fun of Socrates—*our* Socrates? How could this be done if that story concerned not Socrates but a set-based entity such as the Socrates of

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[22] Cf., for example, Bonomi (1994) and Landini (1990). In some respects, also Lamarque-Olsen share this idea [cf. (1994: 126, 293)]. Parsons presents, but only half endorses, the idea that stories contain what he calls "surrogate objects" (1980: 57–8). In (1999), however, Bonomi makes clear that, for him, it is only in what I later call external metafictional sentences (see Chapters 5–6) that singular terms refer to fictional characters which in some way correspond (see following footnote) to real (normally concrete) individuals.

[23] Bonomi (1999: 5) maintains that there are "systematic relations" between fictional entities and the corresponding real (normally concrete) individuals: "given a story H and a set of properties X, selected among those which are assumed to characterize an individual α, I will speak of a function g which, thanks to the properties in X, associates a character β to α. Thus, a statement of the form "g(α,H,X) = β" means that β is the character which, in the light of the story H and of the relevant properties in X, corresponds to the real entity α". Castañeda holds that a relation of "trans-categorial sameness" holds between an actual concrete individual and the corresponding fictional individual. See Castañeda (1990b: 274–5).

The Clouds? Moreover, is it not for this reason that we sometimes call some stories *real* stories? Why do we speak of *historical* novels, such as *Ivanhoe*, *The Betrothed* and so on, if not because, among other things, they concern concrete individuals (Richard the Lion-Hearted, Cardinal Borromeo and so on)?

However, if we insist that nonconniving uses of fictional sentences concern concrete individuals (if there are any), we are forced to consider as false many sentences that in such uses we would intuitively deem to be true. Take once more, for instance, the case of (5). Intuitively, it seems that in an exam on nineteenth-century Russian literature a student has a good chance of passing it if, when asked to say what Prince Andrew does with respect to Napoleon, he or she nonconnivingly uses that sentence rather than its negation. So, in such a use (5) intuitively turns out to be true. But how can this be the case if "Napoleon" refers there to *our* Napoleon? In that case, what the sentence would then say in such a use is that our Napoleon was gazed at by a fictional individual.[24] But how can this be true? Our Napoleon was addressed by a host of strange persons, yet definitely not by fictional individuals! As a result, it seems safer to take (5) in its nonconniving use to be about two fictional individuals, Prince Andrew and the Napoleon of *War and Peace*, and to say that they are connected by the relation of *looking straight at* which is predicated of them in the internal mode.

Without doubt, there are some further arguments which defenders of the idea that concrete individuals are involved by fictional sentences in their nonconniving uses can present. First, they may say that in such a use a sentence "p" is elliptical for a sentence of the form "in the story S, p."[25] Thus, a sentence such as (5) turns out to be true in an ordinary *de re* reading about the flesh and blood Napoleon: it is indeed the case of our Napoleon that *in War and Peace* Prince Andrew looked straight at him. Or they may say that (in such a use) the sentence can be evaluated with respect to different contexts, specifically the real (concrete) context and a certain fictional context, the context of the relevant story. So, with respect to the real context, a sentence such as (5) will definitely turn out to be false precisely for the above-mentioned reasons. In the context of (concrete) reality, the context in which (actually existing) concrete individuals are to be found, the concrete person Napoleon is definitely not addressed by a fictional individual. Yet with respect to the fictional context of Leo Tolstoy's story, (5) definitely turns out

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[24] I deal systematically with the problem of the truth conditions of fictional sentences in their nonconniving use in Chapters 5 and 6.

[25] This approach counts Lewis (1978) among its inspirers.

to be true for in that context, Prince Andrew gazed at our flesh and blood Napoleon.[26]

I devote part of the next chapter to an evaluation of these points in general, that is, regardless of whether in their nonconniving uses fictional sentences are supposed to be about fictional or about concrete individuals. For the time being, let me simply say that if we interpret nonconniving uses of fictional sentences such as (5) as being about concrete individuals in the above two ways, with respect to those sentences (in such uses) we can no longer account for the "analyticity" datum described in Chapter 1. In other words, once interpreted in either of the two above-mentioned ways, those sentences in such uses would be as true as ordinary factual sentences. We would *discover* them to be true precisely as we do with regard to ordinary factual sentences.

One might, of course, swallow the bitter pill and reply that since in non-conniving uses those sentences concern concrete individuals, this result is precisely what one can expect. So, the datum in question may not be as robust as it appeared, at least to some extent, at the very beginning. Yet let us turn again to a sentence such as (5), which allegedly concerns at least one fictional individual, Prince Andrew. Here the intuition that it is not a matter of discovery or, perhaps better, that it is unrevisable that Prince Andrew gazed at Napoleon is as strong as possible. Moreover, it is as strong as the intuition regarding the nonconniving use of any other fictional sentence that does not involve any apparent reference to concrete individuals such as the following, again taken from Leo Tolstoy:

(6) Prince Andrew Bolkonski was a very handsome young man.

So, either we agree that sentences such as (5) and (6) in their nonconniving use must be dealt with in the same way, that is as expressing an analytic predication, or we abandon the idea that there is any analyticity at all as far as nonconniving uses of *any* fictional sentence are concerned. This second option seems to me totally implausible. Yet if we accept the first option we have to agree that, as far as (5) is concerned, analyticity is impermeable to its syntactic order. In other words, if it is analytic that Prince Andrew gazed at Napoleon, then it is also analytic that Napoleon was gazed at by Prince Andrew. Now, accepting that (5) is analytically true in both syntactic orders

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[26] This approach is defended in Predelli (1997). See also his (2002) and, in addition, Salmon (1998) and Thomasson (1999). In fact, for Thomasson (as well as for the other artifactualists) there is no distinction between this approach and the previous one. For, as seen in Chapter 2, she believes that evaluating a sentence "p" with respect to a fictional context is equivalent to saying that such a sentence is elliptical for a sentence of the form "According to story S, p". See Thomasson (1999: 105–7).

is tantamount to accepting that *both* singular terms in (5), "Prince Andrew" and "Napoleon," refer to fictional individuals, Prince Andrew and the Napoleon of *War and Peace*. For if that sentence is analytically true in its active reading only insofar as the fictional individual Prince Andrew has internally the property of *looking straight at Napoleon*, then it must be analytically true in its passive reading only insofar as the *fictional* Napoleon of *War and Peace* has internally the converse property of *being looked straight at by Prince Andrew*. Yet if this is true of the name "Napoleon" in (5) in its nonconniving use, then it is true of it as occurring in any other nonconnivingly used fictional sentence. And it is true a fortiori of *all* singular terms in nonconniving uses of *any* fictional sentence.

Note moreover that, even putting aside the "analyticity" issue, the above example of (5) shows that once we admit fictional individuals, it is definitely more elegant to dispense with immigrant concrete individuals. This allows one to account for the truth of (5) both by saying that the fictional individual Prince Andrew has (internally) the relational property of *looking straight at [the fictional] Napoleon* and by saying that the fictional Napoleon has (also internally) the converse relational property of *being looked straight at by [the fictional] Prince Andrew*. If we said on the contrary that the Napoleon involved in (5) is the flesh and blood Napoleon, we would be forced to deny that he has the latter relational property—the French Emperor has definitely not been gazed at by any fictional individual—while still admitting that the fictional Andrew has the relational property of *looking straight at [the concrete] Napoleon*. But normally, if any two individuals *x* and *y* have the relation *R* to each other, then *x* has the relational property of *being R to y* while *y* has the converse relational property of *being R-ed by x*. Therefore, to deny that this obtains when *x* is a fictional individual and *y* is a concrete individual has no proper justification.[27]

The above considerations show that I do not want the thesis that characters in fiction cannot migrate from reality to be based on a perhaps questionable phenomenon such as the "analyticity" datum. To counter the opposite thesis there is indeed an argument stronger than considerations of elegance. This argument is that, like the intuition that fictional characters literally migrate from one fiction to another, the intuition that characters migrate from reality is equally unsound. In fact, the idea that fiction involves actual concrete individuals is based on simple cases where there actually is a one-one correspondence between a fictional and a concrete individual: the London of Doyle and our everyday London, the Napoleon of Leo Tolstoy and the flesh and blood Napoleon and so on. But there may well

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[27] As Parsons, who admits immigrant concrete individuals, is forced to acknowledge. Cf. Parsons (1980: 59–60).

be more complex cases in which there actually is a one-many correspondence between fictional and concrete individuals. Andrea Bonomi has pointed out one such example: in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Profession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar*, the fictional personage of the Savoyard Vicar actually corresponds to two distinct concrete individuals, Monsieur Gâtier and Monsieur Gaime.[28] If we renounced the idea that a fictional individual is involved here, *which* of the two actual concrete individuals in question would Rousseau's story be about, Gâtier or Gaime? There is no answer in principle to this question: the character of the Savoyard Vicar is no more identical with Gâtier than it is identical with Gaime. Once again, then, if in such complex cases it is clear that a fiction involves no actual concrete individual, why should the situation be different in simpler cases?

Thus, no concrete actual, or even possible, individual migrates in fiction. Fiction contains fictional characters that at most correspond (possibly, also in a one-many form) to such individuals.

This negative result now needs to be generalized. Since in general individuals involved in existentially conservative make-believe games do not migrate in fiction, not only is it the case that concrete individuals do not so migrate, but also no abstract individuals migrate in fiction either.

Take a story one of whose sentences is apparently about a number:

(7) Number One was in a bad mood for it failed to count up to three.[29]

Although in its conniving use (7) is definitely about the number one, there is no more reason to say that in its nonconniving use it concerns that number rather than a fictional character corresponding to it, than there is to say that (5) in its nonconniving use concerns the flesh and blood Napoleon rather than the fictional Napoleon of *War and Peace* corresponding to the French emperor.

Curiously enough, this entails that when existentially conservative make-believe games concern already generated fictional characters that are the protagonists of certain fictional stories, the metafictional stories emerging from those games do not involve these fictional individuals. Instead, they involve *other* fictional characters, which correspond to the previous fictional characters practically in the same way as fictional characters such as the Napoleon of *War and Peace* correspond to their actual concrete counterparts, the French emperor in this case. The reasons why at most correspondence,

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[28] Cf. Bonomi (1999).
[29] G. Rodari, *Il trionfo dello zero*, in *I cinque libri*, Einaudi, Turin 1993, p. 17; my translation.

but not identity, holds between fictional characters in such cases are the same as before. For example, if the metafictional story were about the same fictional characters that a fictional story is about, it might say about these characters a series of falsehoods. Suppose the metafictional story in which Oedipus delights in having been created so early also said that Oedipus complains about the fact that the British do not know of his vicissitudes because his deeds have never been translated into English. Of course, of our ordinary fictional character Oedipus this is false—the British do know about him as there are many English translations of *Oedipus the King*, etc. But this is clearly true of the metafictional character Oedipus which corresponds to our fictional character Oedipus in practically the same way as the Napoleon of *War and Peace* corresponds to the French emperor.

One final remark to end this chapter. As we have seen previously, the fact that concrete, actual or possible, individuals (or even abstract ones) are prevented from being what sentences in their *nonconniving* use are about does not mean that they are prevented from being what sentences in their *conniving* use are about. Indeed, they are precisely the protagonists of what Evans calls "existentially conservative" games of make-believe. As a general consequence of this, we can see that, among the properties mobilized in the relevant make-believe practice and matching those involved in the set constituting the relevant *fictum*, there may be not only pseudo-relational properties of the kind *being a close friend of an individual named "Watson,"* but also genuinely relational properties such as *living in London*. Indeed, these relational properties involve concrete (or even abstract) individuals—our everyday London, in this example. This does not alter the fact that the corresponding relational properties belonging to the set that constitutes the relevant fictional character will involve fictional individuals. These latter *ficta* will be those which correspond to those concrete (or even abstract) individuals. Still with regard to the same example, the relational property corresponding to the relational property of *living in London* and constituting (*inter alia*) Holmes will involve the fictional London of the Conan Doyle stories.