ricks does not think that modal truths impose any special problems on truthmaker theorists. Finally, chapter 8 argues against the correspondence theory of truth, and also against any other theory according to which *being true* is a relation between a truth and that in virtue of which it is true.

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Fiction and Fictionalism, by Mark Sainsbury. London: Routledge, 2010, 243 pp.

If there are no fictional characters, how do we explain thought and discourse about them? And if there are fictional characters, what are they like? Mark Sainsbury's 'Fictional and Fictionalism' (henceforth F&F) argues in favour of an irrealist view according to which there are no such things as fictional objects, be they understood as nonexistent, abstract or merely possible entities.

   After an introductory first chapter on the nature of fiction and the different attitudes that are connected with it, such as pretending, imagining and make-believe, and the different emotional responses generated by fictional works, in chapter two Sainsbury addresses some of the main motivations for realism about fictional objects, according to which Sherlock Holmes, Anna Karenina and the like are entities belonging to our reality. The chapter focuses on a central motivation for a realist account of fictional characters, provided by fictional names: fictional names appear to be plainly meaningful, and yet, can a name be meaningful if it does not have a bearer? If the answer is negative, then realism for fictional characters seems to be called for. This last motivation is challenged by Sainsbury's semantics originally presented in *Reference without Referents* (2005), according to which fictional names are meaningful but have no bearers; on such an analysis, a sentence like

   (1)   Sherlock Holmes smokes a pipe

can express a genuine content, despite the fact that 'Sherlock Holmes,' like any other fictional name, has no bearer (I will return to this while commenting on chapter six). Moreover, Sainsbury endorses a negative free logic (Sainsbury, *Reference without Referents* 2005, 195) holding that all simple sentences containing empty names are false, and so their negations are true, thus providing us with a simple and elegant account of the truth of nonexistence claims containing fictional names. Chapter two prepares the ground for the following four chapters: while chapters three to five critically asses three different versions of realism about fictional entities, chapter six puts forward Sainsbury's irrealist view.

Throughout chapters three to five, Sainsbury carefully presents and critically reviews the different heavy-weighted metaphysical forms that realism about fictional characters can take: Meinongianism, according to which fictional characters are concrete, actual and *non-existent* entities; nonactualism, according to which fictional characters are concrete, *non-actual* and existent entities; abstractism, according to which fictional characters are *non-concrete*, actual and existent entities.

Chapter three is devoted to theories that fall under the label Meinongianism, namely those theories that rely on the intuition that there are nonexistent entities that can become the objects of our thoughts, beliefs, desires and so on, and to which we can refer in ordinary linguistic practices. Meinongianism takes seriously the truth of sentences like (1), and takes fictional entities to be the nonexistent objects described in such sentences: according to Meinongianism a fictional entity is the object that has all the properties ascribed to the character in the relevant work of fiction. However, one of the main problems for Meinongians is that of giving a plausible, realist account of the author's creative act: they cannot say that in writing a piece of fiction an author brings fictional characters into existence, for they are nonexistent entities; nor can they really say that the author brings fictional characters into nonexistence, for they were nonexistent before the act of storytelling — the fictional entities about which authors write are 'out there' long before they are describe in the relevant fictions, and so we cannot really take seriously the idea that authors *create* fictional characters. A strategy available to Meinongians is to say that it is at least true that Conan Doyle *described* Sherlock Holmes among all the available nonexistents and, by describing it in a piece of fiction, made it *fictional*; although there is no real moment of creation, there can still be a time in which a nonexistent's Sosein undergoes a temporal change, when

some new properties are added to it by the act of writing. However attractive this strategy seems, it suffers, Sainsbury remarks, from the 'selection problem,' namely the problem of *what* exactly makes it the case that in writing the *Holmes Stories* Conan Doyle creatively invested the *correct* nonexistent, i.e. the nonexistent Sherlock Holmes rather than the nonexistent Anna Karenina.

If I understand the problem correctly, according to Meinongians, the properties that identify a fictional character are of a relational nature, namely they are properties that a fictional character has only in relation with a given act of writing: the properties that identify the fictional character Sherlock Holmes are the properties he is ascribed as having in the *Holmes stories*. But then the problem is that Conan Doyle, before penning down the *Holmes stories*, must have used such relational properties to identify the correct nonexistent to be written about in the first place, which cannot be the case if the properties the character Sherlock Holmes possesses are related to Conan Doyle's act of writing. In conclusion, there seems to be no way for an author to correctly individuate the nonexistent to be invested with the authorial creativity.

The selection problem also affects non-actualism, a realist view according to which fictional characters are real, existent but non-actual entities, which Sainsbury discusses in chapter five. Of all possible objects that exist, there is no way to determine which are the ones that authors will select for their stories, for actualists take descriptions in works of fiction to individuate *which* objects are the fictional characters authors write about, leaving no possibility for an author to individuate the correct possible object to be invested with authorial activity. Furthermore, such a way of individuating fictional characters makes them metaphysically *fragile*: if we identify a fictional character with a set of properties given in the work of fiction in which the character originally appears, the same set of properties will give us the same character, so a character cannot be literally said to appear in stories in which so much as a single property is changed; this is quite implausible, for one of the main reasons for writing and reading sequels of a story, or parodies, is exactly the idea that they are about the *same* character.

The last heavy-weighted form of realism Sainsbury discusses is the so-called abstract artefact view, according to which fictional characters are abstract, existent and non-concrete entities. The status of fictional characters is like that of many other social and cultural entities such as laws, symphonies and novels: they are existent created

entities, which are abstract in the sense that they lack spatio-temporal location. Fictional entities are individuated by properties 'external' to a work of fiction, such as having been created by a given author, being a well-developed character etc.; furthermore, they also *encode* a range of properties they are described as having in their stories. Thus, we are justified in uttering (1) because we intend to claim that 'pipe-smoking' is a property that is *encoded*, rather than *possessed*, by Sherlock Holmes. But this ambiguity in predication seems to lead, Sainsbury remarks, to an absurd consequence. Producers and consumers of fictional works engage in imaginings involving abstract artefacts wearing hats, smoking pipes and so forth. Abstract artefact realism cannot explain the *singularity* of imaginings required by fiction, for on such a realist view the nature of the objects that are the targets of the fictional imaginings are resistant to the possession of the properties fictions invite us to imagine (cf. p. 113).

I think that Sainsbury's objection is not compelling. I do not think that the distinction between possessing/encoding leads our singular imaginings to absurd consequences: when we read about Sherlock Holmes we do not imagine the abstract entity Holmes in a hat or smoking a pipe — this indeed strikes me as absurd — what we rather seem to imagine is that there is an abstract entity *of which* we imagine that it is something else, namely a real person smoking a pipe, wearing a hat and so on. This 'two-steps' imagining, rather than being absurd, is at the basis of children' theatre: children imagine that tree stumps are frightening bears, and so, for fear of being attacked, run away from them. In so doing, they do not imagine that the stumps will attack them; they imagine, firstly, that the stumps are bears, and, secondly, that the bears are going to attack them.

In chapter six Sainsbury considers and replies to some important challenges that irrealism has to face, and ultimately presents an irrealist view about fictional characters according to which we can understand things we think and say about fiction without the need to appeal to fictional entities. Let me focus here on the challenge presented by sentences that seem to require the existence of fictional characters and which, consequently, turn out to be problematic for an irrealist account of fiction. First of all, there is the case of simple sentences like (1): taken as a straightforward existence claim about a real person, (1) is clearly false, for there is (and never was) such person who is the referent of 'Sherlock Holmes.' An option available to irrelists (and Sainsbury's favourite one) is to appeal to the notion of *fidelity* to analyze

the notion of truth in relation with fiction. Whereas the truth of a sentence like (1) seems to require the existence of Sherlock Holmes, its fidelity does not: all it is needed for (1) to be faithful to the *Holmes stories* is that it reports a content to which the stories are committed.

A more complicated case is presented by sentences involving interfictional comparisons, such as

(2)   Anna Karenina is smarter than Madame Bovary

(2) is clearly not faithful to the *Holmes stories*, for there is not such a work in which both Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary appear.

One option available to irrealists, originally put forward by Sainsbury, is to treat (2) as prefixed by an 'agglomerative story operator' that applies to the total content of the relevant stories taken together

(2*)   According to (Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary [taken in an agglomerative way]), Anna Karenina was more intelligent than Emma Bovary

Prefixed with the agglomerative operator, the sentence can be regarded as faithful to the texts in a collective way. However, Sainsbury's favourite approach seems to be the 'presupposition-relative truth' one, according to which in uttering (2) we are genuinely asserting the comparison under the presupposition — which we believe to be false — that there are such people as Anna and Emma, and that one of them is smarter than the other. The presupposition framework can be extended also to explain sentences that appear to put irrealism in big trouble, such as

(3)   Sherlock Holmes is smarter than any other detective

As Sainsbury correctly points out, the presupposition of Holmes' real existence is not enough here, for then Holmes will be greater than himself, which makes no sense. Rather, what we seem to presuppose here is that there are fictional objects and real people, and that Holmes — as a mere fictional character — is greater than any real detective (cf. p. 147).

Although what we presuppose here shifts over real people and fictional characters, Sainsbury remarks that this does not make the view a realist one, for according to a realist (3) is true, whereas for an

irrealist it is plainly false, although it is true under the presupposition that Holmes is a mere fictional character, which the irrealist takes to be false.

I must say this account leaves me in doubt: first of all, I do not see how the presupposition can shift so easily, and Sainsbury himself acknowledges that the phenomenon of how we can shift between various presuppositions deserves further study (cf. p.147); secondly, and more importantly, it seems to me that the presupposition framework helps us to obtain the intuitive truth-values for only *some* of the statements in which fictional names appear.

Let me go back to a much simpler case for the irrealist,

(1) Sherlock Holmes smokes a pipe

On Sainsbury's proposal it is plainly false, although it is true under the (false) presupposition that there is such a person as Holmes.

Now consider:

(4) Sherlock Holmes smokes cigars

which intuitively strikes us as plainly false, in a much stronger way than (1). Indeed, we would intuitively say that (1) and (4) have different truth-values. However, following Sainsbury's account, nothing concerning the referent of 'Sherlock Holmes' can help us to explain this difference, for there is no such referent; nor is the notion of presupposition used of any help here, for the presupposition should be the same in both sentences, namely that Holmes exists as a real person. But what then makes us intuitively accept the truth of (1), although relative to a presupposition that Sherlock Holmes exist as a real person, but not of (4)? Perhaps we could explain it in terms of fidelity, for it is faithful to the *Holmes Stories* that the person that we presuppose to exist smokes a pipe rather than cigars — but then, does not the presupposition framework become redundant here?

Sainsbury's irrealist proposal offers interesting insights into the way we think and speak about fiction without appealing to the 'exotic entities' of the metaphysical heavy-weighted realist theories; nevertheless, I believe that there are a variety of claims that should be reformulated in the absence of a general and uniform account for all sentences containing fictional names, which is a worry generally put forward in relation with realist positions.

To conclude, in an accurate, concise and clear way F&F critically addresses the main realist views on fictional entities, thus covering a wide range of literature on fiction. Moreover, it puts forward an interesting and original approach (although in need of further elaboration) to deal with traditional puzzles posed by fictional discourse, without, however, entering into a genuine ontological commitment to the exotic entities that realist theories need to postulate, which might prove to be helpful to fictionalist projects.

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Saving Truth from Paradox, by Hartry Field. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, 432 pp.

In one of its versions, the liar paradox presents us with a sentence Q that can be shown to be logically equivalent to a sentence that asserts Q's untruth: $\neg$True(<Q>). By appealing to Q's instance of Tarski's schema (a quite naïve assumption about truth), True(<Q>) $\leftrightarrow$ Q, we easily reach the biconditional:

(*) True(<Q>) $\leftrightarrow$ $\neg$True(<Q>),

which, in classical logic, leads to the contradiction:

(+) True(<Q>) $\wedge$ $\neg$True(<Q>).

Most attempts at solving this paradox restrict Tarski's Schema (TS, from now on). Field takes a different route in *Saving Truth from Paradox* (*STFP* henceforth). According to him, the view that it is always preferable to restrict semantic principles like TS before revising classical logic should be regarded as logical dogmatism, for TS and other semantic principles are more basic than some principles of classical logic (p. 15 & ff., all references to *STFP*). Indeed, Field holds that the truth predicate is merely 'a device of infinite conjunction or disjunction (or, more accurately, a device of quantification)' (p. 210) and this means that it serves mainly *logical* purposes. From this defla-