


Co-Identification and Fictional Names*

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Stacie Friend raises a problem of “co-identification” involving fictional names such as ‘Hamlet’ or ‘Odysseus’: how to explain judgments that different uses of these names are “about the same object”, on the assumption of irrealism about fictional characters on which such expressions do not refer. To deal with this issue, she contrasts a Kripke-inspired “name-centric” approach, pursued among others by Sainsbury, with an Evans-inspired “info-centric” approach, which she prefers. The approach is motivated by her rejection of descriptivist ways of dealing with the problem. In this paper, I rely on the presuppositional, reference-fixing form of descriptivism I favor for the semantics of names, and I explain how it helps us deal with Friend’s problem, which I take to concern primarily the semantic contribution of names to ascriptions of representational content to fictions. The result is a form of the “name-centric” sort of approach that Friend rejects, which can (I’ll argue) stand her criticisms.

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1. Preamble

Stacie Friend (2011, 2014) points out that we have intuitions of “co-identification” about, say, a debate confronting Nabokov, who asserts (2), with a critic who states instead (1) (the novel just says that Samsa is transformed into a gigantic “vermin”):

(1) Critic: Gregor Samsa is transformed into a cockroach.

(2) Nabokov: No, Samsa is transformed into a beetle.

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As she (2014, 308) puts it, Nabokov “takes himself to identify the same character that Kafka invented and that his opponents misconstrue”. How should we account for such intuitions? Friend’s worry is just Geach’s problem of intentional identity: her impressions of co-identification constitute a particular case of Geach’s (1967, 147) attitudes “with a common focus, whether or not there is something at that focus”.¹ We can report Friend’s case in a Geachian “Hob-Nob” fashion:

- (3) A critic thinks Samsa/a character of Kafka’s was transformed into a cockroach, but Nabokov believes he/the same character was transformed into a beetle.

Friend provides an account of the phenomenon compatible with the irrealism about fictional characters she espouses. She appeals to the “communication chains” that have figured in debates about reference and accounts of intentional identity. Everett (2013a) offers an alternative pretense-theoretic account, which Friend questions.

In this paper I will discuss both accounts, arguing that, although we can learn from both, they leave room for improvement. I will present an alternative irrealist account, based on recent proposals to deal with the Frege-Geach problem and on my own account of reference and referential expressions. In previous work, I have defended a “reference-fixing” form of descriptivism for expressions such as names and indexicals.² Friend’s cases are intended to question descriptivism, which she rejects, in favor of orthodox Millian views. Nabokov’s disagreement with the critic shows that they associate different descriptive information with ‘Samsa’; simple-minded descriptivist accounts would then wrongly imply that they are talking past each other. While the form of descriptivism that I hold is not exposed to this objection, I will argue that a proper account of co-identification will have to rely on the kind of neo-descriptivist features that my proposal envisages.

This is the outline of the paper. The next section provides some background on Geach’s problem of Intentional Identity. In §3 I discuss the merits of realist and irrealist accounts of such problems. In §4 I argue that we don’t need to choose between irrealist and realist accounts; what matters is that good explanations should connect their account of claims of fictional co-identification with an account of how referential expressions work in the discourse constitutive of the relevant fictions – which most realist views handle anyway on irrealist, pretense-theoretic assumptions. §§5 and 6 critically discuss, respectively, Friend’s and Everett’s accounts. §7 provides the groundwork for my own proposal, given in §8, by outlining the general account of claims of intentional identity I rely on, and the views on reference I assume. §9 concludes.

2. Intentional Identity

In setting up the problem posed by what he (1967) called *intentional identity*, Geach was interested in attitudes correctly ascribed by (4), on a reading that would be best captured in the language of First Order Logic by either (5) or (6), if we assumed a logic disowning the ontological commitment associated with the existential quantifier since Quine (1948):

¹ Pautz (2008, 149) points this out.

² García-Carpintero (2017) provides a recent presentation and references to previous work.

(4) Hob believes a witch has blighted Bob's mare, and Nob believes that she (the same witch) killed Cob's sow.

(5) $\exists x (W(x) \ \& \ \text{Hob believes that } B(x, b) \ \& \ \text{Nob believes that } K(x, c))$.

(6) $\exists x (\text{Hob believes that } (W(x) \ \& \ B(x, b)) \ \& \ \text{Nob believes that } K(x, c))$.³

On the interpretation that Geach highlighted, (4) would be true in a world without witches, in which Hob and Nob are nonetheless thinking of the same witch, without knowing of each other's beliefs. Consider the following scenario:⁴ Hob and Nob live on opposite sides of town, and their social circles do not overlap; they have never heard of each other. They have been independently persuaded by the local newspaper's claim that "Samantha, a witch, has been terrorizing the town." The story was a complete fabrication, but each thinks he has discovered the cause of local livestock trouble.

Over the years, philosophers have expressed skepticism about the availability of this reading (see Braun (2012) for a recent expression), but such doubts look unfounded to me. If Hob and Nob form their independent beliefs about an actually existing corrupt politician rather than about a witch reported in the newspaper (say, that the politician bribed Bob's son and that he wooed Cob's daughter), or if we happen to inhabit a world in which there in fact are witches, there is no problem in accepting the *de re* reading formalized by either (5) or (6).⁵

In both empty and non-empty cases, what seems to ground the Geachian reading is the impression that the "mental dossiers" (Grice 1969) in the subjects' attitudes would be about the same individual, were one to exist.⁶ Elaborating on Kripke's notion of a *communication chain*, Burge (1983, 91-8) develops a notion of "quasi-anaphoric links", validating the Geachian intuitions by means of it. Intersubjectively, links are constituted by intentions to use referential devices in accordance with the meaning that expressions have in the usage of the interlocutors on whom one relies.⁷ Intrastubjectively, the relations

³ Cf. Salmon (2002) and Friedell (2012) for considerations to choose between (5) and (6). As I make clear below (fn. 9), the issues I will be discussing are sufficiently independent of the details of the semantics of the Hob-Nob sentences, for me to put aside issues like this.

⁴ Edelberg (1986, 2), Glick (2012, 387).

⁵ Braun (2012, 171-4) assumes that the analysis (5) is ontologically committal to witches, and then he uses its structural similarity to *de re* readings with actual witnesses to "explain" why the intuition that (4) is true on Geach's interpretation is confused. This is suspicious. Our intuitions about successful cases are reliable data for semantics, Braun assumes. But indistinguishable intuitions about referent-absent cases are instead confusions engendered by the similarity with the former, because he takes for granted that such readings are ontologically committal to witches. Methodologically it seems preferable to give both sets of intuitions the same standing, providing explanations that account for them equally, by disregarding the assumption that (5)/(6) are so committal. This is what the version of irrealism I favor allows. Cf. Sainsbury's (2018, ch. 2) discussion.

⁶ Cf. Evans (1982, 362).

⁷ As Sainsbury (2015, 205) puts it, "Acquisition involves a *de re* intention concerning that token. A self-conscious and sophisticated subject might inwardly think: that's something I will add to my repertoire, using it as those people do." He goes on to helpfully elaborate on the more usual case in which the relevant intentions are merely implicit.

between referential vehicles that mental files are intended to capture constitute such links.⁸ Unlike Kripke's story, the links might involve referential expressions other than proper names; and they can ultimately depend on an unsuccessful act of reference.⁹ As I'll explain further in §7, my own branch of descriptivism is a reference-fixing version of the "causal descriptivism" that others (cf. Lewis (1983), Kroon (1987), Jackson (2010)) have developed, giving a descriptivist twist to Kripke's ideas, and the account I'll assume for intentional identity is very much along these lines.

Like Burge's, most recent discussions dismiss skepticism. They aim to develop the idea that either (5) or (6) provides a good regimentation of the relevant truth-conditions, understood in such a way that it does not commit us to the actual existence of witches. Most recent proposals are consistent with Burge's appeal to quasi-anaphoric links, providing elaborations of it.¹⁰ Some adopt variants of what Edelberg (2006) calls *realism*, positing "exotic" objects: Edelberg (1986) and Cumming (2014) give accounts in terms of an ontology of "thought-objects", individuated by entities equivalent to Fregean senses, which might or might not coincide with actual referents; Salmon (2002) posits actually existing abstract objects; Glick (2012) and Pagin (2014) give modal accounts, taking the quantifier to range over possible objects including non-actual ones. Other approaches such as Priest's (2005) and Azzouni's (2010) question instead that quantifiers have the standardly assumed ontological commitments. In the next section I'll relate these views to views about reference in fictional discourse.

3. Fictional Discourses: Realism and Irrealism

It will be convenient to distinguish three types of fictional discourse. Consider these sentences:

(7) When Gregor Samsa woke, he found himself transformed into a gigantic vermin.

(8) According to *Metamorphosis*, when Gregor Samsa woke, he found himself transformed into a gigantic vermin.

(9) Gregor Samsa is a fictional character.

⁸ In Sainsbury's helpful terms (*ibid.*), fulfilling the intention to use the same word "will result in acquiring a mechanism of name-reproduction, a mechanism that produces copies of the source name". He goes on to elaborate on the "mechanism" metaphor.

⁹ The links are thus the relations of *de jure* or *internal coreference* that have recently received extensive discussion; cf. Fine (2007, 40, 68) (who speaks instead of objects "being represented as the same"), Lawlor (2010), Schroeter (2012), and references there.

¹⁰ We should distinguish the debate about the semantics of ascriptions such as (4), from the one about the ontological nature of the relations between the ascribed attitudes. For most writers, including Geach, the 'intentional identity' label covers both. I will be mostly discussing the second, philosophical issue, assuming the accounts of the semantic one that I find more promising. As Manning (2015, 281-2) observes, the issues we will be dealing with are equally created by sentences lacking the semantically problematic anaphoric links in (4), like this: *Nabokov and the critic argue about the same character*; cf. also Sandgren (2016), §1. Maier (2017) offers a nice DRT formal account of the semantics of the relevant attitude ascriptions compatible with the philosophical account provided here.

Take firstly an utterance of (7) by Kafka, as part of the longer utterance by him of the full discourse which, with a measure of idealization, we can think constitutes the act of putting forward his creation *Metamorphosis* for us to enjoy. It is distinctive of such uses, which I will be calling *textual*,¹¹ that they are intuitively not truth-evaluable. The other two types differ in that they intuitively appear to be truth-evaluable. There is, firstly, the use of sentences such as (7) that we make when we are reporting the content of a fiction. I will call these content-reporting uses *paratextual*; according to Lewis (1978), they are simply elliptic for intuitively equivalent ascriptions of propositional content such as (8). Finally, I will call the uses of sentences such as (9) *metatextual*; they are intuitively truth-evaluable but not directly content-reporting, in that they are not straightforwardly equivalent to propositional content ascriptions like (8).

Kripke (2013) argues that a proper account of metatextual uses requires interpreting names such as ‘Gregor Samsa’ in them as referring to exotic objects, fictional entities. Such *ficta* could then be taken to be (exactly as in the options considered above for the realist account of the relevant readings of (3) and (4)) Meinongian non-existent entities, concrete non-actual *possibilia*, or abstract existent entities of various sorts, fully-fledged Platonic *abstracta* as in Wolterstorff (1980) or rather created artefacts, as in Salmon (1998), Thomasson (1999) and Schiffer (2003). Fictional entities of any of these sorts could also be invoked to account for either of the other uses, textual and paratextual.

The intuitive obviousness of negative existentials involving fictional names (‘Samsa doesn’t exist’) counts against non-Meinongian realist views, a point that Everett (2007, 2013a ch. 7) forcefully presses. He (2005, 2013a ch. 8) provides an interesting elaboration on equally well-known indeterminacy concerns by Kripke and others about fictional realism, echoing Quine’s (1948, 23) indictment: “the possible fat man in that doorway; and, again, the possible bald man in that doorway. Are they the same possible man, or two possible men? How do we decide? How many possible men are there in that doorway? Are there more possible thin ones than fat ones? How many of them are alike?” Everett (2013a ch. 7) and Sainsbury (2010, ch. 3 & 4) also articulate related problems for the Meinongian and possibilist alternatives.

Focusing on metatextual uses leads us to think of the referential expressions in (7)-(9) as in fact referring to exotic objects when they are taken to make assertions. This might address qualms that Millians who take the referent of a name to exhaust its semantic content would otherwise have to endorse the intuitive view that paratextual uses of (7) indeed make assertions – perhaps the ones explicitly made with (8). Focusing instead on textual uses leads to a contrasting irrealist picture. When the creator of a work of fiction uses declarative sentences such as (7), or when she uses sentences of other types, we do not intuitively think of her as really performing the speech acts one typically performs with them in default contexts. In such cases, the sentences are used in some form of *pretense*, like the acts that actors perform on stage: they do not need to be drinking whisky, for they are merely pretending to do so; hence, we do not evaluate them by invoking any norms we would apply to non-pretend uses.

Perhaps the intuitively best option would be to combine fictional realism for the latter with a pretense-theoretic account of authors’ uses of sentences like (7); this is in fact Kripke’s (2013) “pluralist” suggestion, on which fictional names such as ‘Gregor Samsa’

¹¹ I take this and the other two collectively fitting labels from Bonomi (2008). Ninan (2017, 69) calls them ‘authorial diktats’, which is apt for textual discourse. He also points out the significance of Maier’s (2017) missing the distinction between textual and paratextual uses.

have an empty, pretend use in (7), but a non-empty serious one in (9). In addition to the resulting profligacy, however, paratextual uses of (7) occupy a problematic middle ground for this ecumenical rapprochement.

In previous work I have defended a form of uniform irrealism. I argued first that no adequate pretense-theoretic account can be happily combined with Millian views of singular reference, as in Walton's or Everett's proposals. This is because we need to explain how the semantic content of (7) contributes to determine the content the fiction-maker proposes readers to imagine, or make-believe (García-Carpintero 2010a, 286-7). By relying on my own version of a non-Millian, descriptivism-friendly view of names and other referential expressions,¹² I defended a form of irrealism for metatextual discourse: a version of Yablo's (2001) *figuralist* brand of factionalism, on which the semantic referential apparatus (*de jure* directly referential expressions such as names and indexicals, quantifiers generalizing over the positions they occupy, expressions for identity) is used metaphorically in the likes of (3), deploying the figure of speech called *hypostatization* (García-Carpintero 2010b). It is a dead, conventionalized kind of metaphor. In contrast with pretense-theoretic fictionalist proposals, on this view utterances in metatextual discourse are thus straightforward assertions with truth-conditions.¹³

This might suggest that the view is after all realist, committed to referents of some sort for singular terms in metatextual discourse, but it is not so. Following Yablo's (2014), I would argue that the truth of metatextual sentences including fictional names, and their generalizations, do not really commit us to the existence of fictional characters.¹⁴ This is merely pretend-presupposed: when we look at what they are really *about* (and hence the truth-makers for the claims we make with them) we do not find the referents they appear to pick out.¹⁵ We find instead "ideas for fictional characters" (Everett & Schroeder (2015)) or representations thereof in fictional texts.¹⁶ I thus understand (3), (8) and (9) as genuine assertions, whose truth is grounded on the pretenses thereof in textual and paratextual uses of sentences like (7).

Nevertheless, for my purposes here I can afford to take an ecumenical attitude towards "easy ontology" realist approaches to fictional characters like Thomasson's. We share the view that (3), (8) and (9) are true; and, against heavy-duty Platonism, that their truth ultimately depends on that of uncontroversial claims about fictions. As next section shows, it is indifferent for my purposes whether fictional names in metatextual discourse do refer to fictional characters, which *are* "ideas" or "representations" thereof in fictions – as moderate realists like Thomasson contend; or, as I prefer, that talk of fictional characters is really figurative and the contents we assertorically commit ourselves to in making claims ostensibly about fictional characters are only really about ideas or representations thereof in the fictions.¹⁷

¹² I refer again la reader to García-Carpintero (2017), which provides a recent presentation and further references.

¹³ The pretense involved is hence *semantic* – as opposed to *pragmatic* – on Armour-Garb's & Woodbridge's (2014) classification, if I understand it correctly.

¹⁴ Hoek (2018) provides a nicely precise, tight variation on Yablo's ideas.

¹⁵ Cf. Cameron (2012) for a related view.

¹⁶ Hoek (2018, §4) discusses in detail related cases, including Geach sentences like (3) and (4). Crimmins (1998), Sainsbury (2011), Howell (2015) and Manning (2015, 297-301) defend similar views.

¹⁷ Everett (2013, 143) nicely puts my own take on this: "I do not mean to deny that in some cases the entities invoked by certain fictional realists, who then go on to identify these entities with fictional characters, genuinely exist. My complaint is simply that, in these cases, the relevant entities are not fictional characters; the identification made is wrong". Meinongian or possibilist views of fictional characters are much closer to capture our intuitions.

4. The (Realist-)Cart and the (Pretend-)Horse

I will now explain why for my purposes in this paper I can afford to remain ecumenical between those two views on metatextual discourse. I'll argue that, even if we adopted a straightforward form of fictional realism, we would still have to accept the same explanatory commitments about metatextual discourse that both the sort of fictionalism I have outlined and moderate realists like Thomasson embrace. In particular, we would still have to provide an elucidation of the semantics of judgments of co-identification *independent of the posited objects*; one appealing instead to the nature of the representations thereof in fictions. In §8 I'll argue that a descriptivist-friendly account of referential expressions, such as the one I myself hold, delivers the goods. I will be discussing Salmon's (2002) account, but, as I'll show, the point equally applies to possibilist, Meinongian, or Platonist forms of realism.

Salmon explains the Geachian reading of (4) (and would hence analogously explain the judgment expressed by (3)) by contending that the longest-scope quantifier binding the objects of the attitudes ranges over abstract entities or mythical or fictional objects. The following articulates the proposal:

- (10) There is a mythical witch such that (i) Hob believes: she has blighted Bob's mare; and (ii) Nob believes: she killed Cob's sow.

A mythical witch is an abstract, existent object, of the sort realists like Kripke, van Inwagen and the other writers previously mentioned take fictional objects to be. Now, Braun (2012) objects that (10) does not provide a good analysis of (4), because they have different semantic contents: (10) makes crucial use of an expression, 'mythical witch', whose (theoretically stipulated) semantic content differs from that of any expression in (4). I think a reasonable response to this objection can be provided on behalf of the realist proposal.¹⁸ The response, however, makes it manifest why realism on its own will not supply us with the full account of judgments of co-identification we are after; why we still need an elucidation of claims such as (3) independent of realist posits, like the one irrealist views afford.

To articulate the response, I'll rely on two observations. The first notes the phenomenon that Nunberg (1995) calls "meaning-transfer", as when we count lion-statues as falling under the extension of 'lion' ("I'll meet you by the lion at the square"). These metonymical extensions have sometimes become conventionalized aspects of the lexical meanings of expressions, accounting for some cases of polysemy; take, for instance, the type/token ambiguity for 'novel' and related expressions. For our present purposes we need not worry whether the relevant meanings should count as "semantic" (a feature of the lexical meaning of the expression) or rather "pragmatic" (a creative meaning that speakers manage to endow their utterances with, trading on the rationality of their audiences). The second observation was already noted in §2: the Geachian reading of (4) is clearly apt when there really is a witness for the binding existential quantifier in (5); (4) would be true in a possible world in which there is a real witch about whom Hob and Nob both have certain attitudes.

¹⁸ It is in fact a particular elaboration of the "modified Salmonian pragmatic theory" which Braun discusses in section 6 of his paper.

Putting these two observations together, the defender of the realist analysis can reply as follows to Braun's objection. When we have the intuition that (4) is true in the Geachian reading, we are taking for granted that 'witch' might have one of its metonymically extended senses; thus, for instance, it would be true if the reports about "Samantha" in the story we envisaged are in fact about a real woman who, even though not (strictly speaking) a witch at all, *is thought* to be one, or perhaps *represents herself* as being one.¹⁹ Given that, the real object with witch-related features sufficient for it to count as a witch in the metonymically extended sense might not be a concrete entity; it might well be instead an abstract one created together with the mythical theory of witchcraft. This sort of case might be the one obtaining in most Geachian cases. The claim that (10) provides a good account of (4) is not thus the unwarranted contention that they are synonymous; but rather that it just makes explicit an acceptable metonymical extension for 'witch' in utterances of (4).²⁰

When developed in this way, few substantive differences if any remain between realist and fictionalist proposals.²¹ But the elaboration reveals that, without further work, realist proposals do not offer a satisfactory account of co-identification. For the suggested truth-conditions for (4) explain co-identification in terms of attitudes about the same "witch-like" abstract object; but we still need to know what this amounts to: what has to be the case, for a witch-like abstract object to count as a witch? Questions like this need answers: in the typical case, we are discussing the attitudes of people who have no articulated theory of mythical objects, and hence no explicitly articulated attitudes about them. They would instead take their attitudes to be about real, concrete individuals, so we cannot just appeal to their intentions.²²

This is in fact a particular case of a well-known problem that realists of all stripes should confront, and this is why it extends to all of them. Some realists say that textual uses of (7) are true.²³ Some of them say that content-reporting, paratextual uses of (7)

¹⁹ Everett & Schroeder (2015) make related points.

²⁰ Salmon (2015, 124-7) provides something close to this reply to Braun's criticism. The fact that the relevant form of polysemy-inducing metonymy is a general process in the lexicon, potentially applicable not just to words like 'witch' that we don't take to apply to anything, but also to others like 'dinosaur', effectively deals with Manning's (2015, 296) complaint.

²¹ Note that, for technical reasons, fictionalists welcome "objects" that witness the existential quantifiers, and fail to be in the extension of an existence predicate – to belong, say, in the "outer domains" of the positive free logic she might want to rely on; cf. Maier (2017, 37, fn. 31). As indicated in §3, assertoric commitment remains only on the fictionalist view to there being in the relevant fiction character-representations that make true the relevant claims.

²² Everett (2013, 179-188) and Sandgren (2016) develop a similar point. Priest (2005, 141-2) averts the concern by taking the relevant aboutness as primitive; like Manning (2015, 295) and Sandgren (2016, §6.2), I find this too methodologically implausible to accept.

²³ A view like this appears to follow from Ludlow's (2006) main claim, that in fictional contexts predicates such as 'is a vampire' (metonymically?) acquire an extended sense in which they truly, literally apply to the props representing vampires in the relevant fiction, such as actors playing vampire roles in *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. Ludlow is unclear regarding what the props are in literary cases, but if we take them to be the fictional terms in textual discourse, the resulting proposal is a natural extension of a moderate realist view of metafictional discourse to it. Manning (2014) also appear to hold such a view, for he argues that fictional names refer in textual uses to something like representations in fictive discourse, taken as socially created objects. Martinich & Stroll (2007) defend a related view of textual uses, including those of sentences with apparently empty names like (7) – which, unlike in the just mentioned proposals, they take to be in fact empty, without that preventing those uses from being true. They advance a performative view of the acts of the fiction-maker, which create "institutional facts" making their claims true – Manning (2014) seems to have something similar in mind.

can be straightforwardly true, without the need to take it in such uses as short for (8) – which, for most of them, in any case raises the same concerns as (7) does if assumed to include a non-referring expression, irrespective of its occurring in a subordinate clause. This is achieved by taking ‘Gregor Samsa’ to refer to some realist posit. But this creates a problem: how can such entities fall under the extension of the predicate? Neither abstract nor non-existent objects literally are true verminous insects. Realists deal with this problem by either distinguishing two types of properties, or two types of predication.²⁴ On the latter, to my mind better developed and clearer proposal, the realist would say that the subject-predicate combination in (7) does not mean that the referent of the subject-term truly instantiates the property expressed by the predicate, but merely that such property *is ascribed to it* in some fiction. But this prompts the request I am raising: namely, to explain how fictions ascribe properties to the sort of object posited by realist theories, given that typically neither their creators nor their intended audiences have an elaborated view of them – and to do it without mentioning the posited objects themselves. This is simply the challenge raised in the previous paragraph, in a more general form.

I think that the realist can also plausibly answer this more general form of the challenge; in fact, once more, what he can say will be very close to what my approach in §8 affords. In a nutshell, a moderate realist can say that for the abstract object that he takes Samsa to be to count as an insect is for the representation that Samsa is, on his account, to represent its intended object as an insect. For (3) to be true will be for the relevant concepts that Nabokov and the critic have to pick out the same representation (in Kafka’s story); and such representations would count as the same if they represent their intended objects as the same. Realists of different persuasions can provide accounts that are variations on these ideas using their preferred ideology. The present point is that the challenge must be met: just positing a Meinongian non-existent object, a *possibile*, or an abstract entity to witness the existential quantifier in (3), without further explanatory work, is not enough. We need to explain what it is to have attitudes about a common witch-like Meinongian non-existent, *possible*, or abstract entity, or about a single witch-in-an-extended-sense; and we need to explain it independently of these posits, which means that our account of textual discourse should have the resources for that.²⁵

Everett & Schroeder (2015, 289-91) point out that irrealists about metatextual discourse are in the same boat, for variations on the questions raised here for realists can be legitimately posed to them. I fully agree; §8 will discharge this burden. They ask (*ibid.*, 290), “Why is it ‘correct’ to pretend that Holmes is a character created by Conan Doyle but not that Holmes is a character created by Tolstoy? Moreover, what is the sense of debating whether Holmes is a one-dimensional character if we are merely debating what shape our pretence or presupposition should take?” The fictionalist should answer by pointing out that metatextual assertions made in pretense about Holmes involve assertoric commitments about the goings-on in Conan Doyle stories, and the Holmes-

²⁴ Cf. Everett (2013, 170-7) for a good discussion of the two options and their problems, and references to the original works articulating the strategies.

²⁵ I do not mean to suggest that realists have not taken up this challenge. Thomasson (1999, 90-91) makes a proposal for her created-abstract-object form of realism compatible with my account in §7 below; something similar could be invoked on behalf of Priest’s (2011) Meinongian proposal, and Everett & Schroeder (2015) elaborate on how their brand of moderate realism deals with it.

representations to be found there, as (3), (9), and (10) involve assertoric commitments about facts concerning the Samsa-representations in *Metamorphosis*.

Summing up, this is the cart-before-the-horse concern I have been developing for fictional realism. We need an account of aboutness or reference that applies to straightforward assertions, such as those in metatextual claims, but also to the *prima facie* pretenses thereof in textual discourses, on which our account of co-identification can then rely; i.e., an account of aboutness, reference and co-reference in textual discourse. Having that, we can debate whether judgments of co-identification that concern fictional characters are of the same kind as those that concern real particulars, as realists claim, or involve some form of metaphor or pretense, as I prefer. Our target utterances such as (3) are pieces of metatextual discourse. Whether we give them a realist treatment like Salmon's (2002), or the figuralist one I favor, their truth-conditions are dependent on the aboutness of the original representations to which the relied-upon "quasi-anaphoric links" ultimately lead – in our case, the relevant pieces of textual discourse.

5. Friend's Account

Friend is thus entirely right in my view to put fictional realism aside in her pursuit of an account of co-identification. Let me now present and appraise her proposal. As I mentioned before, accounts of intentional identity have pursued the idea that what (correctly) explains impressions of co-identification is the fact that the attitudes in question (Hob's and Nob's, Nabokov's and the critic's) rely on converging communication chains. They are familiar from contemporary discussions of reference-fixing in the tradition of Kripke's causal-historical "picture". Chains may converge on a successful "baptism" (if, say, our skepticism is unfounded, there in fact are witches, and the newspaper's use of 'Samantha' in the story imagined above does pick one out) or instead on one of Donnellan's (1974) *blocks* (if, as assumed, the story was a fabrication). Burge (1983) develops such an account.

Friend does not discuss accounts of intentional identity in general, but she ends up defending a proposal for her cases that is close to Burge's.²⁶ She distinguishes "name-centric" approaches from "info-centric" ones. Name-centric approaches invoke the name-transmission chains that figured in Kripke's account, whose links are constituted by intentions to use tokens of the name as referring to whatever they did in the use from which the name is taken. Info-centric approaches focus instead on "networks of information (and misinformation) transmission" involving particular mental representations ("files" or "dossiers"), and the intentions to deploy them in order to think about whatever they are about, which is also assumed to have etiological underpinnings. Perry (2012, 196-234) provides a detailed account, and Everett (2000, 2013a, 89-92) an elaboration that applies to our specific case.

Info-centric approaches are initially favored by cases illustrated by Evans's (1973) famous 'Madagascar' example, involving an intuitively uninterrupted communication

²⁶ As I said, we should distinguish accounts of the semantics of sentences ascribing intentional identity, such as (3) and (4), from accounts of the nature of the judgments of co-identification they express. Burge, like Geach and most other writers, was interested in both; they provide more or less detailed semantics, guided by more or less articulated views about the constitutive issue. Here I am mostly concerned with the latter, and I will put aside semantic complexities that need not concern us, for reasons mentioned above, fn. 10.

chain along which the mental file users typically associate with the name change referents. More recent users of ‘Madagascar’ intuitively do not use it to talk about the land originally baptized thus,²⁷ but (in Evans’s terms) about the “dominant source” of the information in their associated dossiers – to wit, the island. Friend provides other considerations in support of info-centric approaches; an additional important one is that correct judgments of co-identification might involve names belonging in independent communication chains, such as, in the fictional case, ‘Father Christmas’/‘Santa Claus’, ‘Odysseus’/‘Ulysses’, or ‘Clark Kent’/‘Superman’.²⁸ Moreover, we have indistinguishable impressions of co-identification in cases that do not involve names at all (say, cases involving fictions with nameless characters) but rather other referentially used expressions, such as indexicals, demonstratives, and definite or indefinite descriptions.

Now, talk of the dominant source of information will not help in the empty case. Friend resorts to Evans’s (1982) variant proposal, which in the case of names distinguishes between the roles of “consumers” and “producers”; consumers intend reference in their uses to be determined relative to producers’ files. However, Evans’s (1982, 388) object-dependent account characterizes producers for a name *NN* as a “core group of speakers who regularly and reliably recognize an individual, *x*, as *NN*”. This will not do for the empty case. Hence, Friend (*op. cit.*, 325) suggests “that we take the defining feature of producers to be their capacity legitimately to introduce new information in the network . . . in some non-referring networks, the producers will be those who are in an authoritative position, for example with respect to a literary practice”.

Friend does not explicitly state her account of co-identification; we are left to infer it from her diagnoses of different cases, like this: “On this account, the reason that ‘Superman’ and ‘Clark Kent’ identify the same character is that the creators of that character were guided by a single notion in introducing (or re-introducing) those names” (in footnote: “alternatively one might say that there are two notions, but the flow of information between the notions is unrestricted”) (*ibid.*). I will state the idea behind this suggestion thus:²⁹

(CI_F) Two attitudes have a common focus if and only if the dominant source* of information in the files they deploy is a single producer’s notion in the network.³⁰

This obviously would not do without revision, as the ‘Clark Kent’/‘Superman’ case already shows. Notions and their associated files are mental particulars, while the story in which the character was put forward had two authors, writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe

²⁷ According to the Wikipedia entry for ‘Madagascar’, present-day ‘Mogadishu’ comes from such previous uses.

²⁸ Salis (2013) defends a “name-centric” approach, based on Sainsbury’s (2005) account of naming-practices; she appeals to a notion of “linking” of practices starting in different dubbings to deal with this objection (*op. cit.* 295). My proposal below shares some features with Salis’; it can explain such “linkings” by the role presuppositions play in reference-fixing according to it.

²⁹ I use an asterisk to distinguish Friend’s variant from Evans’ original notion.

³⁰ I have benefited from conversations with Stacie Friend, but the responsibility for the statement is mine. I am assuming a notion of *source of information* on which these are (empty or non-empty) files. Unlike the one introduced by Evans in “The Causal Theory of Names” (roughly, individuals that caused the information in the file through reliably knowledge-allowing channels, cf. Evans 1973, 15), this should help when dealing with empty terms.

Shuster; when we move to collective undertakings such as films, the problem is magnified. Other examples among those she provides ('Father Christmas'/'Santa Claus') do not originate from single sources. This is not unrelated to some of the problems I am about to raise. But I will stick to this formulation, because while it is not obvious how to revise it in order to properly develop the view she has in mind, it provides a sufficiently clear-cut proposal for a critical examination. My main point against Friend will after all be just that her view needs elaboration; CI_F is just intended to help highlighting the respects in which it does.

There are problems with both the sufficiency and the necessity of the condition for co-identification in CI_F . I'll start with the latter. Friend insists that she wants an account that, in itself (i.e., abstracting from the details of each particular case) applies both to the empty (fictional in particular) and non-empty (non-fictional) cases. I think she is entirely right about this. For, as I have been insisting, nothing intuitively changes regarding our impression of the truth of (4) in the relevant reading when we imaginatively move from a witch-believer perspective to another that is disabused of superstitious beliefs; nor regarding (3) when we pass from taking the contenders to be speaking about an actual individual to realizing that they are speaking of a fictional character. But this creates a problem for the left-to-right part of CI_F , as Edelberg (1992) and Everett (2013a) show.³¹

In the non-empty case, convergence in a single individual of the chains leading to the two representations suffices for co-identification, but it is not required. Two attitudes might co-identify by deploying files of the same individual, even if they rely on independent chains. Thus, in an undated letter to Jourdain, Frege (1980, 44) has the following example:

Let us suppose an explorer travelling in an unexplored country sees a high snow-capped mountain on the northern horizon. By making inquiries among the natives he learns that its name is 'Aphla'. By sighting it from different points he determines its position as exactly as possible, enters it in a map, and writes in his diary: 'Aphla is at least 5000 metres high.' Another explorer sees a snow-capped mountain on the southern horizon and learns that it is called 'Ateb'. He enters it in his map under this name. Later comparison shows that both explorers saw the same mountain.

Frege's story would underwrite claims with the structure of (3) and (4): *an explorer thinks that a mountain is at least 5000 meters high, and another learns that it is called 'Ateb'*. Why should we not have similar impressions in empty cases? In fact we do. Edelberg (1992, 574-5) has a nice example involving two 'Vulcan'-like baptisms, by two independent teams of scientists who come up with a theoretically similar non-existent posit, baptizing it with two different names, and he shows that we would find co-identification judgments justified in such a case. Everett (2013a, 96) has a similar case involving two inattentive spectators of Hamlet who do not realize that Ophelia is Polonius' daughter, and hold thoughts about, respectively, the mother of Ophelia and Polonius' wife – a character who is not explicitly mentioned in the play.

Let me move now to examine the sufficiency of the condition for co-identification stated in CI_F . Here the problem lies in an assumption we are, I think, entitled to make, given Friend's (correct) insistence on dealing with the problem in a general way applying

³¹ Sandgren (2017, §5) also notices this.

also to non-fictional cases, together with her sympathy towards Evans's (1982) info-centric account. The assumption is this: *in the non-empty case we should just appeal to Evans's unmodified account* (cf. Evans 1982, 362). The problem this creates is reminiscent of difficulties about attitudes regarding real objects as portrayed in fictions that Kroon (1994) pointed out.

In the example I want to discuss, a real entity serves as model for what intuitively is a merely fictional character. Thus, imagine that Alice, author of novel *N*, uses her file for a real entity (herself, say) to create what competent readers of *N* would as a matter of course judge to be two different characters, Alex and Adrian. Reader A thinks that Alex is gloomy, reader B (who could just be A) thinks that Adrian is fun. Now the problem is that, under the assumption, CI_F appears to validate judgments of co-identification. We import lots of information from our mental file of a real person into the mental files we create for two characters. Given the notion of dominant source* in CI_F , the information in those two files counts as having the same source. So CI_F counts them as co-identifying, validating (11):³²

(11) A thinks Alice/someone is gloomy, but B thinks she/the same person is fun.

The situation is reminiscent of Kripke's (1979) famous 'Paderewski' example, in that the utterances appear to express conflicting contents, which (11) reports, while intuitively no tension is felt in the expressed judgments. But there is an important difference; against what Kripke insists applies to his case, here we have in ordinary parlance, with no need to resort to technical notions, an easy way of dissolving the appearance of a tension. I think we intuitively find the report (11) at the very least dubious. A correct semantics for the attitudes should in my view count relevant utterances of (11) as false, and not merely misleading as other accounts would have it.³³ Only reports such as (12) are strictly speaking correct:

(12) A thinks Alice – as represented by Alex/modeled as Alex in *N* – is gloomy, but B believes she – as represented by Adrian/modeled as Adrian in *N* – is fun.

Friend (2014, 316) discusses a related case:

Thomas Kyd based his *Hamlet* on a Norse legend about the (possibly real) Prince Amleth of Denmark. Suppose that Amleth was real, and that Kyd intended to use 'Hamlet' to identify the same individual, if any, represented in the Norse legend; perhaps the English

³² Note that it is irrelevant whether Alice's mental file system "manager" has "opened" two additional files for herself, one for each character modeled after her in the novel, to keep track of "them" and avoid confusions, as long as the new files represent the author – as in fact they would, because she will obviously keep them "linked" to her SELF file. (Thanks here to Miguel Hoeltje and Manolo Martínez for pressing me on this).

³³ Salmon (1986) and Soames (1989) notoriously defend that 'Hammurabi believed that Hesperus is Phosphorus' has the same semantic content and hence truth-value as 'Hammurabi believed that Hesperus is Hesperus', although the former conveys a false implicature. Braun (2005) offers an alternative explanation for the (in his view) misguided intuitive impression that the two reports differ semantically. Davis (2005, 175-190) articulates many of the reasons why such proposals are very dubious. Of course, Salmon and Braun might prefer other accounts for (11); they might, say, take 'Alice' in (11) to refer to an abstract fictional entity, and explain the failure of co-identification on that basis.

name is just a variation on the Norse one. And suppose (just for the sake of argument) that Shakespeare, mistakenly assuming Hamlet to be invented or perhaps not caring one way or the other, intended to use the name 'Hamlet' to identify the same character as Kyd. Then it turns out that all this time we who talk about Hamlet are referring to a real individual. This looks like the wrong result.

Later she wonders whether her account commits her to saying that Shakespeare, and by extension readers who defer to him, refer after all to Amleth and have as a result co-identifying attitudes. She (2014, 329) argues that it does not, on the basis of these considerations:

Shakespeare's Hamlet-notion would include a crucial item absent from his Amleth-notion: the fact that Hamlet was a fictional character that he invented. Most consumers in the Hamlet-network associate fictionality with Shakespeare's character, and we could argue that this feature is sufficiently important to offset other descriptive similarities between Hamlet and Amleth. We might also think that it is just a fact about the relevant artistic and entertainment practices that an author's intention usually suffices to establish that a character is based on, rather than identical to, a real individual. (...) Moreover there are likely to be other factors to consider in determining reference in fiction, such as the extent to which information about the real individual is relevant to understanding a work, or the likelihood of recognition among the intended audience.

The three considerations here can be reasonably applied to my self-fiction example: Alice's additional files for herself, as represented by Alex and Adrian in her novel, should include fictionality, because this is what sensible readers will assume. Whether or not her psychology has created the two files (we should not speculate on such matters), it is reasonable to expect her to have the intention that Alex and Adrian be considered fictional. It is also reasonable to think that conventions for properly engaging with fictions such as N discourage using information about Alice in thinking about Alex and Adrian in N. Thus, it is reasonable to invoke Friend's considerations in somehow limiting the application of CI_F .

However, for this not to be *ad hoc*, a replacement for CI_F should be articulated, which still has the desired generality – i.e., which still applies equally to empty and non-empty instances of co-identification. It is difficult to see how the second and third considerations could be used to modify CI_F as I have stated it, because they have to do with the interpretation of fictions, as opposed to the sources of the information deployed by the attitudes whose co-identification or otherwise is being considered. It is easier to modify CI_F on the basis of Friend's first suggestion; but the modifications that come to mind are not very convincing.

Thus, we can say that two files cannot ground claims of co-identification if one contains "is fictional" and the other doesn't; while no single file in a cognitive economy can include "is fictional" and be intended for a real object. Shakespeare must have had two different files, as Friend suggests, one associated with 'Hamlet' and the other with 'Amleth', and judgments involving the character in the play would co-identify given their dependence on the former. Author Alice must have at least three different files for herself – two for her two fictional guises – so that (11) would be unsupported by the modified CI_F . However, these restrictions appear unmotivated. Why shouldn't Alice's single file for herself include the information that she is fictional – that she is fictional character Alex and fictional character Adrian in her novel? Something like this seems required to

explain judgments of co-identification she is undoubtedly disposed to make: Alex – and Adrian –, *c'est moi!* Moreover, we find intuitively correct judgments of co-identification concerning attitudes of two individuals, one who takes an entity (Troy, say) to be merely fictional and the other who doesn't: One thinks an ancient city was on the Asian coast, and the other believes a great battle took place there.

As I mentioned, Kroon (1994) discussed related issues. He considers utterances expressing what he calls *reflective appreciator-attitude statements*, such as 'Smith admires Garrison (in the film *JFK*) because (in the film) he is humble'. Among other things, they show that it is not so easy to deal with the problem posed by (11) by taking it as short for (12), and then treating '(as it is portrayed) in *N*' as an operator: A thinks that according to *N* Alice is gloomy. My own proposal in §8 is close to Kroon'. Friend (2000) had considered Kroon's (1994) cases. She argued that Millians who take non-empty names in fictional discourse as having their ordinary semantic content (on such accounts, their referents), can deal with them by providing a psychological explanation of the intuitions against that semantics. This sounds like a version of either Salmon's (1986) or Braun's (2005) views for attitude ascriptions in general on behalf of the Millian view. Although (11) is literally true, when it occurs in expressions of A's and B's relevant attitudes 'Alice' is associated with different modes of presentation. We can then say that (11) conveys the wrong implicature that A and B think of Alice under the same mode of presentation – this would be the Salmon line. Or we can use the fact to explain why we have the wrong impression that the unvarnished (11) is false, adopting instead Braun's take. With many others (cf. Davis (2005, 175-190)), I take this to be a hard bullet to bite, so I prefer accounts like the one I'll provide below, which make utterances of (11) straightforwardly false in the indicated circumstances.³⁴

6. Everett's Pretense Account

Everett (2013a) provides a compelling, Walton-inspired pretense-theoretic account of all discourse (textual, paratextual and metatextual) involving fictional referring expressions, a line towards which I expressed my own sympathies above. Everett tackles the problem of co-identification, offering a pretense-theoretic account of the judgments that utterances like (3) express. On such a view, they are correct, but not because the utterances are true assertions; rather they are proposals to imagine – or some such speech act – "true" only under the relevant pretense. Everett does not provide "principles of generation" which might generate such games of make-believe. Instead, he offers "specifications of the circumstances in which, intuitively, we count two representations as being about the same fictional thing" (2013a, 96 fn.). They go as follows (*ibid.*, 96):

- (CI_E) If two representations . . . are associated with the same fiction then we will take them to be 'about' the same thing if and only if, within the scope of the pretense associated with that fiction, they count as being about the same thing.

³⁴ Friend (2000) ends up arguing that reports such as 'Smith admires Garrison (in the film *JFK*)' cannot be straightforwardly true assertions; she takes them to be true only under a pretense. The corresponding proposal about (11) is more plausible; it is the sort of view that Everett defends and I'll discuss next. Friend, however, now rejects that line with respect to judgments of co-identification (in the talk "Creating Nothing", and work-in-progress) in part for the sort of reason I'll provide below to prefer my own account to Everett's.

Corresponding specifications are provided for representations that count as being about different things, or as producing indeterminate identifications. This gives the right results for the cases we have considered. The networks to which Nabokov's and the critic's representation belong explain why their aboutness (pretend, because, there being no referent, according to Everett there cannot be true aboutness) is to be determined relative to the (pretend) use of a single name in Kafka's fiction. Then CI_E establishes that they count as being about the same thing. In the case of Everett's *mother of Ophelia/Polonius' wife* counterexample to accounts such as Friend's that rely on convergence of networks, within the pretense the two notions would again count as being about the same thing. Then CI_E establishes again that they count as being of the same individual.

I do not strongly disagree with this proposal, as far as it goes; the main problem I will raise is that it does not go sufficiently far. Let me start with a minor disagreement, which will set the stage to present the main one. As indicated in §3, the account I favor of paratextual and metatextual discourse takes it to involve a form of lexicalized, dead metaphor, and regards utterances such as (3)-(4), (8)-(9) as straightforwardly true. Everett, as pretense theorists tend to do, denies this. Nevertheless, Everett points out that, on the Waltonian account of fictionalizing he favors, they do have (objective) correctness conditions. He follows Walton (1990) and Evans (1982) in explaining (in more detail than they do) how utterances made only in the fictionalizing mood can nonetheless be intended to convey information about the actual world, through the "prop-oriented" (Walton 1993) "piggybacking" mechanism (Richard 2000).³⁵

Everett (2013a, 81-6) invokes these two points to explain away intuitions that the relevant utterances have genuine truth-conditions and can be genuinely true or false. But he agrees that the two points can instead be taken to conclude that "these correctness conditions . . . have become conventionalized, so that they have become semantically encoded as the truth conditions of the relevant utterances"; and he declares that he "would not be too concerned if, in the end, you preferred to opt for this approach" (*ibid.*, 81). This is exactly what my figuralist proposal does. As acknowledged in §3, this raises for figuralism the concern whether it is not, after all, a form of realism. I said that I do not think it is, but I suggested putting aside these issues. The main concern, I argued, is that we still need an account of how what for the figuralist are metaphorical contents of conventionalized dead metaphors, and for Everett serious assertions made by piggybacking on the fiction, are grounded on the literal contents that for the former are only metaphorically (but conventionally) meant and for the irrealist merely put forward in pretense. Moreover, I argued in §4 that, even if we straightforwardly adopted a form of realism, we would still have a similar explanatory obligation.

This sets the stage for my main objection. As I mentioned above, in previous work (García-Carpintero 2010a, 286-7) I have criticized the combination of a pretense-theoretic account of paratextual and metatextual discourse with the object-dependent view of contents in Evans's and Walton's work. Although he declares sympathies with Millian views, in the respects that matter for the account in the next section Everett's views are once again more nuanced, because he accepts that there might be singular thoughts based on a mere descriptive cognitive fix (*ibid.*, 89 fn.). But in any case, the problem remains that Everett's

³⁵ This is what happens when the mother tells her child "the cowboy should now wash his hands for dinner"; i.e., it is to make an utterance which would be true-in-the-pretense if certain conditions obtained (mother and child are playing a game of cowboys and Indians, with specific principles of generation), with the intention of asserting such conditions (i.e., that the boy dressed as a cowboy now has certain obligations). Cf. Evans (1982, 363-4).

account puts the cart before the horse; that is to say, for CI_E to do the required explanatory work, it should be elaborated on the basis of an account of singular reference with more resources than straightforward Millianism allows, along the lines that next section suggests.

My objection to Walton is that he needs to explain the content of the pretense that creators of fictions – such as Kafka in producing the German equivalent of (7) – engage in. Such pretenses are on Walton’s view (and correctly so) representational acts with representational contents, propositional imaginings that proper appreciators should entertain. But the strict Millian view that Walton holds, on which such utterances do not have propositional contents, makes it entirely mysterious how such contents are generated. The general shape of this worry is the one I already raised in §4 for realist proposals: even if we accept them for metatextual discourse, they require an independent account of aboutness in textual discourse. The same applies to pretense-theoretic accounts such as Everett’s. He provides an account of aboutness in metatextual co-identification claims such as (3); but any such account must ultimately rely on a previous, independent account of aboutness or reference in the fiction that CI_E invokes.

As I said before, Everett’s *mother of Ophelia/Polonius’ wife* example is analogous to an example by Edelberg in a non-fictional context, which equally suggests that we take co-identification claims to be true even when the representations in the two attitudes we claim to co-identify do not belong in the same anaphoric chain. This highlights the worry just raised, in that there is no fiction that the two representations are associated with, but just two different failed theoretical pursuits. Hence, without further ado we cannot apply Everett’s CI_E recipe to such a case – unless we (implausibly) claim that the relevant theoretical pursuits count as fictions, just because they have posited non-existent theoretical entities.

Granting that such theoretical pursuits were not fictional, there are interesting pretense-theoretic proposals in the literature to understand ascriptions of attitudes concerning them, including judgments of co-identification of the form of (3); cf. Kroon (2005). But they raise the same issues: they cannot be plausibly based on a straightforward Millian account.³⁶ Everett could handle the Edelberg case as Kroon suggests: Our sense of co-identification comes from pretending that the two theories are correct. Within the scope of this pretense the mental representations of the two groups would count as being about the same thing. But this still leaves us with the sort of issue I am insisting we should address: what does it take for two representations to count, within a pretense, as being ‘about’ the same thing?

This is, again, the cart-before-the-horse concern. What is needed is an account of aboutness or reference that uniformly applies to straightforward assertions, such as those in theoretical claims, and the pretenses of textual discourses, on which our account of co-identification can then rely; i.e., an account of aboutness, reference and co-reference in textual discourse, i.e., in the paradigmatic cases that render themselves to the pretense-theoretic account.³⁷ To deal with that we may well put aside the issue whether judgments

³⁶ Kroon (2004) also rejects Millian views.

³⁷ Here I agree with the main point that Friend (2011) was emphasizing in raising the issue of co-identification, namely, that we take textual discourse to be as singular as ordinary assertoric discourse. She also previously questioned Walton’s account along similar lines, and raised the “cart-before-the-horse” problem for Everett’s account in her talk in the talk mentioned in fn. 39. Everett (2013b, fn. 25) acknowledges the link between co-identification judgments involving fictional entities and Geach sentences, and insists that those who want to count them as true on the relevant readings without adopting realism should offer their own account. I cannot agree more; but someone who, extending his views, offered in general a pretense-theoretic account of Geach sentences (along the lines of Kroon (2005), say) would equally be required to explain aboutness in the representational origins to which the alleged pretense leads us back.

of co-identification involving fictional characters are exactly like those involving real particulars, as realists contend, or should be considered as involving some form of metaphor or pretense. What I claim for the account I am about to suggest is an explanatory advantage: it advances our understanding of co-identification in ways that are required by all types of accounts in the market, realist and irrealist.

7. Pretend Reference and Presupposings

Let me sum up the main claims of the previous sections. Our target utterances (3) and (11) are pieces of metatextual discourse. Whether we give them a realist treatment like Salmon's (2002), a pretense-theoretic one like Everett's (2013a), or the figuralist one I favor, satisfaction of their truth-conditions is dependent on the aboutness of a representation: the one which grounds the "quasi-anaphoric links" that any account will rely on – in our case, the relevant pieces of textual discourse. In this respect, Friend's account is on the right track. However, it should be elaborated adequately in order to confront the problems we raised in section 5. In this section I'll present the resources that my own account in the next needs.

Let us consider some recent accounts of the truth conditions of claims of intentional identity. Along the lines already suggested by Evans (1982, 362), Pagin (2014, 94) points out that the intuition which seems to guide our judgment and which different accounts have tried to capture over the years seems to be something like (CI_M):

- (CI_M) Two attitudes have a common focus if and only if, if one had been about a real object of the relevant kind, then both would have been about the same object.

Modal accounts such as Pagin's (2014) and Glick's (2012) aim to capture the intuition (CI_M) in a straightforward way, by providing analyses along the lines of (5)-(6) above on which the Greek variables range over a domain of *possibilia*.³⁸ Possible worlds are useful tools in semantics, and I'll be resorting to them. We do not need not think of them as primitive entities; they might be (determined by) finer-grained contents. Cumming's (2014), Lanier's (2014) and Maier (2017) offer accounts of the relevant attitudes couched in a Fregean ideology.³⁹

³⁸ Edelberg (1986) pointed out a *prima facie* asymmetry in intuitions of intentional identity with a much discussed example. I follow Cumming's (2014, 373) exposition: Smith and Jones have been found dead in different parts of Chicago. Detectives Onesky and Twosky conclude that both were victims of homicide. Onesky believes that a single man killed both of them. Twosky maintains instead a two-killer theory. In truth, neither man was murdered; they died in unrelated accidents. In this context, it seems true to report "Twosky thinks that someone murdered Smith, and Onesky thinks he murdered Jones". However, it feels wrong to report "Onesky thinks someone murdered Jones, and Twosky thinks that he murdered Smith". But if we analyze both reports along the lines of (5)-(6), they should be logically equivalent. All recent analyses try to account for this apparent asymmetry as resulting from some contextual effect; Glick resorts to a counterpart-theoretic metaphysics of modality in order to deal with it. I will ignore these complications, orthogonal to my main concerns for reasons advanced above, fn. 10.

³⁹ Sainsbury (2014) expresses a wide-ranging skepticism about possible worlds as a basic tool to understand fictional content. I believe that a Fregean view of the sort I rely on is in a position to handle the concerns raised by Salmon (2002, 111). Like Glick's, both Cumming's and Lanier's accounts are made more complex than I can adequately represent them here, because they aim to account for Edelberg's apparent asymmetries.

Abstracting from the details we don't need to care about, along the lines initially suggested by Kaplan (1969), on such a view *de re* ascriptions describe singular thoughts in indefinite terms, existentially quantifying over some of their representational vehicles. (13) below is a good way of capturing the essential import of (5), and hence (4) in that framework (cf. Salmon (2002, 110-1)). There, 'R' stands for an appropriate representational relation between constituents in belief states and their semantic values, one sustaining correct *de re* ascriptions. The Greek variables 'μ' and 'ν' range over vehicles for singular representation in mental states, under the assumption that embedded clauses in attitude ascription (partially) characterize such vehicles in context. As before, 'α' ranges over "objects" corresponding to *de jure* referential "expressions" in language or in thought, i.e., objects *prima facie* determined by them. They might be plainly ordinary objects (a real witch) or exotic ones instead; in the latter case, on irrealist views like the figuralist interpretation I favor, they are merely pretend, our references to "them" and quantifications over "them" just being a hypostatizing figure of speech:⁴⁰

$$(13) \exists\mu \exists\nu \exists\alpha (R(\mu, \alpha, \text{Hob}) \ \& \ R(\nu, \alpha, \text{Nob}) \ \& \ W(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{Hob believes } \lceil B(\mu, b) \rceil \ \& \ \text{Nob believes } \lceil K(\nu, c) \rceil).$$

Relative to these accounts, the question I have raised in §§4-6 is this: When do the textual discourses to which the ascribers' mental representations ultimately lead underwrite positing a common object? When do they validate the counterfactual in (CI_M), assuming it is sufficiently well defined? I have been arguing that, in cases involving fictions, the answer must come from the nature of referential textual discourse. On the view that Lewis's (1978) account of "truth in fiction" assumes, we should consider worlds in which the textual discourse is uttered as presenting known facts, and some other restrictions obtain – the world is otherwise as similar as possible to the actual world, or to the world according to common beliefs in the context in which the discourse is produced.⁴¹ The representations co-identify if they pick out the same referent in those worlds. On Currie's (1990) alternative view, we should consider instead the belief-worlds of a fictional narrator of the textual discourse. I have questioned both accounts and provided an alternative one (García-Carpintero 2007, 2013), assuming a presuppositional account of reference. Here is a very brief summary of the main relevant ideas.⁴²

Although the states of information we end up in by accepting 'John stole the camera' and 'it was John who stole the camera' are the same, these two sentences pack the information they convey in different ways. The second, cleft sentence *presupposes* that someone stole the camera, while the former, plainer sentence does not. For present purposes, it will do no harm to think of presuppositions along the well-known lines that Stalnaker (1978) has suggested.⁴³ Speech acts like assertion take place against a *common ground*, a set of already accepted propositions. Linguistic presuppositions are requirements on the

⁴⁰ Cumming (2014, 381) appears to concur. Cf. also Recanati (2017) and Sainsbury (2018, ch.2).

⁴¹ Of course, there is not just one "world of the fiction" to underwrite (CI_M).

⁴² I refer the reader again to García-Carpintero (2017) and references there to previous work.

⁴³ My own views, although strongly influenced by him, differ at some points (García-Carpintero 2014, 2018). I think of all speech (and mental) acts, including ancillary acts such as *presupposing* and *referring*, as constitutively normative; in particular, I think of presuppositions as normative requirements, constitutive of some representational acts, that knowledge already in place includes them. I also think that some linguistic presuppositions are semantically triggered.

common ground. The difference between our two sentences lies in the fact that an utterance of the cleft sentence will feel inappropriate (at presupposition evaluation time) if it is not common ground that someone stole the camera. But the state of information that we get into by accepting either of our sentences will be the same.

Consider then an utterance of ‘he is hungry’. My view agrees with *direct reference* theorists that the asserted content is a singular proposition, *x is hungry*, given some assignment to *x*. It is expressed, however, in a context in which another singular proposition is presupposed – in this case, one semantically triggered by something akin to a Kaplanian character for ‘he’ – which we could express thus: *x is the male picked out by the demonstration associated with **he***,⁴⁴ where the bold-face ‘he’ refers to the relevant token. There are related general contents that are also presupposed by entailment, such that there is a male picked out by **he**. For full understanding, these semantically triggered presuppositions are to be typically supplemented by further pragmatically triggered presuppositions, specifying additional features of the intended demonstrated referent, perceptually accessible or accessible from previous discourse.⁴⁵ The descriptive identification embodied in such presuppositions is “reference-fixing” and not “meaning-giving”, in Kripke’s (1980) sense.

This is not, it should be clear, a reductive descriptivist view: far from aiming to reduce singular representations to descriptive general ones, it assumes primitively singular attitudes. The suggestion is only that general descriptive information helping to fix the individuals the utterances are about is a constitutive feature of them. This information figures in associated presuppositions. But the presuppositions are themselves singular, and not just because they may mention singular token representational states; the intended referents, if there are any, also figure in their contents. Singularity, like presuppositionality, is understood here as a constitutive feature of the representational devices, a “semantic requirement” (Fine 2007) on them – a fact to be embedded in a theory of such representations, which must be grasped for them to be fully comprehended.⁴⁶ It is thus that singular terms are *de jure* rigid, in Kripke’s (1980) sense.

When it comes to an utterance of ‘*N* is hungry’, the proposal has it that the semantically triggered presupposition is *x is called N* – and hence that there is someone called *N*. The name is individuated by a specific *naming practice* picked out at a “pre-semantic” level in order to identify which specific homonym is meant in the relevant context. As with indexicals, additional reference-fixing descriptive information might be pragmatically presupposed. This might be information associated with descriptive names like Evans’ ‘Julius’; or information standardly associated with the name (*being seen in the evening in the Western sky*, for ‘Hesperus’, *causing perturbations in Uranus’/Mercury’s orbit* for, respectively,

⁴⁴ This statement of the presupposition contains another, existential presupposition associated with the definite description, which I do not unpack further for the sake of clarity.

⁴⁵ Cf. Simons (2005, 350-1) on contextual, pragmatically triggered presuppositions. Proposals along the general lines outlined in the main text are now quite standard in the linguistic semantics literature; cf. Heim (2008), Maier (2009, 2017) and Hunter (2012) for different but related views. Maier (2017) extends this sort of account to mental states in a way compatible with my own proposal outlined below. While I discuss only linguistic claims of co-identification, the phenomenon is ultimately cognitive. Very similar resources could be applied to deal with cases involving thoughts, cf. García-Carpintero (2016).

⁴⁶ Crucially, singular representations thus understood may fail to have an object; singular presuppositions associated with some singular terms in fictions are merely pretend, as I have been indicating. Our theoretical claims are to be understood as made in the framework of an adequate free logic.

‘Neptune’ and ‘Vulcan’); or perhaps information that helps individuating the specific homonym that was meant in context (Wittgenstein, *the author of the Tractatus*, . . .).⁴⁷

On the Stalnakerian picture of presuppositions that I partially assume, presupposition and assertion interrelate in dynamic ways. Presuppositions are checked against a “common ground”, a set of propositions that are common knowledge among conversational participants. Asserted contents, if accepted, become part of the common ground, and thus legitimize presuppositions later on in the discourse. Now, consider a textual use of (7) in its assumed context. This is a declarative sentence that would be used by default to make an assertion. But the assertion is in this use merely pretend, which is why we would not complain that it cannot be true or impart knowledge by its including an empty name. The speaker (as opposed to the pretend-speaker), the fiction-maker, is using it to make a different speech act, a sort of invitation or proposal for audiences of a certain kind to imagine certain contents (García-Carpintero 2013). However, it behaves with respect to the dynamics of discourse exactly like the corresponding assertion would, legitimizing presuppositions down the road; thus, the next sentence could have been “it was not just gigantic, it was also frightening” – a cleft construction presupposing that the insect was gigantic – and it would feel entirely felicitous (unlike “it was not just tiny . . .”).

Given this, the common ground should not be taken to consist of propositions that are common *knowledge*, but merely commonly “accepted” (Stalnaker 2002). I suggest we take such an “acceptance” in the case of fiction to be a matter of further pretense: accepted pretend assertions become pretend presuppositions. The presuppositions, like the initial assertions, occur under the scope of a pretense. A pretend assertion is one advanced merely for its having taken place to be imagined, so that it is not subject to ordinary norms for assertions. A pretend presupposition is similarly one put forward merely to be imagined, hence not subject to norms for presuppositions – one that does not fail because its content is not common knowledge. Now, fully understanding fictional discourse involves additional pretend presuppositions to the ones created by pretend assertion: the singular reference-fixing presuppositions that my proposal associates with empty names such as ‘Gregor Samsa’ are similarly merely pretend presuppositions, and so are the general ones entailed by them that there is someone bearing a specific name articulated as ‘Gregor Samsa’.⁴⁸ Like its author, competent interpreters of the fictional work do not really presuppose any of this; they merely pretend to do it. It is thus irrelevant that the presuppositions are not true, nor therefore matters of common knowledge.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Cf. García-Carpintero (2017) for the details of this view on names.

⁴⁸ Has Kafka truly created a *specific* name articulated as ‘Gregor Samsa’? In the figurative sense of ‘object’ that I assume for metatextual discourse, I find it intuitive that when we use ‘Gregor Samsa’ to “refer” to that “object”, Kafka’s fictional character, we are deploying for that purpose a specific name articulated as such, the dubbing for which was tacit (Donnellan 1974, 19); one upholding the presuppositions in the practice of discussing Kafka’s text. I thus see it natural to take Kafka to have introduced that specific name with his uses throughout his text. Predelli (2017) assumes a framework on names similar to my own – albeit with the crucial difference that he takes the “being-named” related descriptive propositions to express just regularities in use, as opposed to pragmatically triggered presuppositions. He then advances the “No-Name Hypothesis” that ‘Gregor Samsa’ in textual and paratextual uses is not really a name constituted at a dubbing, but some sort of disguised description involving only the generic name. My view doesn’t require to adopt this hypothesis, and I prefer not to do it because of its awkward consequences, particularly for paratextual uses, in special those like (8) involving explicit “according to the fiction” operators (cp. Predelli 2017, 141-5).

⁴⁹ Cf. Sainsbury’s (2010, 143-8) related discussion of “truth under a presupposition” and Howell’s (2015, 53) of “truth under an assumption” – which are not, however, put in the framework of a general theory of reference involving presuppositions. Recanati’s (2017) discussion is closer to the present view.

Not all presuppositions that a piece of textual discourse assumes are pretend. Even the most fanciful tales assume facts that truly are (taken to be) common knowledge, in order to determine their contents.⁵⁰ Special among them are presuppositions constitutive of the meaning of the terms the tale uses; these cannot be pretend. All them interact with pretend presuppositions to determine the content of the fiction, in ways that have been famously explored by Lewis (1978) in his already mentioned analysis of “truth in fiction”, by Walton (1990) for his “principles of generation” and by Friend (2017) for her *Reality Assumption*.

Note however that, although the text constituting a fiction directs its readers to imaginatively presuppose some contents, they do not merely because of that contribute to delineating the “fictional world”. The text constitutes an act of fiction-making; but not everything that the reader should imagine in order to comprehend it needs be part of the fictional truths specifying such world. There are imaginative acts required to understand the text that are merely ancillary to their determination. This is so, for instance, in the case of the fictional claims of unreliable narrators. Also, let us consider a story beginning thus: “this is the tale of a little dragon, Urkul, who lived at a time when there were no people around and things still did not have names”. The reader is to imagine that *x* is the dragon picked out by the naming-practice on which that token of ‘Urkul’ relies. It is clearly not intended to be part of the content of the fiction proper that there is such a practice; it doesn’t obtain in the fictional world (see Predelli 2017, 135 ff. on “peripheral” dubbings). What is to be part of it is determined by relevance-like factors, relative to the nature of the act of fiction-making (García-Carpintero 2013, ms), including the intentions of the author, conventions, etc.

8. The Presuppositional Account of Co-Identification

I will now use this apparatus to provide my own account of fictional co-identification, elaborating on Friend’s and Everett’s. Let us call all reference-fixing presuppositions, pretend and serious, “the rf-presuppositions of the fiction”.⁵¹ My proposal for the case of co-identification involving fictions then goes as follows: the singular mental representations in the ascribées co-identify just in case (to put it by pretending to assume the possibilist ideology) they pick out the same referent in the presupposition-worlds taken for granted by the fiction-maker in making the invitation to imagine that constitutes the fiction:

(CI_{GC}) If two representations are associated with fiction F, then they co-identify if and only if the rf-presuppositions of F “pick out” the same “object”.

CI_{GC} applies to our case the sort of general Fregean account of intentional identity that (13) provides for (4), unpacking CI_M relative to the general views on reference I have

⁵⁰ This means that both our semantic account, and competent speakers, should contemplate contexts that do not merely consist of propositions, as it is usually assumed, but are structured relative to different “force-like” categories (García-Carpintero 2015b). This in fact should be obvious, and is standardly assumed by adequate accounts, given that questions and requests contribute to the common ground in distinctive ways (sets of “questions under discussion” and “plans”, respectively); I am suggesting to add the two categories of serious and pretend presuppositions. Cf. also Maier (2017) and Recanati (2017).

⁵¹ These correspond, I take it, to Maier’s (2017) *anchors*; cf. Recanati (2017, 83).

just outlined. Going back to (3), Nabokov's and the critic's attitude co-identify because the reference-fixing presuppositions for their respective "Samsa" files lead back – along the anaphoric links that Burge's account envisages, described in §2 above – to Kafka's text; and then because the reference-fixing presuppositions we find there, associated to "Samsa"-representations, are supposed to pick out one and the same "object". Even though Nabokov and the critic associate different descriptive information with the name 'George Samsa', they both assume that what they are talking about, whether beetle or cockroach, is picked out by a single pretend dubbing Kafka's *Metamorphosis* invites readers to imagine. To resort again to the possibilist ideology, if any of their representations were about something, it would be the entity picked out by the (pretend) dubbing on which the name 'Gregor Samsa' in Kafka's text relies; then both would pick out this entity.⁵² It is indifferent whether we think of such "picking out of an object" as involving a real reference to a real entity – say, one constituted by the "Samsa"-representations in the text, as on moderate realist views; or rather, as I prefer, as a further mere pretense. In any case, we have put the cart behind the horse, as one should: we have outlined an account of what is there, in those "Samsa"-representations, which grounds co-identification.

The proposal appears to deal adequately with the other clear cases involving fictions we have considered before, such as Everett's *mother of Ophelia/Polonius' wife* example. Resorting again to possibilist ideology, worlds fitting the rf-presuppositions of the play would have a single individual for both *mother of Ophelia* and *Polonius' wife*. The same applies to 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent', and to 'Dr. Jekyll' and 'Mr. Hyde', which would therefore sustain in agreement with CI_{GC} corresponding claims of co-identification. The account can be easily extended to inter-textual identification, including the 'Father Christmas'/'Santa Claus' case under the conditions allowing for co-identification described by Friend (2014, 317-8). This could be a straightforward matter (as when Chandler writes one more Marlowe story), or a more indeterminate and context-dependent issue. The issues are too complex to be illuminatingly discussed here in any detail.⁵³ The presuppositions that my account appeals to might have their origin in authors' intentions or (as I think) in more conventional, normative matters; that depends on the nature of meaning-determination for fiction-making (García-Carpintero forthcoming-a). I think that it is more explanatory to speak of presuppositions, however they are grounded, because this captures the phenomenon in its generality.

Like Everett's CI_E , CI_{GC} accounts only for co-identification under the specific conditions I have been discussing here. However, as indicated CI_{GC} is intended just as an application under those conditions of CI_M as understood through schemas like (13); i.e., of a general view on intentional identity that assumes the views on reference that I have outlined in §7. In Hob/Nob cases, intuitions depend upon the details of the story. If Hob and Nob picked up their relevant mental files from a common source (say, the newspaper

⁵² This in fact assumes, in two-dimensional jargon (cf. García-Carpintero 2015a), that it is the primary intension of 'Gregor Samsa' in Kafka's text that contributes to determine the fiction's possible-worlds content. For the singular presuppositions primarily associated with the name, being gappy, do not select any worlds. Only the entailed general ones do; and these rely on the metalinguistic descriptions, involving the specific names, that two-dimensional accounts invoke to characterize names' primary intensions. But I am trying to put aside technical semantic jargon in this paper, for reasons mentioned above, fn. 10.

⁵³ Cf. Everett 2013a, 201-7. The asymmetric nature of the character-incorporation relation among stories will give rise to issues like those raised by Edelberg (1986), cf. fn. 42.

story), Hob's thoughts and Nob's thoughts inherit the presuppositions made in the telling of the witch story (say, that the referent of 'Samantha' is a witch who has done Y, or that the singular mental file that figures in the singular thoughts which the reporter expresses in the newspaper report pick out a witch that is F). Hob's thoughts and Nob's thoughts will thus have the same pragmatic reference-fixing presuppositions. So, when we consider all the worlds that make true the presuppositions of Hob's thoughts and Nob's thoughts, for each such world the Hob thoughts and the Nob thoughts will pick out the same object. Hence they co-identify.

I take it that this handles adequately Edberg's example of the two scientific communities: the reference-fixing information associated with the names they introduce in their respective theoretical representations would pick out the same objects in close worlds in which they picked out something. For the two communities make the same pragmatic presuppositions (that the referent of the relevant name is the F) when they use their respective names for their posits. So, when we consider their views, and the relevant presupposition worlds, both names will pick out whatever is the F in those worlds. Hence the two names will co-refer with respect to each presupposition world. The two communities make singular reference-fixing presuppositions that, although independent of each other, we reasonably take to co-identify in relevant worlds.

CI_{GC} is compatible with Everett's CI_E, so he could borrow this take on Edberg's example; my objection was not that his account is incorrect. CI_{GC} explicitly assumes an account of pretend reference in textual discourse that, although a direct reference account, is also a (reference-fixing) descriptivist Fregean one. This is what distinguishes the account of singular thought I assume, on which this is a matter of the nature of the referential vehicles, and it is compatible with their failing to pick out an object (cf. García-Carpintero & Pamira, ms). As said, this is not inconsistent with Everett's moderate view on singular reference either; the virtue of the proposal is only that it makes explicit its reliance on an account of aboutness in textual discourse.⁵⁴ As said, CI_{GC} thus puts the horse before the cart, and this is what I argued is needed.

Let me discuss now the objection to the sufficiency of Friend's CI_E. Objections to her account didn't issue from a fundamental disagreement; the main problem I raised was only one of formulation. We agree that what matters for co-identification is what some singular representations are – or pretend to be – about. I think the present account improves on Friend's Evans-inspired proposal on how that idea is developed. If (11) is false – unless it contextually incorporates the qualifications made explicit in (12) – this is because it is not the reference-fixing presuppositions associated with ordinary representations of author Alice that matter for the truth of the intended claim, but those made in the textual discourse constituting the relevant fictions. This is not as much a matter of the file structure of the psychology of the producer of the fiction, but of the nature of the representational acts that constitute the fiction.⁵⁵ Worlds that satisfy the semantic and pragmatic presuppositions the author made when she introduced and used 'Alex' and

⁵⁴ My proposal is also close to Kroon's (2004, 2005), which I understand develops the account in terms of a distinction between "prescriptive" and "descriptive" pretense in Kroon (1994). Kroon would treat (3) and (12) as involving a form of "shallow pretense"; the figuralist view is in the same spirit. Kroon (2004) also emphasizes one of my main points, the need to rely on an account of reference that includes descriptivist elements.

⁵⁵ It may perhaps be captured in mental files ideology; cf. Terrone (2017), who develops Recanati's (2013, 205) notion of a "public file", Maier (2017) and Renati (2017).

‘Adrian’ will be such that these names will pick out distinct objects with respect to those worlds. Hence ‘Alex’ and ‘Adrian’ do not co-identify.

To elaborate, we are taking for granted that no competent reader has been given any reason to identify the two characters Alex and Adrian – perhaps putting aside those who know Alice personally, who, I’ll assume, are irrelevant to determine how the fiction is to be properly interpreted. The fiction does in no way suggest to competent readers that it is “autofiction” with respect to any of those two characters. In these circumstances, independently of what goes on in the author’s mind, the fiction includes two different specific names articulated as ‘Alex’ and ‘Adrian’, different also from the author’s name, in that they involve three different dubbings – two of them merely pretend. If the author had had the linguistically incompetent intention of using ‘Alex’ and ‘Adrian’ with the same referent that her own name has, this would still be irrelevant; it would be a ‘Madagascar’-like situation, whose adequate analysis involves positing two different (pretend) dubbings for the names in the fiction.

In a nutshell, the reason why this is the correct thing to say about ‘Madagascar’ is that dubbings have the role in the language of allowing speakers to coordinate their acts when they participate in ordinary speech acts using the thereby introduced names, in virtue of the semantic referent of the name in the relevant utterances systematically coinciding with their respective speaker’s referents. On no sensible metasemantics would it be appropriate to insist that current users of ‘Madagascar’ are beholden to the very same dubbing leading to current uses of ‘Mogadishu’, so that they systematically fail to (semantically) speak about what they intend in using it, and hence to successfully coordinate the ordinary speech acts they perform with the name.⁵⁶ In the figurative, hypostatizing sense of ‘object’ that I allow myself for metatextual discourse, a similar objection can be made to the view that the occurrences of ‘Alex’ and ‘Adrian’ in the fiction refer to the same “object”/fictional character, or that they refer to the same straightforward object (the author). The point would be made instead in a realist perspective by saying that, as a result of those considerations on the role of dubbings and the adequate metasemantics for referential expressions, the two fictional names refer to two different abstract objects; in a pretense-theoretic stance, that in using or interpreting them we pretend to refer to two different individuals. This is ultimately why (11) is false: there is no single “object” witnessing the existential quantification.

These points carry over to the ‘Hamlet’/‘Amleth’ case. The considerations that I have used are similar to those that Friend suggests to deal with it, and thus with the objection I raised: competent interpretation of the fiction ascribes fictionality to the “referents”; there is no reason to use information from the author in interpreting the contribution the names make to the fiction, etc. However, here they have been advanced in the context of an account that provides the sort of elaboration that I found missing in Friend’s suggestion.

The objections to (11) do not of course apply to (12), because there (invoking again the figurative way of formulating metatextual claims) reference to the two different fictional characters is made only inside the ‘as’-governed clauses; now the real author can serve as the witness for the existential quantification, making the claim true in the

⁵⁶ Cf. Sainsbury (2005, 118), from the viewpoint of a Davidsonian metasemantics, Macià (2005, 140), and García-Carpintero (2017, 18-21) for a conventional-normative account.

envisaged context. (12) correctly assumes three different “objects”: the author Alice, who supports co-identification, and the two characters who portray her in the novel.⁵⁷

I will bring out now another kind of case that would have been too controversial to use earlier as one more counterexample to the sufficiency of Friend’s account; for it evinces the flexibility of the view I am putting forward, and thus provides additional support for it. Imagine that, while reading Carmen Laforet’s wonderful novel *Nada*, and with respect to it, A judges what can be expressed with ‘Barcelona was a gloomy, sad city’; B, remembering her experience living in Barcelona (or with respect to a different novel) judges instead ‘Barcelona was a fun, buoyant city’. B might again actually be A herself. CI_F validates (14):

(14) A thinks Barcelona/a city is gloomy, while B believes it/the same city is fun.

Some philosophers will count (14) as straightforwardly true, but many speakers aware of the context find it at the very least highly misleading; on my own view, once again, only reports such as (15) are strictly speaking correct:

(15) A thinks Barcelona – (as it is portrayed) in *Nada* – is gloomy, while B believes it is fun.

In the figurative idiom I prefer, the reason is exactly the same as before, for even real names when they occur in fictions (‘Barcelona’ in *Nada*, ‘Napoleon’ in *War and Peace*) stand only for fictional characters, not their real referents. This is a view I have defended elsewhere, particularly from criticisms by Friend (2000). I have argued that it is perfectly compatible with this view that *Nada* is (in some sense) *about* (the real) Barcelona, and *War and Peace about* Napoleon, and also with the fact that the use of real names in fictions calls for the importation to the fiction of some facts about their (real) referents.⁵⁸

I will conclude by showing how the proposal handles an alleged counterexample by Pautz (2008) to pretense-theoretic accounts that may cast doubt on my account of (3). The present proposal is not that (3) is part of some extended pretense, but rather that it is a figurative assertion; however, as I have granted the figurative content is very much like the contents asserted by “piggybacking” on pretense-theoretic accounts. On the presuppositional account the crucial condition grounding the truth of (3) is akin to Pautz’s (2008, 152) (iiiic): to wit (replacing her Sherlock Holmes example with ours), that the critic’s and Nabokov’s uses of their respective singular representations causally lead back (through the relevant “quasi-anaphoric links”) to the referential pretenses associated with ‘Gregor Samsa’ in Kafka’s text.

To this sort of account, she provides an alleged counterexample of the following form (*op. cit.*, 152-3): “There is an initial pretend use of an empty name by the author of the fiction. Subsequently, two individuals . . . use tokens of the same name . . . where their

⁵⁷ The semantics of ‘as’ clauses is controversial, but both the accounts by Szabó (2003) and Asher (2006) would underwrite the truth of (12).

⁵⁸ Cf. García-Carpintero (2015a, forthcoming-b). Kripke (2013, 24, fn.) ascribes the view to Frege. It is also espoused by Bonomi (2008) and Motoarca (2014), although my reasons are different, and in fact I strongly object to some of theirs.

uses of the name are causally related to the initial pretend use. One individual acquires the intended pretend beliefs [these are the beliefs that a proper appreciator of the fiction should pretend to have, M_{G-C}]. But the other individual acquires beliefs which are substantially different from the intended beliefs". Thus, in her Sherlock Holmes example, the second speaker believes that Sherlock Holmes lives in California, drives a Ferrari, and is a surgeon who makes a large amount of money by helping the police solve murder cases. Under these circumstances, Pautz contends that, while the accounts she is objecting to would underwrite judgments of co-identification concerning the pretend beliefs of the two speakers, these judgments would intuitively be untrue.

In response, I suggest that Pautz's alleged counterexample is essentially underdescribed. The crucial claim is not just that the uses of the singular representations are causally related to the pretend uses in the fiction; the causal relations should be of the proper form. The question is, does the speaker with the wrong beliefs use 'Sherlock Holmes' as *de jure* coreferential with the uses of the speakers from which she has taken it? I.e., does she intend to use it as it has been used by previous speakers? If so, I do not share her intuition that the co-identification judgments are false. On the contrary, my intuition is that she has mistaken beliefs about the character that Conan Doyle created, and that she should accept corrections in that regard. If, on the other hand, she lacks these intentions, then the account (on the Sainsbury-based articulation in §2 above) does not support the co-identification judgments, even if her use of 'Sherlock Holmes' is ultimately causally dependent on Doyle's: when it comes to underwriting co-identification judgments, such causal dependence is beside the point.⁵⁹

9. Conclusion

In this paper I have taken up Stacie Friend's challenge to descriptivist accounts of (fictional) names based on the fact that we make true claims of co-identification involving such names. Although the account of such (metatextual) claims I have assumed can be considered realist, its figurativist character makes my stance sympathetic to the irrealist assumptions about fictional characters that she assumes in setting up the problem. In addition, I have emphasized a point that Evans (1982, 367) makes against fictional-character realism, namely, that a proper account of paratextual and metatextual discourses should nonetheless explain the connection between uses of names in them and their uses in textual discourses, and also uses of names as genuine singular terms. Unlike Friend's, the proposal I have made is "name-centric", but it assumes an account of 'Madagascar'-like changes of reference that emphasizes the connection between reference and information-gathering, in the way that her Evans-inspired "info-centric" account does. In fact, the account I have provided is structurally very similar to the one given by Evans (1982, 358-368), including his suggestions about how to deal in general with intentional identity claims (*ibid.*, 361-2, 368fn). However, the proposal made here is free from the difficulties of "object-dependent" views of referential concepts like Evans', in virtue of its appeal to the role of reference-fixing presuppositions in the semantics of referential expressions. It vindicates a form of descriptivism; it even allows for the view that I have defended

⁵⁹ My response assumes, as I take it she does, Kripke's outline of an account of reference, which crucially mentions referential intentions in characterizing the relevant causal links. Pautz takes Everett (2000) and Kroon (2004) to subscribe her principle (iii), but they explicitly understand the causal links in such terms.

elsewhere and briefly considered here, that names, including non-empty ones, contribute to the contents of fictions as descriptions do. It does this by confronting Friend's criticism by means of an account of co-identification involving fictional names improving on current proposals, including hers.

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