

## **Sherlock Holmes Does Not Exist: A Nominalistic Account of Fictional Characters**

*Jansan Favazzo*

*Università degli Studi di Macerata*

Many philosophers include fictional entities, like Sherlock Holmes and Mrs Dalloway, in their ontological inventory. Some of them argue that Sherlock Holmes is an abstract object, whose existence depends on the mental activities of human beings in flesh and blood; others maintain that he is a non-existent object, or maybe the inhabitant of some merely possible world. In any case, a fictional entity would be an «exotic» object: if Sherlock Holmes is part of reality, then he must be either non-concrete or non-actual or non-existent. I will assume that whatever there is (in reality) is concrete, actual and existent. Accordingly, I will present some semantic tools that allow us to get rid of the (alleged) ontological commitment to fictional entities. Roughly speaking, the general idea – which I will develop in some detail – is that, when we talk about Sherlock Holmes, we are actually talking about Sherlock|Holmes-depictions.