RUSSELL'S EARLIEST METAPHYSICS

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ABSTRACT

In what follows I examine the effects upon Russell's metaphysics of developments in his philosophy between 1894 and 1924. I attempt to make clear the nature of the philosophical interdependence of the three main respects in which Russell's opinion changed in the course of this period and which have bearing on the question of his metaphysics: (1), concerning ontology; (2), concerning the nature of metaphysics; (3), concerning the validity of metaphysics.

(1) Given these intentions, what is interesting about the development of Russell's ontology from An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry (1896), via the monistic idealism of his uncompleted studies of the foundations of science (1896-1898), to the empiricism and pluralism of Logical Atomism (1924), is not so much the fact that he reversed his opinions in about 1900 but the continuity of attitude which underlies the reversal.

The period in question is dominated, of course, by Principia Mathematica (Vol. I, 1910). I show how this work evolved out of the earlier to its intended status not

merely of meta-mathematical thesis, or treatise of formal logic, but of "Logic" in the sense of a comprehensive system of philosophy. (What is given there summarily is developed at length expressly as a system of metaphysics in The Philosophy of Logical Atomism (1918) and as a system of epistemology in Our Knowledge of the External World (1914) etc.) I try to show that Principia's vast superiority to its predecessors in the sphere of formal logic is counterbalanced (at least in comparison with its direct rival, Bradley's Principles of Logic) by equally vast and irresoluble difficulties in the sphere of metaphysics.

(2) Russell came to reject in principle Kant's transcendentalism on the grounds of that method's "subjectivity" and "psychologism" . I argue that Russell's insensitivity to the import of Kant's principle, revealed by the demand for an absolutely mind-independent ground for the truth of mathematics, is evidenced in his own metaphysics by neglect of attention to the principle that to attempt to define the grounds of the objectivity of truth as wholly independent of knowledge in general must lead to incoherence. In turn the cause of this (and thus the ultimate source of incoherence in his own account) lies in his misunderstanding the transcendental principle to imply that the generality intended by the

concept of knowledge in general is to be construed as equivalent to some such conjunctive generalisation as that of the set of all individuals' individual knowledge.

(3) In the course of certain papers which are intended rather more polemically than philosophically, (e.g. The Philosophical Importance of Mathematical Logic (1913), and Mysticism and Logic (1914), there is a gradually more explicit suggestion that Idealism is to be rejected more on the grounds just that it is a metaphysical doctrine, than that it is bad metaphysics. That is, Russell came to reject metaphysics as such, which he contrasts with "scientific philosophy" precisely as an expression of the contrast between mysticism and mathematical logic. Thus Idealism and his own philosophy prior to the doctrines of Principia are presented as totally disreputable in just this way. I argue that the corollary to this has a disastrous effect upon his own later philosophy, viz., the belief that the "scientific philosophy" is, as such, immune to external criticism on metaphysical grounds.

To sum up, my thesis is that the key to Russell's earliest metaphysics is his perhaps temperamental inability to accept any theory which allows a different order or sphere of validity respectively to mathematical

and to metaphysical statements about reality as such. He seems to have been influenced by the feeling that since these are identical just in respect of their absolute generality, on any satisfactory account they ought to be assimilable. Thus in the Idealist phase he proposed that mathematics could not express the whole truth about reality because of inherent contradictions which would be totally removed only in the highest synthesis. That is, mathematics was to become one with metaphysics by means of a conceptual revolution in the former. In the Logicist phase just the contrary is proposed, that mathematical philosophy is to supplant metaphysics by means of a conceptual revolution in the latter.

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* MPD, chs. 4 and 5, titles.

CHAPTER 1

Excursion: Russell's Idealism

1. Introduction

> It is well to lay stress on the defects of Monism and on the positive claims of ... Pluralism .... But these protests and these criticisms, it seems to me, are one thing, and the setting up and the preaching of some counter-onesidedness is surely another thing. And before anything, no matter what it is, is proclaimed as a new gospel, it will be better, I think, to ask if account has been taken of objections ... [1]

My purpose is not to show yet again how Russell failed to refute Idealism but rather, to deny that account has been taken of objections - by which I shall mean objections to the logicist theory of truth on the grounds of metaphysical considerations advanced by the monistic theory.

The radical change of opinion between the first and second phases of Russell's metaphysical development

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[1] ETR, 101

reflects a change in his conception of what ought to be fundamental among the possible subjects of analysis for the philosophy of mathematics; for throughout, Russell's metaphysical picture is derived from the conditions necessary for mathematics to be true. The difference between the Kantian, the Idealist, and the Logicist phases in his philosophy of mathematics is due to changes in Russell's conception of what sense it is necessary to attach to "true" in this context. Consequently, the problem about truth is more than usually central.

Because the fundamental logical key to the logicist reduction of mathematics was found to lie in the definition of order in terms of asymmetrical relations Russell seems to have conceived of the doctrine of Internal relations, which if true in the way Russell construed it would make such a definition impossible, as occupying a central logical position of just the same order in the monistic theory. This is a misconception resulting from two other complementary misconceptions: in the first, Idealist, phase, even though Russell claimed that "In Logic, I have learnt most from Mr. Bradley"[2] he seems to have tried to assimilate the level

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[2] EFG, 2

of the truth of mathematics to the essentially higher-order level of Bradley's general formula of truth; in the second he seems to have construed the meta-mathematical definition of truth as a properly metaphysical principle. It is only in Russell's acceptation of the monistic theory of truth that the theory can be construed as implying the conclusion that mathematics is not quite true in the sense of "true" in which common sense takes it to be true.

The difficulty for us of avoiding such an interpretation arises, perhaps, from the fact that Russell was not only one of the chief protagonists in the dispute with the monistic theory, but the chief historian of it also. The claims which Russell first put forward as arguments, he sometimes subsequently re-affirmed as facts in the history of philosophy:(not mendaciously, of course; I mean that Russell's claim qua historian that monism is in principle refutable in the form he attempted is the least easy to reject: this lends support to his claim to have refuted it, which in turn appears to be confirmed by the fact that it ceased to be professed. In particular he generally uses "Hegelian" as a catch-all for what he calls at one point "an emaciated idealism imported from Germany".[3]

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[3] ONA, 128

He also uses it of his own early Idealism. In consequence there is a feeling that his priviledged judgements upon his own early work - "nothing but unmitigated rubbish ... misguided ... complete nonsense ...",[4] etc. are somehow true of whatever else he calls "Hegelian", but the term, in Russell's usage, though always pejorative, as descriptive of the view he is opposing is the title of a straw pretender.)

I indicated above that there were two grounds upon which Russell claimed to have refuted monistic idealism: (1) that the doctrine of internal relations is logically refutable, (2) that the monistic theory of truth offends common sense. As to the first, it is more or less a commonplace, now, to agree again with what F.C.S. Schiller remarked as early as 1915: "the relations between these views [Russell's and Bradley's] must remain purely 'external' and there is little likelihood that either will ever get near enough to the other to deal it a mortal blow."[5] (Even so, Ayer, for example, remains faithful to Russell's historical

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[4] MPD, 39, 41, 43

[5] Schiller, 349

account: "Their counter-attack was so successful that the whole dispute has lost interest for us. The position of these neo-Hegelians is so palpably untenable that it is hard for us to understand how they could ever have been taken seriously."[6] Cf. below, p. 105 - but it ought not to be so hard for us to understand; this is the point of the present thesis.)

On the other hand, the substance of Russell's other objection is still found put forward either in the form of the argument that if the doctrine of internal relations is resistant to Russell's counter-argument this is because it depends for its meaning on a metaphysical doctrine which we have no <u>reason</u> to accept (which faint praise in retrospect for the discredited theory effectively damns it more than Russell's original objections); or on the grounds that any doctrine which denies truth to science and mathematics is thereby directly refutable (an acceptable principle but, as I have indicated, not one that is applicable to the Monistic theory of truth.)

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[6] Ayer (C), 186

Thus Wollheim, for example, claims that the appeal of monism is ultimately not logical at all, but "must lie deep in the recesses of the human mind ... the desire to establish 'whole objects' which is of such crucial importance in infantile development."[7] Similarly, Warnock allows that it would be "historically improper to give the impression that Idealism perished of refutation",[8] but, like Wollheim, appeals to this very fact in support of the essentially more powerful objection that "Such systems are more vulnerable to ennui than to disproof."[9] The basis of this form of objection is that to common sense monistic idealism is literally incredible; it offends common sense in this way. Thus in the preface to the first edition of "Appearance and Reality" Bradley quotes from his notebook the following aphorism: "Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct",[10] and the two forms of Russell's objection may be paraphrased with reference to this by saying that the reasons are

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7 Wollheim, 278

8 Warnock, 10

9 Ibid., 11

10 AR, x

indeed bad, if they are the doctrine of internal relations, and what they are reasons for is not at all what anyone believes upon instinct, if that is monism. (Cf. Russell: "I share the common-sense belief that there are many separate things ..."[11]) But the conclusion that Bradley offends common sense in this way is just on a level with the identical criticism that is sometimes made of Berkeley and may be rejected for the same reason; (but in Bradley's case, as we shall see, with more justice): for as Walsh says, "there is no conflict between Bradley and common sense, only between Bradley and common sense philosophy, which is by no means the same thing and whose credentials are by no means so obviously impeccable."[12]

This is also, ultimately, the answer to the other form of the objection, which is re-echoed, for example, by Watling: "the conclusion which a philosopher draws from certain doctrines may constitute a reason for rejecting those doctrines even if no other

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11 PLA, 178

12 Walsh, 435

reason against them exists"[13] - a version of Moore's famous principle that we are to reject without the need to supply arguments to refute it, any argument which is "an attempt to prove that a given proposition is false, by means of a principle which is, in fact, much less certain than the proposition which is supposed to be proved false by its means."[14] Russell frequently appeals to different versions of this argument: most interestingly, "the possibility of mathematical knowledge refutes both empiricism and idealism ...",[15] "In favour of the premises from which I start, there is, however, a kind of inductive argument: they allow much more truth to science and common sense than is allowed by the opposite premises, and they do not require us to 'condemn, almost without a hearing, the great mass of phenomena.'"[16] In general, "there is more likelihood of error in a very subtle, abstract, and difficult argument than in so patent a fact as the interrelatedness

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13 Watling, 44

14 Moore (B), 143

15 PIML, 493

16 Ibid., 377

of things in the world."[17] I shall not attempt more in the way of discussion of the principle in this introductory note than to oppose quotation with quotation: thus Bradley replies, "Mr. Russell's contention that in his view we are less in conflict with science and with common sense ... is an argument which I am very far from undervaluing. In fact the doctrine which I hold I hold largely because it seems to me to remain, more than others, in harmony with life as a whole."[18]

My thesis is, then, that the metaphysical assumptions contained in Russell's last-quoted principle are vulnerable to fatal objections which will become apparent during what follows, which is an attempt to reconstruct, primarily logically, but also historically, the development of the opposing arguments in Russell's earliest metaphysics.

I said above (page 1) that one expression of Russell's radical change of opinion is bound up in a change in his understanding of what were the proper subjects of analysis for the philosophy of mathematics.

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[17] OKEW, 8

[18] ETR, 291

The change occurs when for the philosophy of space he substitutes the philosophy of geometry, and for that of matter and motion, the philosophy of rational dynamics. After the change, any philosophical consideration which is not internally part of the subject-matter of the branch of mathematics whose foundations he is considering he relegates to empirical research. Thus before the change of opinion, the "Essay on the Foundations of Geometry", for example, is part meta-geometry and part philosophy of space - the findings of the latter being a regulative principle in the detailed undertaking of the former, whereas in "The Principles of Mathematics", on the contrary, he takes the view that e.g. "Geometry may be considered as a pure a priori science, or as the study of actual space. In the latter sense, I hold it to be an experimental science, to be conducted by means of careful measurements"[19] - and in the former sense, of course, the only alternative he allows is geometry qua mathematics; that is "a branch of pure mathematics".[20] Thus "every Geometry is rigidly deductive, and does not employ any form of reasoning but such as apply to Arithmetic and all other deductive sciences".[21] He sees

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19 POM, 372

20 POM, 373

21 Ibid., 374

this finding as "fatal to the Kantian philosophy".[22] This explains his later opinion of the Essay, that "Apart from details I do not think there is anything valid in the early book."[23] Now since the purpose of this chapter is to give sympathetic consideration to this book among other works of similar philosophical outlook, I propose, as a preliminary, to establish at least the validity in general of Russell's early undertaking, in contradiction of his later opinion about it.

Russell's argument against Kant is, essentially, that whatever is a necessary geometrical proposition is reducible to truths of logic, whereas any non-necessary (i.e. synthetic in Kant's sense) geometrical proposition is merely an empirical hypothesis. But does this exclude by anything more than just stipulation what he was himself attempting to investigate in the Essay? A third sort of geometrical propositions not either analytic nor capable of verification by space-measurement is possible, viz. propositions about what Russell himself later called "perceptual space." Kant appears to have believed that

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[22] Ibid.

[23] EFG, 39

in order to be true of reality geometrical propositions must be true of perceptual space (that is, their being true necessarily of perceptual space explains the possibility of their being true of reality). This being so, the possibility of n-dimensional geometries, though it excludes the possibility that mathematical geometry as such, which includes them, is descriptive of perceptual space, has nothing at all to do with the philosophical problem concerning the possibility (in a Kantian sense) of our experiencing reality as spatially ordered. Russell excludes this metaphysical study of geometry by a false alternative: the a priority of the synthetic a priori status which Kant assigned to the propositions of Geometry is attributed by Russell to the propositions of that branch of pure mathematics called "geometry", whilst the syntheticity is attributed to the propositions of that empirical proceedure called "measurement". This is already a sleight of hand so it is no further argument against Kant to say that "space is, as Peano remarks, a word with which Geometry can very easily dispense"[24] - in fact this assumption is actually the source of the metaphysical inadequacy of the logicist account.

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[24] POM, 437

A similar treatment is given of matter, and here the seriousness of the misconception is more evident. Russell says, "What is matter? And here matter is to mean, matter as it occurs in rational Dynamics, quite independently of all questions as to its actual existence."[25] What Russell is doing in both cases is defining what is going to be capable of logicist reduction. Certainly the possibility of this reduction is a philosophically interesting undertaking but it is an undertaking of a quite different sort from the one he has excluded by the fiat of his false alternatives. But Russell conceives of it as being a correct answer (where Kant's was false), to Kant's very problem: How is mathematics "possible"? I shall postpone discussion of this larger question; however, to the present purpose we may say, very roughly, that Russell's answer consists in the claim that since it would be unintelligible to deny the truth of logic, if mathematics is reducible to logic, then mathematics must be true - true in Kant's sense, of reality. But Kant, of course, denies in general that any analysis of truth along these lines can solve the transcendental problem: "The purely logical criterion of truth ... is a condition sine qua non, and is therefore the negative condition of all truth. But further than this logic cannot go."[26] As

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[25] Ibid., 465

[26] A 69/B 84

for Russell's exclusion of any third sense in which the philosophical investigation of space, matter, and motion might be philosophically valid, Kant remarks as follows:

> Motion of an object in space does not belong to a pure science, and consequently not to geometry ... Motion, however, considered as the describing of a space, is a pure act of the synthesis of the manifold in outer intuition in general by means of the productive imagination, and belongs not only to geometry, but even to transcendental philosophy. [27]

2. Space

Russell's discussion in "An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry" is essentially Kantian as regards the precondition that a transcendental solution must be sought (for example, that it must be in terms of a "form of externality".) However the considerations upon which his eventual solution depends are rather those of the Deduction, than of the Aesthetic. That is, while Kant relies on an anlysis of the necessary alogically spatial form of what is given in experience, Russell's primary reliance is upon an analysis of the conditions of that experience's being intelligible - i.e., Kant says roughly that all the experiences of "outer intuition" are

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[27] B 155 n.

temporally and spatially ordered in certain ways such that we cannot conceive of any such experience that were not so ordered; whereas, rather differently, Russell maintains that in order for such an experience to be intelligible, the object of sense must, in its given state, conform to the two fundamental and related conditions of the possibility of thought, viz. analysability into simpler components, and self-transcendence (i.e. the object must be neither simple nor discrete absolutely, even in sense.)

It would be fair to say that at this stage Russell has accepted the logical foundation, but not the epistemological content of Bradley's doctrine. For example, Bradley holds, epistemologically speaking, that there is no necessary connection between the variegations in sense and the discrete objects of thought, and that conceptualisation is always subsequent to sense as regards expressing what is given; i.e. as expressing the structure of what actually is real. At the same time, he insists of course, that Immediate Experience is "a unity, complex but without relations ...."[28] That is, "for the mind there is no

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[28] ETR, 194; my underlining

discretion, or even discrimination. All is feeling in the sense .... of a whole given without relations",[29] i.e., in short, a "non-relational immediate felt unity"[30] which is at the same time complex (contains variegations) - "Feeling is certainly not 'un-differentiated' if that means that it contains no diverse aspects."[31] Now Russell believes that a necessary condition of the possibility of intelligible experience is, that an object of sense-perception be revealed, by attention to the experience of it, to be given as complex and as self-transcendent. The central point of this is the notion of attention: Russell maintains that it is not that attention creates complexity, but that it reveals it. That is, he reiterates the argument of the Deduction that intelligible experience of mere simples is impossible. Thus the emphasis of his argument is rather different from Bradley's; in a sense his remarks here might lead more naturally to logical atomism. It is knowledge, as a datum, which interests him in the Geometry, so while nothing he says contradicts Bradley, the effect is quite different. For example, Bradley's main tenet is that

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29 CE, 220-221; my underlining

30 ETR, 176

31 AR, 508 n.

discursive thought cannot represent reality without falsification because reality is non-relational: i.e. he emphasizes the relational nature of thought just in order to show how it is essentially inadequate to its pretentions. Russell, on the other hand, at this stage takes an opposite view, viz. that since thought is relational, in order that empirical knowledge be possible, it must start from the diversities given in sense: "The essence of my contention is that, if experience is to be possible, every sensational This must, when attended to, be found, on the one hand resolvable into Thises, and on the other hand dependent, for some of its adjectives, on external reference."[32] This is just the essence of the doctrine of internal relations, expressed in an empiricist way, by reason of which inversion of viewpoint his argument is the reverse of Bradley's, though it does not contradict it: "Knowledge would be impossible, unless the object of attention could be complex, i.e., not a mere particular. Now could the mental object - i.e. in this connection, the object of a cognition - be complex, if the object of immediate perception were always simple?"[33]

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[32] EFG, 184

[33] Ibid.

This argument shows how complicated is Russell's position in the Geometry: What is being denied is essentially the view that "ultimately" perception is of simples like Hume's coloured points (and with it the whole mechanism of simple "ideas" correlated with simple "impressions" and the mental "construction" of complex objects.) But at the same time what is being affirmed is not the Bradleyian corollary to this denial, namely, that therefore propositional knowledge, which treats its components as simples, is necessarily false: on the contrary, what is being affirmed is the correlate in logic of the Humean doctrine in perception, i.e., the fundamental tenet of what later becomes logical atomism, viz. that an atomic fact cannot be simple. (In this respect, as in others, the argument resembles that of the Deduction against the possibility of experience of discrete presentations not conceived of as being separate presentations of an identical object: "if any mere particular existed, all judgement and inference as to that particular would be impossible, since all judgement and inference necessarily operate by means of universals.")[34] When the requirements of complexity and self-transcendence

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[34] EFG, 182

were dropped along with the doctrine of internal relations, of which they are consequences, then the epistemological part of the theory became Humean also, and the correlates in experience of the components of atomic facts were said to be simple also.

For the present, however, Russell's acceptance of the doctrine of Immediate Experience (so far as it goes) has the following general consequences which underlie the details of his account of the foundations of Geometry: a complex interrelatedness is said to exist, all deriving ultimately from the content of experience, between the data of sense, their relation with the external world, the spatial form of phenomena, and matter, conceived of as being the substantial correlate in external reality of the ideal content of perception.

In delineating their relationships in the Geometry, Russell starts from the basic empiricist position: "Now the only mental states whose immediate causes lie in the external world are sensations .... It is in sensation alone that we are directly affected by the external world, and only here does it give us direct information about itself."[35] But then, in apparent contradiction of the view

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[35] EFG, 2

of Immediate Experience which I have been advocating, Russell remarks that "A pure sensation is, of course, an impossible abstraction - we are never wholly passive under the action of an external stimulus - ".[36] He says also that the question of "what, in our perceptions, belongs to sensation, and what is the work of thought or association,"[37] is psychological, from which it might seem that he believes the distinction Bradley draws between felt experience and intellection is not properly philosophical, and that the doctrine of Immediate Experience which results, is an "impossible abstraction". However this would not, of course, thereby contradict any essential tenet of Bradley's argument, which claims only that the distinction is analytically possible. In fact Russell does ultimately accept the Bradley/Bosanquet doctrine that experienced spatiality is continuous, such that "no This can be regarded either as simple or as self-subsistent. Every This, on the one hand, can be analyzed into Thises, and on the other hand, is found to be necessarily related to other things, outside the limits of the given object of sense-perception."[38] That is, it

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[36] EFG, 2

[37] EFG, 3

[38] EFG, 183

would appear that Russell accepts the logic of Bradley's position, but for different reasons. He says, for example, that Bradley's argument is the converse of his own: "My contention is, conversely, that since all knowledge is necessarily derived by an extension of the This of sense-perception, and since such extension is only possible if the This has that fragmentary and yet complex character conferred by a form of externality, therefore some form of externality, given with the This is essential to all knowledge, and is thus logically a priori."[39] In short, Bradley and Bosanquet affirm that since reality is continuous, the This cannot be merely discrete, whereas Russell affirms that since the possibility of knowledge depends on the complexity and self-transcendence of the This, which is in turn dependent upon the This being given spatially, therefore this spatial form of externality is logically a priori.

Russell now moves towards the view that space is a plenum - in a way which tries to reconcile Idealism with the reality of space. The first step is the fairly cautious claim that reality cannot be said not

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[39] EFG, 183

to conform to the requirements of our thought about it: "Of course, necessity for experience can only arise from the nature of the mind which experiences: but it does not follow that the necessary conditions could be fulfilled unless the objective world had certain properties."[40] He then claims that "a form of externality, if it is to do its work, ... must be a given element in sense-perception - not, of course, originally given in isolation, but discoverable, through analysis, by attention to the object of sense-perception."[41] That is, although Russell does not appear to subscribe to the doctrine of Immediate Experience insofar as that claims there is an alogical sensual element in perception; what he now proposes is, although a different analysis of the object of perception, still an analysis of just the same logical order as Bradley's (unlike the empiricist analysis, which postulates that logical simples are given). Russell's distinction is not between sensation and intellection but between the content of perception and its form (qua form of externality: a Kantian, as opposed to the more or less Aristotelian notion employed by Bradley) such that what in Bradley's doctrine

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[40] EFG, 179

[41] EFG, 180

is a picture of sense, becomes in Russell's analysis a picture of space.

Thus he suggests that we can regard space, "primarily at any rate", as giving "only the mutual externality of things presented to sense perception."[42] Then, analogous with Bradley's denial that the alogically given is conceptually ordered, Russell, in his examination of the concept of empty space, of the whole of space, and the antinomy of the spatial point remarks that "Though the parts of space are intuitively distinguished, no conception is adequate to differentiate them."[43] (From which fact Bradley, of course, draws the conclusion that "Empty space - space without some quality (visual or muscular) which in itself is more than spatial - is an unreal abstraction. It cannot be said to exist, for the reason that it cannot by itself have any meaning. When a man realises what he has got in it, he finds that always he has a quality which is more than extension."[44] i.e. "Space is essentially a relation of what vanishes into relations, which seek in vain for their terms.

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[42] EFG, 182

[43] EFG, 188

It is lengths of - nothing that we can find." [45])

But according to Russell, "the first steps in removing these contradictions ... is to restore the notion of matter as that which, in the data of sense-perception, is localised and interrelated in space." [46] That is, if we regard the form of perception as empty space, then there is no way in which different parts of reality could be differentiated conceptually unless we regard the content of that empty form as being matter, such as to allow us the possibility of identifying discrete parts of space by means of the parts of matter which coincide with them. Empty space, then, is, according to Russell, identical in logic with the Whole of Immediate Experience, of which it is the form of externality: "empty space is a bare possibility of relations, undifferentiated and homogeneous, and thus wholly destitute of parts or thinghood." [47]

Thus if we were to construe the doctrine of Immediate Experience as a logical model, Russell has

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[44] AR, 33

[45] AR, 32

[46] EFG, 188; my underlining

[47] EFG, 191

provided the supplement necessary in order to be able to interpret it as a model of reality, as follows: (1) Immediate Experience is a non-relational but complex whole which is logically prior to the conceptual differentiation of the world into discrete objects. (2) The Whole of experience is also the Whole of empty space (such that whatever complexities occur even within Immediate Experience are necessarily ordered spatially); i.e., spatiality is not a concept but a form. (3) Insofar as Immediate Experience is co-extensive with reality, whatever it is conceived of as being an experience of, qua something in space, is ipso facto conceived of as being something material. In short, whatever we are prepared to say exists in external reality, just from that fact we imply that it is material and that it exists in space. (Cf. Bradley: "Everything phenomenal is somehow real; and the absolute must at least be as rich as the relative ... the Absolute is, so far an individual and a system, but, if we stop here, it remains but formal and abstract. Can we then, the question is, say anything about the concrete nature of the system?"[48] (I do not suggest that Bradley would

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[48] AR, 127

accept the four points just outlined: I offer them as the answer to Bradley's question which is implied in Russell's account and which, as metaphysics, I think is valid independently of that account.)

"Spatial figures, we shall now say, are relations between the matter which differentiates empty space"[49] ... "it is not empty space, but spatial figures which sense-perception reveals, and spatial figures, as we have just seen, involve a differentiation of space, and therefore a reference to the matter which is in space. It is spatial figures,also, and not empty space, with which Geometry has to deal ..."[50] "Empty space is the ground, in reality, of all diversity in relation ...."[51]

Diversity in relation ("identity in difference") is the crucial point, for "Two things, if they occupy different positions in space are necessarily diverse, but are as necessarily something more; otherwise spatial order becomes unmeaning."[52] The difficulty for Russell lies in the nature of the "something more". To serve

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[49] EFG, 191

[50] EFG, 191

[51] EFG, 193

[52] EFG, 194

his(Kantian) purpose it must be something more in reality; on the other hand it must not be a hypostatisation of the "bare possibility of spatial relations" which is how he has characterised empty space. Russell's solution to the difficulty is the obverse of his solution to the problem of the differentiation of space: "spatial order, by its reference to matter, becomes more concrete, and contains also the element of unity, arising out of the connection of the different material atoms."[53] Further, before the feasibility of this account is discussed, it ought to be noticed that the matter which Russell has in mind is "a peculiar and abstract kind of matter, which is not regarded as possessing any causal qualities, as exerting or as subject to the action of forces."[54]

Thus we have to take account of three obscurities in Russell's account: the "reference" of space to matter, the "connection" of material atoms, and the "peculiar" nature of this matter. With regard to the latter, it seems that "matter" here plays no part beyond the formal function, as I suggested, of being "that which occupies

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[53] EFG, 199; my underlining

[54] EFG, 191

space" - Russell thereby avoids the hypostatisation of space, whilst giving to space the concreteness which a "bare possibility" necessarily lacks. (Cf. "We must find, therefore, in our matter, that unit of differentiation, or atom, which in space we could not find."[55] This, of course, is required for Geometry (as he thinks) which is why, for the purely formal function I attributed to matter, he substitutes the idea of a punctual system: the abandonment of this was the crucial step, later, in his adoption of monism.) For the present, then, Russell is affirming that while space is a homogeneous plenum, matter is an atomic system: the function which matter serves by this account is analoguous with the superimposition of a grid on a plain surface. Questions remain, however, e.g.: if matter is atomic and abstract, and not subject to causation, what is conceived to be the principle of "connection" between the atoms such as to yield the unity that relations demand? Finally, in what consists, beyond the merely tautological relation of "location", the "reference" of space to matter?

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[55] EFG, 192

At the end of the Geometry, Russell concedes that while his account solves the problem of the foundations of Geometry (at least to his satisfaction at the time), the new problems raised in their turn by the notion of matter employed leads to "new contradictions" the pursuit of a solution to which would lead "through Kinematics, into the domains of Dynamics and Physics."[56] By 1896 (half way between submission of the dissertation and publication of the Essay), Russell had already started working along the lines required, and continued to do so until 1898.

3. Material Reality

Bradley believed that spatiality (not space as such, for as we saw above, he regards that as an unreal hypostatisation) is an aspect of experience which is wholly exhausted in the data of experience, and concludes that "Neither the things in space, nor their space, nor both together, can be taken as substantial. They are abstractions depending upon a more concrete whole which they fail to express."[57] This more concrete whole is, of course, ultimately the Absolute, but the solution to

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[56] EFG, 201

[57] AR, 156

the problem of "unity in difference" which Russell solves in the Geometry by reference to matter, is already contained, for Bradley, in: "the immediate experience where the whole is in the parts, and where, through the whole, the parts are in one another."[58] Bradley in fact has very little to say about matter - for the reason that his account proceeds in the quite unusual way I have indicated (which is more fully discussed below, pp. 82-87) based on the distinction between sensation and intellection, rather than on a distinction between the ideal content of experience, and the material content of what experience is conceived to be the experience of.

Russell, of course, does employ this latter distinction in the Geometry, as well as the former. Hence he conceives of the logical relations between space, matter, and experience in the following way: "Assuming that in perception, we are assured of the existence of something other than ourselves ... the question inevitably arises: Of what nature is this

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[58] ETR, 282; my underlining

something external to ourselves? Insofar as it appears to be in space, we name it matter."[59]

Russell tells us that he finished the Geometry in 1896 "and proceeded at once to what I intended as a similar treatment of the foundations of physics."[60] "I was at this time a full-fledged Hegelian, and I aimed at constructing a complete dialectic of the sciences which should end up with the proof that all reality is mental."[61] He tells us also that one of the two main problems which interested him at the time was that concerning the nature of matter which is foreshadowed in the unsatisfactory conclusion of the Geometry: "the question whether matter consists of atoms separated by empty space, or of a plenum pervading all space."[62] "I inclined at first to the former view ... When I adopted the more modern view, I gave it a Hegelian dress, and represented it as a dialectical transition from Leibniz to Spinoza ...."[63] (As we shall see, both at the end of the Geometry and throughout this new undertaking, Russell was in fact following far more closely in the footsteps

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59 CEPL, 75
60 MPD, 41
61 MPD, 42
62 Ibid.
63 MPD, 43

of Lotze, the true plenum theorist.) The notes Russell made on this subject between 1896 and 1898 are fragmentary and usually contain more in the way of affirmation than of coherent argument. Even so, they record the peak of his infatuation with the plenum theory and clearly indicate the reasons why he ultimately rejected it. The bulk of what was accomplished is to be found in "My Philosophical Development" (pp. 43-53). The rest remains unpublished.

He starts with high hopes - "It seems possible that in such ideas as the continuum and plenum, the immediacy vainly sought by logic is retained. We might thus find a method of turning Appearance into Reality, instead of first constructing Reality and then being confronted by a hopeless dualism."[64] In the title of another note he asks "Why do we regard time, but not space, as necessarily a plenum?" and takes much more a Bradleyian line than in the Geometry about the relation of space to experience: "Either space or time, in fact, may be regarded as an adjective of one extended experience - in which case we get the doctrine of the

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[64] On the Idea of a Dialectic of the Sciences, Notebook, 77; MPD, 44

plenum ....."[65]

It is possible to discern a number of logical steps whereby he moves from the position taken in the Geometry, which is relational, to this adjectival view of space, in the course of which progression matter, experience, and reality are all bound up in a rigid monism. The central issue is the definition of matter:

> Matter is commonly thought of as defined by one or other of two properties: extension, or force. But if space is purely relative, as discussion of Geometry suggests, extension cannot be the distinguishing mark of matter, which has to duty as substance. Therefore, only force remains, i.e. atoms are to be regarded as unextended centres of force, not inherently spatial, and localised only by their interactions.[66]

This does not seem much advance on the theory in the Geometry except insofar as it rejects the notion of that theory's peculiarly abstract matter (Cf. "local matter"). The transition becomes clearer in the more

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[65] Archives (2), 5

[66] Note on Transition from Geometry to Dynamics, Notebook, 39; MPD, 44

extended note "Some Definitions of Matter"[67] and I shall accordingly consider the definitions offered there in order, as showing the progressive steps towards monism. This will require a regrettable but unavoidable reliance on extensive quotation.

> General definition. Matter is that, in the data of the outer sense, which can be regarded, with less contradiction than any other sensational datum as logical subject, or as substance.

Cf.

> Matter, we may say generally, is that element, in the data of the 'outer sense', which can be regarded as the logical subject of all assertions about such data, or, in short, as substance ....[68]
> Matter may be defined then, as substance insofar as it appears in space .... all space is an adjective of the one substance, and is therefore necessarily a plenum. Matter is everywhere, since everywhere is matter's adjective.[69]

The argument is, I think, to revert to the theory advanced in the Geometry, that since space is a bare possibility, differentiated only be reference to matter,

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[67] Some Definitions of Matter, Notebook, 54-60: MPD, 45-48

[68] Archives (1), 1

[69] Ibid., 2

it cannot serve as the logical subject of assertions about the data of outer sense. Russell seems to be combining the two assertions

(a) that space cannot be a logical subject

(b) that matter is that which, when assertions are made of the data of outer sense, must "ultimately" be conceived of as being the subject of such assertions just in order that the data be possible to be conceived of as the data of outer sense.

This interpretation gains support from Russell's next step:

> 1. Kinematical definition. Matter is that of which spatial relations are adjectives. We saw in geometry, that the attempt to make space a logical subject breaks down: that those axioms which alone make a knowledge of space possible, can only be true on condition that space is a mere adjective. It must, therefore, be an adjective of something: and even geometry, though otherwise indifferent to matter, registers this something, in general, as a condition of its possibility .... nor does it introduce any property of matter except that of being susceptible of varying spatial adjectives without loss of identity .... Space, in short, is immoveable, and therefore if geometry is impossible without motion, we require something that can move in space.

- i.e. the punctual atoms of matter "must, for the axiom of free mobility, e.g., actually move, i.e. change their spatial relations."

That is, the axiom of free mobility is required for the possibility of measurement (by superposition: Cf. Geometry pp.66-67: "The magnitudes which space deals with .... are relations between points, and it is for this reason that superposition is essential to space-measurements,") - it should be pointed out that free mobility and its correlate, rigidity (constancy of shape/magnitude of space) do not require and cannot, for the purposes of geometry be thought of as requiring as subject an empirical body: roughly, what is required is an otherwise wholly indeterminate particular configuration of points. But change of position, if the principle of individuation of a particle consists wholly in the set of spatial relations of which it is a term, is impossible without loss of identity. Therefore what is capable of movement can only be what Bradley calls a "character" (i.e. not an individual as such). We are told by Russell that atoms of matter are moveable in this sense matter is said to be "susceptible of varying spatial adjectives without loss of identity". It follows, therefore, that the Kinematical definition cannot serve as an alternative to the General definition qua having the same definiendum. Russell cannot legitimately mean both (a) matter is all that admits spatial adjectives (Gen. Def.) and (b) matter can move without loss of identity (Kin. Def.), or else the

present notion of matter is incoherent, which, in fact, Russell came to realise. That is, if the conception of matter is taken to be the same in (a) and (b) then the notion of the material point is subject to a new antimony, and cannot serve, as it does in the Geometry, to avoid the antimony of the spatial point.

> II. Dynamical Definition of Matter. Matter is not only the moveable, but the mover: two pieces of matter are capable of causally affecting one another in such a way as to change their spatial relations .... which definition makes it impossible permanently to treat matter as a logical subject, as substance or as Absolute. 70

If the first two definitions either lead to an antimony, or are of different conceptions of matter, then this Dynamical definition introduces a third property, likewise incompatible with the first two conceptions. The three conceptions are in effect, respectively, "stuff", "atoms", and "bodies" - and of course these are not identical in conception, though they are related, just as to Russell geometry, dynamics, and physics are related,

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70 Note on Matter and Motion, Notebook, 63; MPD, 49

via the notion of materiality (or for Russell, matter). Russell is here caught in a dilemma: he wants to show how the three sciences are possible (in the Kantian sense) and he wants to do it using the minimum of fundamental concepts: "if we are to be able to construct a dynamic, i.e. a science of matter in motion, considered apart from other things in the universe, we must be able to find this cause within the conceptions we already have, i.e. within matter and spatial relations."[71] It is the Kantian preoccupation with experience which underlies this requirement - when he abandoned this preoccupation he was able (i.e. in Principles of Mathematics) to give an account based on the even more fundamental idea of the logical foundations of the special concepts of the respective mathematics involved. But so long as he conceived of accomplishing his aim by means of a "Philosophy of Matter", the dynamical definition is that which by making explicit the contradictions inherent in the original account of matter as punctual, leads to the overthrow of that account:

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[71] MPD, 46

> But in this definition, the elements are no longer self-subsistent at all. On the contrary, all the adjectives of any elements, except mass, consist wholly of relations to all the other elements, and mass is only exhibited in these relations. The necessary course seems, therefore, to regard our atoms either as mere adjectives of one single substance, or, if we prefer it, as the same substance appearing in different places. This comes to the same thing, for, in either case, whatever makes their particularity is only adjectival. 72

And similarly for space:

> We can ... conceive of a spatially differentiated universe, in which there are no constituents of equal reality, but, on the contrary, only parts which a thorough understanding reveals to be not parts, but mere aspects of one real Whole. Thus the ground for spatial monadism is gone - space is left as an adjective of the One, and as therefore necessarily a plenum, in the sense that the One is omnipresent. 73

In general, then, "The principle of our dialectic appears to lie in making the Whole gradually more explicit. Our separate particles turn out, first to be related to other particles, and then to be necessarily related to

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72 Can We Make a Dialectical Transition from Punctual Matter to the Plenum?, Notebook, 75; MPD, 50-52

73 Archives (2), 8

all other particles, and finally to err in being separate particles at all. With this we pass to the plenum."[74] Russell concludes that "The Laws of Matter will have to result somehow from the immutability of the Whole, as in the .... equation M = Ø (A,B ....) "M is the one Whole, of which space and motion are mere adjectives."[75]

Russell's earliest investigations into the philosophy of mathematics thus achieve two definite but unfruitful results:

(a) the arrival, by a series of retreats, at the formula which Bradley derives straight away from the nature of immediate experience, i.e. Lotze's formula "M=Ø (A,B...)" which, I suggest, is a particularisation of Bradley's general formula of truth, i.e. "Reality is such that S is P."

(b) the indication of a way in which "to construct, with the appropriate set of ideas, a world containing no contradictions but those which unavoidably result from the incompleteness of those ideas."[76] To do this, we have "first to arrange the postulates of the science so as to leave the minimum of contradictions; then to supply to

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[74] MPD, 52

[75] Ibid.

[76] Note on the Logic of the Sciences, Notebook, 162; MPD, 52-53

these postulates or ideas such supplement as will abolish the special contradictions of the science in question, and thus pass outside to a new science, which may then be similarly treated. Thus, e.g. number, the fundamental notion of arithmetic, involves something numerable. Hence geometry, since space is the only directly measurable element in sensation. Geometry, again, involves something which can be located, and something which can move - for a position, by definition, cannot move. Hence matter and physics."[77]

What has to be done is clearly indicated, and, as has been seen, some steps along the way were worked out. However, first: the completion of the steps in conformity with (a) above presents difficulties: "how to continue this process beyond Dynamics I do not know." Or again, as to the actual derivation of the laws of matter according to Lotze's formula: "How the principle is to be applied, may be a matter for purely empirical investigations."[78] Second: This undertaking, even if

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[77] Ibid.

[78] MPD, 52

possible, "merely supplies to an abstract idea its necessary and substantive complement, while leaving, to the abstract science, full validity on its own level" and is therefore not a transition which is "dialectical in the true Hegelian sense", as showing that "the notion of the science in question is fundamentally self-contradictory, and must be throughout replaced by another, in any metaphysical construction of the real."[79]

In effect, then, (a) states the relation between particular facts and reality as a whole, or less innocuously, generalises the argument aRb = (ab)r (in the sense that the metaphysically more correct logical characterisation of relations is a deductive consequence of the general formula which expresses the logical character of a plenum.) At the same time (b) unsuccessfully attempts to expound a philosophy of mathematics and natural science within the logical bounds specified in (a). Because Russell's primary concern was the philosophy of mathematics, he was not content to accept the incoherence of demanding a greater sense of "true" for mathematics than "full

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[79] MPD, 51; my underlining

validity on its own level". (Cf. Bradley: "something less than absolute truth is all that we can use, and therefore all we should want."[80]) - it seems to be Russell's own militant Hegelianism here which gives him the confused sense of "absolute truth" as something which, if mathematics were not metaphysically deficient, it would be capable of, which he forever after accuses Idealists of holding - and in reaction against which he appears later to come to the conclusion that mathematics is metaphysically sufficient. His mistake consists in confusing the Idealists' unobjectionable claim that mathematics is not metaphysics with the claim that mathematics is deficient as metaphysics. (Cf. Bradley: "The ideas with which it works are not intended to set out the true character of reality".)[81] Russell came, therefore, to attribute the unsatisfactoriness of (b) qua philosophy of mathematics to the falsity of (a) qua metaphysics.

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[80] AR, 252

[81] AR, 251-252; my underlining

CHAPTER 2

Idealism: A Reconstructed Theory

1. Experience

In Chapter 1, Section 2, I suggested that although Russell had accepted Bradley's logic he had not accepted his epistemology, and showed how as a consequence he applied the monistic logic not to Immediate Experience, but to the concept of space. That was, in effect, a Lotzean proceedure - attempting to account for the intelligibility of the connectedness of an apparent multiplicity of objects in experience by showing their inherence in an ideal plenum. It will now be appropriate therefore, to consider the significant respects in which Bradley's doctrine differs from this.

Ayer says: "Many philosophers would deny that there is any such thing as the hard coin of experience, if this is understood to imply that our knowledge of the world around us is derived from more primitive data than the

perception of physical objects."[82] That is, they would deny the view that "we are presented with uninterpreted data which we are free to work up in any way that we find convenient."[83] He must be understood as meaning to include among the philosophers to whom he is referring J.L. Austin, in connection with whom Firth thinks it is even necessary to deny the supposition which, he believes, some admirers of Austin may think to have been proved in "Sense and Sensibilia", viz. that "perceptual experience (or, at least, most perceptual experience) does not contain a sensory constituent"[84] - a most far-reaching conclusion indeed, had Austin meant to try to establish it. Firth reassures us, however, that "Austin's arguments, even if they are valid, are too limited in their scope to accomplish a result as revolutionary as this."[85] Clearly, the belief mentioned by Ayer is more plausible than this. The question is, then, not whether there is a sensory element in experience, but how far it can be maintained (and what such a claim would mean in ontological terms) that such an element must be regarded as

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82 Ayer (C), 303

83 Ibid.; my underlining

84 Firth, 256

85 Ibid.

"uninterpreted". This is vital to an understanding of the monistic theory of truth.

Bradley says: "The recognition of the fact of immediate experience opens the road, I submit, to the solution of ultimate problems."[86] I want to suggest that the logically fundamental constituent of Bradley's conception of immediate experience consists in a distinction between the felt (sensated) quality of an empirical experience and the experience as such, which also includes essentially the conception of whatever it is, that the experience is an experience of; that is, the doctrine that what is given to sense is alogical - not any kind of object but something absolutely pre-conceptual. He says, for example, that presentations "exist, and they say nothing",[87] "Feeling is more ultimate",[88] "Consciousness is superinduced on, and is still supported by feeling",[89] and so forth.

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86 ETR, 160

87 CE, 245; my underlining

88 CE, 658

89 ETR, 195

It will be evident straight away, from the last quotation, how far what I am attributing to him is an impoverishment of his doctrine - "Consciousness is superinduced on feeling" must be intended to mean (if rather incoherently) that for Bradley, in the primary distinction, what is logically subsequent is apperception, not intellection. I should say, however, that the impoverished doctrine is implied by the richer, though the converse does not hold; (though this may be too strong: what is at issue is what Bradley intended - we should say, perhaps, that what I attribute to him is at least contained in what he says.) Some further evidence for this view: "We have, I should say, the aspect of datum, and we have the aspect of interpretation on construction ..."[90], "what we experience is not merely objects. The experienced will not all fall under the head of an object for a subject."[91] I shall assume, therefore, that what I have suggested is the fundamental epistemological import of the doctrine of Immediate Experience. The justification of the assumption is that such a distinction permits the construction of an

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90 ETR, 204

91 ETR, 159

argument with the conclusion of which the sense of his theory is in agreement.

Thus on this view in a sense Bradley is essentially a more radical empiricist than James. James says, "The perceptual flux as such means nothing, and is but what it immediately is."[92] Ayer claims that James thinks of the flux as "a coagulated mass from which the understanding carves its objects out"[93] - in his famous phrase, "one great blooming, buzzing, confusion".[94] (Cf. Bradley: "It is all one blur with differences, that work and that are felt, but are not discriminated."[95]) But the difference is, that James is not prepared to maintain the distinction absolutely; for, as we shall see, one consequence of maintaining it shows that ontological pluralism cannot be affirmed simply on the basis of empirical common sense.

The distinction to which I have drawn attention seems not to be denied by most philosophers but at the

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92 James (C), 49

93 Ayer (C), 289

94 James (B), I, 488

95 ETR, 157, n.1

same time it seems that none wish to exploit it. There are certain reasons for this, I think: (1) the philosophical notion of a "pure" sensation is usually generated regressively in terms of a <u>particular</u> sensation, by abstraction from the idea of the experience of a particular object. This is customarily the case in classical empiricism (Cf. Austin ; passim), and the philosophical utility of the idea of a particular, yet wholly indeterminate sensation is so limited that it is either dismissed as an "abstraction" (Cf. Russell: "A pure sensation is, of course, an impossible abstraction ..."[96]) or conceived of as fulfilling nothing but the function of a <u>limit</u> in the analysis of experience. (Cf. James: "the nearer the object cognised comes to being a simple quality like 'hot', 'cold', 'red', 'noise', 'pain' apprehended irrelatively to other things, the more the state of mind approaches pure sensation."[97])

(2) Adherence to the principle expressed in Kant's famous maxim: "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind";[98] that is, the

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96 EFG, 2

97 James (B), II, 1

98 A51/B75

principle that we have necessarily to "make our intuitions intelligible, that is, to bring them under concepts."[99] Yet this principle is curiously misapplied if it is invoked to rule out discussion of "pure" sensation in favour of e.g. "qualia"; for, as we shall see, the principle shows that in fact there is no epistemological priority in sense-datum statements.

(3) There is a suggestion, based on nos. (1) and (2) that the "pure" sensation as such is falsely hypostatised under the form of a substance-like datum from the substantive in such locutions as "It looks red to me". The necessary indeterminateness of the sensational quasi-substance apart from its characterisation in the sense-datum statement, it is suggested, is an indication of its mere hypostatisation from grammatical form and is in principle eliminable by adverbial reformulations like "I see redly", or "I sense redly". This is a view for which Bradley might be expected to have some sympathy: but in the first place such an analysis cannot be given of anything but the sense-datum language (i.e. the "it" in "it looks like a chair" is not

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[99] A51/B75

a quasi-substance), for the analysis must allow the possibility of mis-description. But then if this is admitted there is no reason to suppose that "I sense redly" describes an epistemologically more basic fact than "I sense chairly". The adverbial form seems to guarantee incorrigibility, a feeling derived from the infallibility of the sensation in the sense-datum case: but since in the case of a public object that feeling is misplaced, it becomes obvious that since "Øly" is no more incorrigible than "is Ø" it is also no less descriptive of something.

(4) The distinction has been traditionally applied in support of more or less transcendental faculty psychologies, with rather dire results. But clearly, as I have expounded it the distinction neither relies on nor is used to support any psycho-physiological conjecture at all. However, a residue of the objection to faculties is the view that if only creatures capable of conceptualization are capable of "experience" we have either to postulate a doggy language or deny that dogs have experiences. And anything less than an intellectual sense for "interpretation" seems to draw all the epistemological power out of the distinction, for what we seem to want in our bare sensation is no admixture of

theory. And there is the further suspicion that without even unconscious reliance on the idea of faculties there are no grounds for the claim that sensation and intellection are irreducibly different.

However, some familiar arguments which employ physiological and psychological considerations to deny that there are faculties tend to raise certain points which in fact confirm my analysis and incidentally illustrate its essentially non-psychological basis. First, it is suggested that for "interpretation" ought to be substituted "modification" or "organisation" to allow for the "normally automatic adjustments which can apparently be achieved by birds or even fish."[100] Then if such structuring occurs, Hirst for example concludes, "there must then be something interpreted, i.e. sensations."[101] This would of course be begging one of the questions except that the account may be supplemented with the question: Why do we not say that a camera experiences what it records? Wittgenstein would reply: Because a camera does not behave like a human being. We say that birds and fishes organise their sensations

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100 Hirst, 36

101 Ibid.

and that therefore they must have unorganised sensations as a prior condition because we attribute to them behaviour like a human being just in that respect - that they behave as if they experience the world. Now the content of what the camera records is the content of what we would say it experienced if it behaved in other respects like a human being (or like a bird or a fish). We can say that in a sense it can "acquire" non-conceptual information - i.e. in the sense that it can photo-chemically record it, just as a sine qua non of "seeing" is the occurrence of a photo-chemical process. The difference between it and a human being is that it cannot acquire conceptual information. As Ellis points out: "The conceptual information that may be acquired by seeing something red may also be acquired in other ways. But the non-conceptual information that is acquired by seeing something red can only be acquired by actually seeing something red."[102] On the other hand, after due consideration of the "physiological evidence" he concludes that "a completely non-rational perceiver is a physical impossibility"[103] - by which he must be taken to mean that a "perceiver" defined in physical terms (e.g. a machine that perceives, a perceptron, where the criterion of

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[102] Ellis, 148

[103] Ibid., 158

perception is certain sorts of stimulus-modified "behaviour") which has not some sort of inbuilt capability of registering non-conceptual information, is impossible. (And N.B. "registering" is an anthropomorphic metaphor: the information must be structured in some way by the perceiver in order to be registered by it - the photograph is not structured by the camera in this sense, but by whoever looks at it.) But his argument, interesting as it is, does not so much prove this principle as is throughout informed by it. The fact is that intellection is the form of modification in human beings qua intelligent (i.e. to whom the world is intelligible) and this is the primary sense of "experience" - a non-rational percipient is logically impossible on this definition. To say that a completely non-rational percipient is physically impossible is just to say that the less something behaves (hence the physicality) in ways analogous with an intelligent being the less likely we are to say that it experiences; with the limiting case being that whatever does not behave in any sense we say does not ratiocinate in any sense. But the fact that many sorts of creatures ratiocinate in senses less than the full intellectual sense is obviously no argument whatever against the claim that all such creatures sense (prior to their ratiocinations)

already a slight but definite advantage of my interpretation). He says that it is unlikely that Bradley should have based his argument on the a priori tautology that everything that is experienced is experienced; but his text for this is, "You cannot find fact unless in unity with sentience."[106] Now as for Idealism, Wollheim may not be wholly wrong (Cf. below, Section 3) but his interpretation, that this thesis "though clearly true, is also clearly tautological, and it seems unlikely that Bradley can have wanted to set up as one of the central tenets of his metaphysics a mere tautology",[107] if the central tenet concerned is monism, is quite false. For it is not a mere tautology (contra Ward, also: "if in a case of feeling proper I were to say 'feeling is felt' this would be little more than a tautology"[108]), if we take it to affirm what was expounded above, that whatever is experienced is at least sensed. Then all that is necessary to understand the basis of Bradley's monism is to be clear about the nature of whatever it is that is merely sensed.

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106 AR, 129

107 Wollheim, 198

108 Ward, 16

whatever it is they ratiocinate about.

So much for the foundations of certain more or less misconceived objections either to the distinction itself or its utility in principle: there remains the pragmatic objection that even if it is as I say, a valid distinction, what utility <u>has</u> it? The objection here is that the pure sensation by definition cannot be talked about. But this is just a form of the confusion between use and mention: thus, e.g. "if you abide strictly by the nature of this "blurred whole" you cannot even intelligently speak of it without committing a contradiction in terms, or a covert Hysteron Proteron."[104] Similarly Ward quite fails to see the point of the distinction: "to say 'feeling is felt' would not mean that something is cognised, as would be the case if I said, 'I feel, i.e. I "sense" something, say red.'"[105] And Wollheim, in effect largely on these grounds, disputes my attribution of this doctrine to Bradley in favour of an interpretation which traces the derivation of his monistic idealism to a false syllogism (- which indicates

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[104] Das, S.K. <u>Bradley's Doctrine of Immediate Experience</u>. Proc. xth Indian Phil. Cong.; quoted Shrivastava, 82

[105] Ward, 16

I indicated above one meaning which I wished to attach to this, viz. that whatever is sensed is to be regarded as absolutely not ordered conceptually. I also indicated one basis of the empiricists' conception of a "pure" sensation as a particular, somehow got by abstraction from the analysis of a particular (discrete) sensation. The classical empiricists tried to show that what in the content of experience is given to sense in as basic a sense of "sense" as it is proper to define, are particulars of a sort logically simpler than physical objects - particular data of colour, taste, sound etc. But this use of the distinction between sensation and intellection is unsound because what is sensed, is, as Aristotle says, not a "such" but a "this somewhat",[109] or as we might say, something which in principle, i.e. by definition, is not sensed under the form of a concept, for this is just what the distinction denies. This is the reason why it will not do to say that what we "really" see are coloured points etc., as Hume does, for example: "But my senses convey to me only the impressions of coloured points, disposed in a certain manner. If the eye is sensible of anything further, I desire it may be pointed out to me."[110] - it

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[109] Post. An., 87b28

[110] Hume, 34

may be pointed out that if Hume is going to go so far as to say that the eye is sensible of coloured points, there is epistemologically speaking no reason why he should not say immediately that the eye is sensible of whatever physical object the coloured points compose, and logically speaking every reason why he should. To say that what we really see is a white dot and not a distant house is correct only in a sense which does not help the empiricist. In general, it is incoherent to say of what is given to sense that it is something which has a connection in experience with a physical object, but refuse to subsume it under the concept of the object itself, whilst insisting on subsuming it under a concept lower in order of elaboration, (that is, as if to suggest that it requires less intellection to apply.) Obviously, in terms of the original distinction between sensation and intellection, this proceedure has absolutely no superior epistemological virtue so far as describing what we "actually" experience.[111]

Now a counter-objection to Austin's thesis, which this very largely is, and hence a possible objection to

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[111] Cf. Austin, 98 & passim

the form of the distinction I am trying to draw between Bradley and the empiricists, is raised by Ayer. He seems to me to be consistently unclear about the absoluteness of the distinction between sensation qua felt, and a sense-datum qua cognised. In reply to Austin, for example, he first maintains that his position in "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge" relies solely on the indisputable fact that "the occurrence of the experience which gives rise to the perceptual judgement is logically consistent with the judgement's being false."[112] This statement is true in case we construe "experience" as "sensation" in the sense I have defined it, in which case it is what I have been maintaining. But Ayer immediately assimilates this thesis to the much stronger thesis required for his form of phenomenalism; viz. "the statement that the chair exists does not follow from any statement, or indeed from any finite number of statements which are limited to describing the content of the observer's experience."[113]

Austin's rejoinder to this latter would be, that

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[112] Ayer (A), 286; my underlining

[113] Ibid.; my underlining

however true, it is otiose; for the perceptual situation is quite falsely described as involving an intermediate stage of categorising percepts in terms of logically simpler sorts of "objects" (e.g. sense-data): "we don't go through any kind of intermediate stage of relating the word 'pig' to a lot of statements about the way things look, or sound, or smell."[114] In a sense, what the empiricist puts forward as the basic datum of experience is a sort of logical hypostatisation of the psychology of knowing the use of an object-word (this is much more obviously the case in the less sophisticated versions of the theory which employ the doctrine of "simple ideas" - i.e. the analysis of knowing the meaning of a word in terms of having a certain sort of mental image. Cf. below, page 176)

Ayer says that in the language of public objects "I am claiming more than is contained in the experience on which the judgement is based."[115] He is right in a sense, of course; as a matter of fact we are perhaps less likely to misdescribe something fairly simple than something fairly complex: but this is not a matter of

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114 Austin, 121

115 Ayer (C), 305

logical relations between different language levels. There is no question of inference in any sense. Thus his statement "All that I mean when I speak of our everyday judgements as being inferential is that they are based on observations which do not entail them,"[116] depends on "observations" being defined as non-inferential - a traditional definition (Cf. Russell: "without a process of inference, and therefore by perception...",[117] "we mean by a 'datum' merely a piece of knowledge that is not deduced."[118] etc.) but one which when used for this purpose, for which, of course, it is expressly constructed, leads to incoherence: for an observation which is non-inferential in the same sense of "inferential" in which it is said that statements in everyday language are inferential either logically cannot serve as the premise of an inference, or if they can then the observation of the physical object itself could equally well serve, in which case no inference would either occur, or be required. (Cf. Russell, again: "We may then define a 'basic proposition' as follows: it is a proposition which arises on occasion of a perception, which is the evidence for its truth."[119])

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116 Ayer (C), 307

117 MTCA, 212

118 IMT, 124

119 IMT, 139; my underlining

Here Das's objection is correctly applied: we cannot talk about what we "directly" perceive ifwhat we "directly" perceive is construed in the empiricist sense of being something logically distinct from whatever it is that the experience is an experience of (where what the experience is of is to include sense-data); or, if we can talk about it, we are not talking about anything which is epistemologically prior. That is, if we experience a pig-shaped shape when the pig is there, then in the very same experience we experience the pig and there is no sense in which "I see a pig" is inferential in a way in which "I see a pig-shaped shape" is not; and there no sense in which either is an inference from anything else: (contra Russell: "When you think you see a dog, what is really given in perception may be expressed in the words 'there is a canoid patch of colour'".[120] This is essentially the same claim, epistemologically speaking, as Moore's "perception is to be regarded philosophically as the cognition of an existential proposition",[121] which view of judgement Russell had ostensibly long since abandoned.) In short no empirical

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120 IMT, 139

121 Moore (C), 183

statement, whether "basic proposition", "observation statement", "sense-datum statement", "protocol" or so forth, so far as expressing fact goes, is in any sense more priviledged than any other. As Bradley says, "Your ultimate brute fact is in brief your own half-thought-out theory."[122] This finding will have further application in the discussion of atomic facts. (Cf. below, Chapter 4, Section 2.)

One further objection to the account of Immediate Experience as being whatever is felt, alogically and pre-conceptually, is derived from occasional ambiguities of purpose in Bradley's own exposition. He does not always assign only the sense of "prior" I have been using to the priority of feeling. He discusses at one point whether he wants to claim also some less logical senses: e.g. "Everywhere, in the individual as in the race this stage comes first in the development."[123] He concludes indecisively that "Feeling is more ultimate: but whether prior in time we have agreed to leave doubtful ..."[124] Russell seems to

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122 ETR, 314

123 CE, 654

124 CE, 658

have felt that these other senses of "priority" in fact underlie the account and objected to its analysis for that reason: "When your object is, not simply to study the history or development of mind, but to ascertain the nature of the world, you do not want to go any further back than you are already yourself."[125] But I think it is clear that what Bradley is offering is an epistemological analysis and not a psychogenetic account: "The Absolute, so characterised, is not a mere stage of experience which is psychologically a priori to the relational stage, but is the epistemologically a priori principle presupposed by the relational experience."[126]

The principle is that what is given in the sense that it is prior to "interpretation" (i.e. conceptual ordering), is, from the fact that it is not composed of conceptually discriminated particulars, logically speaking a homogeneous plenum (i.e. wholly unorganised logically, - alogical). Now James expresses the obvious dissatisfaction with the abstractness of this conception,

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125 PLA, 181

126 Mukerji, 287

but in so doing he endorses the point Bradley wants to make. He asks Bradley to say "just why we may not use both perception and conception in philosophy as we use both blades of a pair of scissors."[127] The point is, in philosophy: Bradley would reply that in philosophy appeal to the Kantian finding of the "transcendentally" necessary conjoint use of both, can have only the effect of using the scissors in an ontologically illegitimate way, to cut up reality according to theory-laden categories.

Thus to conclude; Bradley and empiricists generally start from the same original analysis of experience; and althougth this distinction certainly may issue in tautologies (Cf. Hume: the senses "cannot operate beyond the extent, in which they really operate."[128]); the empiricist way to make the tautology non-trivial (i.e. by conceiving of what the senses give as "non-inferential" in the way discussed above) leads to an epistemology (and ultimately, in Russell's case to a metaphysics) which is open to serious difficulties.

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[127] Kenna, 329

[128] Hume, ?

Bradley's way, which is to determine what logical consequences arise from the tautology (which I discuss in the following section) at least does not lead to those difficulties.

2. The Logic of a Plenum

Russell claimed that "monism is derived from a faulty logic inspired by mysticism".[129] Elsewhere he explains that "Belief in a reality quite different from what appears to the senses arises with irresistable force in certain moods, which are the source of most mysticism and most metaphysics."[130] I discussed in the preceeding section the question, far more complex than Russell here allows, of "what appears to the senses" and concluded that the analysis of experience seems in fact to favour Bradley rather than Russell. The question now, then, is whether Russell is right in saying that Bradley's logic is inspired by mysticism (I indicated above that I believe it can be shown to be derived from the result of Bradley's analysis of experience) and whether it is faulty.

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129 OP, 264

130 ML, 21

A plenum may be defined: a whole within which no parts are discriminable by the same logical type or order of discrimination as that by which the whole is discriminated. That is, the plenum is given as a whole, and the discrimination of parts is logically subsequent.

Given the conception of such a whole there are various candidates for a metaphysical interpretation of it. (i.e. for a specification of what can be conceived of as the content of such a whole) - for example, as in Russell's early theories described above, space, or matter. The novelty of the account I shall ascribe to Bradley consists in the attempt to show the applicability of the logic of such a model to the content of experience, and thence, to the conception of reality as such. He says, for example, "When we ask as to the matter which fills up the empty outline, we can reply in one word, that this matter is experience .... Sentient experience, in short, is reality, and what is not this is not real."[131] For the present I intend to discuss only the former proposition, reserving consideration of the latter to the following Section.

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[131] AR, 127

What follows will unavoidably be spatial in expression: I offer it therefore as a picture, but not as a picture of space, exclusively.

Consider a plain, say white, surface. Then any enclosed shape drawn at random on this surface we could consider to delimit an individual part of the surface, or to be, surface and boundary jointly, an individual thing, or object. I shall refer to such a part, so defined, as a Part.

This individual was isolated, i.e. differentiated from the surface as a whole, by drawing a line around it, and by "it" we understand a part of the surface: but did a part of the surface have a line drawn round it? To say this is to speak as if the part were logically prior to the shape, as if that particular Part pre-existed in some sense, as if waiting for the line to be drawn around it. But obviously, the number of Parts of the surface which have potential existence in this sense is infinite, such that if the line had been drawn in any way differently from the way it was drawn, it would have delimited a different Part. Since the surface is by definition absolutely undifferentiated prior to the drawing of any line, no shape can be considered as

coinciding with any so to speak "natural" differentiation of the surface. In short, the drawing of shapes, and thereby the discrimination of Parts is a wholly artificial proceedure. (Cf., as regards a spatial interpretation, but applicable also to the present, non-spatial pictures, Russell: "Indeed, before spatial relations can arise at all, the homogeneity of empty space must be destroyed, and this destruction must be affected by matter. The blank page is useless to the geometer until he defaces its homogeneity by lines in ink or pencil. No spatial figures, in short, are conceivable, without a reference to a not purely spatial matter."[132])

Now it will be objected here, in anticipation of the desired conclusion, that if the model is interpreted in terms of <u>experience</u>, then if drawing a shape is construed as an analogy of subsuming a Part of the sense-field under a concept, it is false, because the sense field is not a plain, undifferentiated field but contains variegations (to say the least) within <u>sense</u>, such that the boundaries of the pre-existing variegations coincide with the (conceptual) line which delimits them. That

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[132] EFG, 77

is, although the surface is unvariegated by definition as regards such things as objects (Parts), as regards say colour-patches, the model of a plain white surface is misleading: we might maintain the analytical picture, but we should have to allow that the surface is, say, streaked, or marbled in some way, or, remembering Hume, that it resembles a pointilliste painting. And Bradley certainly allows this. It has already been noticed that he admits that sense contains 'diverse aspects' (Cf. above, page 16), and in fact he is prepared to maintain that diversity and complexity, and the appearance in sense of such diverse aspects as not wholly disordered is a necessary condition of conceptual ordering: "I agree that to impose order from without on sheer disorder would be wholly impracticable, and that, if my sense-world were disorderly beyond a certain point, my intelligence would not exist."[133]

However, even if it were to be maintained that the variegations in sense are in fact conceived of as coinciding with natural macroscopic objects, such that the conceptual line delimiting a Part always coincides with the boundary of a variegation, such as to avoid artificiality (as defined above), then the reply must be that although this may be the case in fact, it need not be, and if it

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[133] ETR, 209

need not why does such a coincidence occur at all except that we make it so? That is, artificiality is not avoided, because there is nothing in the nature either of the variegation or of the coincident Part which implies any internal connection between the two. For example, although we have a concept say of book, it is not necessary that we have not also a single concept for book-part-of-table: for we have also a concept of say spine-part-of-book. The variegations labelled here respectively "spine", "book", "table", are not disordered in sensation, but the order thay have does not dictate what conceptual order we are to impose.

To which a further objection is, that the sense-field is not static: variegations get up and move about. Therefore, although it might seem just plausible to say of a red book lying on a table that it is only contingently the case that we isolate the red shape by the conceptual line "book" which coincides exactly with its "natural" boundary, nevertheless, that red variegation is not invariably a variegation within the brown of the table: as it is lifted it may become a variegation of the white wall, or of the blue sky etc. That is, it appears to retain its identity even in mere sensation, whilst appearing as the variegation of different parts of the

sense-field. A similar objection is raised by Moore, who argues in External and Internal Relations, that if one colour-patch contains another as a part, "It seems quite clear that though the whole could not have existed without having the red patch for a part, the red patch might perfectly well have existed without being part of that particular whole."[134]

But the first objection is plausible independently of Moore's only insofar as it assumes that what is seen is sensed as having identity in a conceptual way, even though the concept employed is relatively unspecific: and this is within a context where the possibility of any conceptual employment, however unspecific, has been excluded by definition - red, shape, patch, etc. are all conceptual discrimination as much as book. As for Moore's argument: to revert to the model, suppose a Part is determined in the way specified (it will not matter, that the line coincide with the boundary of a variegation): call this Part a. Then suppose another Part discriminated in the same way - call it b. Then what would it mean to assert a R b? (Again, R is not a spatial relation

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[134] Moore (A), 282

necessarily.) We should need, if the above objection is to hold, to be able to imagine that a is removable to some other position with its integrity intact and its identity retained (i.e. that 'not a R b' can be meaningful). If we could not allow for this possibility then we would be forced to say that the identity of a depends on a's relation of contiguity with b.

Suppose that a and b are contiguous, then, and let the shared part of the boundary remain just as it is, but without b being there (i.e. we first imagine an alteration to b.) We want to be able to say: imagine ab and imagine that part of ab we called a, but imagine it without b. If we succeed in imagining it, ought we to call it "ab - b" or just "a"? The latter would be a mistake, because "a" is already in use - it designates that a which is part of ab. ab - b is patently not that individual. Although it is the same shape it is not the same Part. Call this shape A, then A is a universal, of which both a and ab - b are instances. Clearly, if we allow that ab - b = a there is no reason why we should not allow that a - with - a dent, a half-the-size etc. = a. But of course this is impossible according to the definition of a Part: any deviation in the course of the outline is logically equivalent, as regards identity, to a total

deviation (unlikely, of course, in our ordinary conception that any number of changes short of a certain critical point are possible without loss of identity.)

The reason for this is that there is by definition no ground in the nature of the surface on which to base the identity of any Part. (I have already indicated why a variegation cannot serve as such a ground): a Part is discriminated solely by drawing a line, and no Part can be identical with another qua Part (i.e. qua individual), though it may be identical qua shape (i.e. where we regard the shape as constituting a class-concept or universal such that other Parts may be said to fall under it.) The relation between Part and shape, as defined, is the relation between a and A. The importance of this for Bradley is that "Nothing in the end is real but the individual: and the individual is unique ..." In addition, since all individuals are Parts and all Parts are artifically got by abstraction from the total surface the model expresses Bradley's further contention also "... and (at least in my opinion) there is in the end but one individual which is real and true."[135]

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[135] CE, 663

If the proferred analysis of identity seems doubtful, consider a new model, in which a Part is delimited by placing a cutout shape on the surface instead of by drawing a line. In this case each Part will be an individual solely in virtue of appearing within the aperture. The surface cannot change and nor can the aperture, though it may be placed at different points on the surface; or another aperture of a different shape may be placed at the original point. In the latter case obviously we cannot say "a was a circle but it is now a square" because we cannot say "a" of anything but that and only that Part of the surface which fell within the circle. Similarly, in the former case if "a" is used to refer to that Part which appears after the aperture is moved it is no longer being used as a proper name.

Thus, in the case where an aperture fits exactly such as to expose all and only a particular pre-existing variegation of the surface, the identity of that Part does not consist in its sense-quality qua variegation, nor in the fact of its coincidence with the variegation, but solely in the fact of being exposed by the aperture.

To conclude, in the model the situation logically

cannot arise that a Part a which has the relation R to another Part b, can be deprived of that relation and remain the same a (though of course, it may remain the same A). Therefore in the model all relations between individuals are internal to those individuals, such that if x R y, then if R ceases to hold, x would be other than it is (in the strong sense, that it would be a different individual.) In addition, all possible relations are internal to the surface as a whole, such that the relational fact (x R y) is properly speaking an adjective of the whole.

Thus the doctrine of internal relations expresses a logical fact about the discrimination of individual parts in a plenum. If the content of sensation is a plenum, then monism is the correct logical analysis of experience.

3. The Monistic Theory of Truth

The theory has two inseparable but distinguishable aspects; metaphysical idealism and a coherence theory of truth: "The view that truth is one may be called 'logical monism'; it is, of course, closely connected with ontological monism, i.e., the doctrine that Reality is

one."[136] Russell conceived the connection to lie, ultimately, in the doctrine of internal relations as the "axiom" upon which both are based. However, I have already given grounds for the contrary view, viz. that far from being the logical axiom upon which monism is based, the doctrine is a consequence of a prior epistemological analysis. Consequently the way to understand the theory correctly is to relegate the doctrine to its proper place and to examine the connection directly from the point of view of Bradley's more general statement: "It is impossible, in my opinion, to deal with truth apart from an examination of the nature of reality."[137]

It might seem from the nature of Bradley's analysis of experience that his idealism must be based on considerations similar to those that Berkeley employs, and certain of his pronouncements could well be construed in this way: e.g. "Sentient experience, in short, is reality, and what is not this is not real."[138] (Cf.

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136 MTT, 150

137 ETR, 310

138 AR, 127

Berkeley: "there is nothing perceived by sense, which is not perceived immediately: therefore there is nothing sensible that exists without the mind."[139] And the statement that Reality as such is ultimately "a single Experience, superior to relations and containing in the fullest sense everything which is,"[140] could be construed as characterising the Absolute as a de-theologised version of Berkeley's God: (Cf. "sensible things do really exist: and if they really exist, they are necessarily perceived by an infinite mind: therefore there is an infinite mind, or God."[141]) James, in fact, did construe it like this. For example: "First we hear Mr. Bradley convicting things of absurdity: next, calling on the Absolute to vouch for them quand meme. Invoked for no other duty, that duty it must and shall perform ...."[142]; "the absolute deus ex machina is called on to mend it in his own way, since we cannot mend it in ours."[143]

Of course, what James is attacking here is the

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139 Berkeley, 249
140 ETR, 246
141 Berkeley, 246
142 James (A), 507
143 James (A), 508

synthesising function of the Absolute; that is, its form. As to the content of the Absolute; that is, its ideality, Wollheim, for example, states that "Bradley employs the traditional epistemological arguments for Idealism ..."[144] and describes his arguments as proceeding from the innocuous empiricist statement noticed above: "You cannot find fact unless in unity with sentience" (Cf. Hume: "None of the sciences or arts can go beyond experience, or establish any principles which are not founded on that authority."[145]), via the extension of this to all possible facts by means of a covert assimilation of conceivability to experiencability ("Find any piece of existence, take up anything that one could possibly call a fact or could in any sense assert to have being and then judge if it does not consist in sentient experience."[146]), to the Berkeleyian conclusion cited above: "Sentient experience in short, is reality, and what is not this is not real."

Now there is no denying that Bradley's argument has some assumptions in common with Berkeley's, but the

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144 Wollheim, 198

145 Hume, xxii

146 AR, 127

vital difference is the relatively much more intellectual sense in which Bradley understands "experience" - Berkeley's absolute experience is, so to speak, the totality of felt sensation (based on the ambiguously percipient-dependent/object-attributed status of "sensible qualities"), whereas Bradley's conception is of the totality of what is intelligible (in a special all-inclusive sense to be defined below which exceeds the narrowly intellectual, Aristotelian sense; and for which "Experience" is the technical term). Absolute Experience is said to include the totality of truths (i.e. the totality of what is intelligible in the intellectual sense) but at the same time to transcend the limitations of their capability to express what is real - a limited capability inherent in their discursive form. That this is a non-mystical conception will become clearer as we proceed: for the present perhaps its intelligibility may be taken on trust.

In this aspect of their "refutation" of Idealism, Russell and Moore, however, identified Bradley as a subjective idealist of the Berkeleyian sort, the sort characterised by Russell as "a man who believes that whatever exists may be called 'mental', in the sense of having a certain character, known to us by introspection

as belonging to our own minds."[147] Short of the bare identification with Berkeley, there is no evidence at all that this is true of Bradley (my exposition of the epistemological analysis shows that there is no attempt to ontologise sensation as such, which is Berkeley's manoeuvre). Similarly, why Moore's "Refutation of Idealism" fails from the outset as a refutation of Bradley is that his idealism is simply not based on Berkeley's doctrine that "esse est percipi": "Mr. Moore appears to suppose that the idealists, who hold that the universe is in its ultimate reality 'spiritual', understands by the universe in its ultimate reality the assemblage of what the unreflective perceptive consciousness takes as 'things'."[148] That is, Moore falsely attributed to the Nineteenth Century Idealists a similarity to Berkeley in form of argument, and a similarity to empiricism in form of epistemological abstraction of the basic experience from the perception of what Austin calls "moderate-sized specimens of dry goods."[149] (Cf. above, page 57) Consequently, as Joachin says, "Even if Mr. Moore really had reduced all

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147 ONA, 129

148 Joachim, 62 n.

149 Austin, 8

idealism to subjective idealism, his 'refutation' is far from convincing; but it will be time enough for idealists to meet Mr. Moore's 'refutation' when the reduction has been made."[150] The argument for idealism, in short, is not the rather careless syllogism that Wollheim detects, but a rather more complex undertaking based on considerations of the question of what can be experienced.

The key premise of the real argument is the statement, "Anything, in no sense felt or perceived, becomes to me quite unmeaning"[151], the import of which may be best dissociated from the Berkeleyian overtones by reformulation in the words of E. Belfort Bax: "to speak of aught as obtaining outside the fundamental principle of consciousness, was to use a meaningless phrase ..."[152] What has to be borne in mind throughout is Bradley's denial that only propositions (and their constituents) can be said to have meaning - indeed, he holds all propositions to be ultimately self-contradictory. Consequently "meaning" has for him a sense wider than the

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150 Joachim, 62 n.

151 AR, 128

152 Belfort Bax, 58

normal corresponding to the wider sense of "intelligible". For the sake of clarity let "thinkable" serve to replace the Aristotelian sense of "intelligible" and let "intelligible" be reserved in what follows to the Idealist conception. Then whatever is thinkable will be intelligible, but not vice versa; and reality and experience will be coextensive with the intelligible, whilst the merely thinkable, although contained in the totality of what is real, will not exhaust it.

Given these definitions, an analogy with Aristotle may serve to point out the essence of the idealists' contention. For Aristotle reality is coextensive with thinkable reality just in the sense that whatever is, is what it really is as the thing that it is for thought; i.e. "the question whether Socrates and to be Socrates are the same thing, are obviously answered by the same solution; for there is no difference either in the standpoint from which the question could be asked, nor in that from which one could answer it successfully."[153] In short, according to Aristotle, "that which is primarily is the "what" which indicates the substance of the thing."[154]

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153 Met. Z 1031b 15-20

154 Met. Z 1028a 15

And the substance is conceived of as being a discrete individual, real by virtue of being the actuality for thought, of its matter qua potential - the necessary compresence of which saves it from being totally reducible, ontologically, to its form.

Now Berkeley, attacking a version of this doctrine by means of a reduction of the supposed substantial object to the set of its perceptible qualities, made the mistake of rejecting, along with the thought - independent materiality of the substance its transcendental function of synthesising the set of qualities predicable of it. As a consequence he needed to postulate the ad hoc synthesising function of God's mind. Kant, on the other hand, correctly perceived the priority of this function in the logic underlying Aristotle's account - the need for "the concept of ... unity which is the representation of the object = x"[155] but unfortunately hypostatised this transcendental necessity as an object of a special sort: the "transcendental object = x"[156] of the First Edition Deduction - a postulated entity wholly unknowable, but ontologically necessary for the possibility of

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155 A105

156 A109

knowledge. The point for Bradley is that in common with Berkeley he rejects the materiality of substance, as also Kant's necessarily postulated but as necessarily unknowable entity, whilst not failing to notice that the conception of such entities is a necessary condition of thought. All that remained was to cite this very fact as proof that thought necessarily misrepresents reality. If what is thinkable is logically identical with what is real, but fails to be reality as such only because the latter has the additional attribute of being matter, then if the intelligibility of matter as such is denied, reality becomes coextensive with what is thinkable. But if the content of what is thinkable is distorted by the form of thought, and in addition qua being thinkable is merely an abstraction from what is intelligible, then clearly what is real is not what is thinkable as such, but what is intelligible; or, as Bradley maintains, Reality is Experience. This, in its historical perspective, is what Bradley's arguments for idealism in effect affirm.

Bedell has more or less the right idea about this when he says that the claim that reality is experience "is not a claim to any special insight into hidden essences, but a negative judgement that reality cannot be any of those abstractions from experience that we express in ideal

content."[157] As expressing a denial that Bradley's idealism is mystical or speculative and his refusal to accept that what is intelligible is exhausted (or even properly expressed in the form of what is thinkable), this will serve. However, Bedell falls into affirming the other half of Russell's criticism (it will be remembered that the mystically based metaphysics tends to be rationalised in weak logic) for he says of Bradley that "to assume that the contradictory cannot be real is tantamount to asserting that what reconciles the discrepancy is real,"[158] This would have been a poor argument had Bradley employed it, but in fact the argument he actually employs is rather the reverse. He does not assume that the contradictory cannot be real: "Ultimate reality must be such that it does not contradict itself; here is an absolute criterion. And it is proved absolute by the fact that, either in endeavouring to deny it, or even in attempting to doubt it, we tacitly assume its validity."[159] It is, then, because he finds discursive thought involving itself in self-contradictions in attempting to

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157 Bedell, 231

158 Bedell, 577

159 AR, 136-137; my underlining

express what is inexpressible by means of the categories employed in it, that Bradley claims that thought fails to satisfy the criterion laid down and hence refuses to allow that the thinkable is coextensive with what is real.

Thus Bradley affirms that "Reality is an intelligible whole and Reality also is experience ..."[160] However, it might be objected that I have construed Idealism to affirm far too transcendental, rather than ontological a doctrine. Thus, for example, "the question is <u>not</u> whether the universe is in any sense intelligible. The question is whether, if you thought it and understood it, there would be no difference left between your thought and the thing."[161] - or again: "there is no difference between the state and its content, since, in a word, the experienced and the experience are one."[162] However, the preceeding arguments have shown that for Bradley the distinction itself between transcendental and ontological is false. For his idealism is not derived, like Berkeley's, from a distinction

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160 ETR, 316

161 AR, 171

162 ETR, 194

between an apparent world of material things and sensible qualities with denial of reality to the former; but on a distinction between Experience (in the defined sense which denies the intelligibility of the idea of any supra-experiential thing) and an apparent world of supposedly real things instantiating the categorial forms of propositional thought - with denial of reality to the latter.

Nevertheless, common sense adheres to the principle which Joachim, paraphrasing Russell and Moore, calls (for them) "the fundamental postulate of all Logic", viz. that "experiencing makes no difference to the facts."[163] "And you cannot refuse to grant a principle of this kind - so it may be urged [i.e. by a Russellian] if you are to have a Logic at all."[164] That is, whether I see it or not, the tree is green - "Its greenness is there, an independent, unchangeable fact."[165] Bradley, too, remarked of the correspondence theory of truth, that "behind this we have the demand for absolute reality in the shape of self-

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163 Joachim, 39

164 Joachim, 39

165 Ibid., 36

existent facts and of independent truths. Unless reality takes this form it seems to be nowhere ..."[166] But this clearly reveals one feature of the commonsense principle which at least throws some doubt on its inviolability, viz. that the absolute reality of common sense is conceived of as having the shape of "facts", the form of "truths": this aspect of it at least, the analysis of experience (Cf. above, Section 1) showed to be not an empirical but a metaphysical principle (and a false one at that).

As to the other aspect of the commonsense principle, the self-existence and independence of reality, common sense might at first sight prefer a conception more like Bosanquet's: "The real world for every individual is emphatically his world; an extension and determination of his present perception, which perception is to him not indeed reality as such, but his point of contact with reality as such."[167] But the distinction, of course, reduces from the seemingly important one between a percipient and reality as such

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166 ETR, 217

167 Bosanquet, I, 3

to the distinction between an individual's subjective experience and the objective world which he experiences. But if we allow that "objective", if it is to serve in the distinction, cannot have the sense of "independent" which is equivalent to "unintelligible", then the only sense left to it is something like "intersubjective" (by contrast with "subjective") and "whole" (by contrast with "individual"). In short the commonsense view embodied in Bosanquet's remark is reducible to the view that what we are to understand as the real world, as distinct from an individual's subjective path through it, is something like "the set of all intersubjectively verified (or verifiable) facts" - i.e. the world is everything that is the case. But here again we are reduced to the metaphysical assumption as to the form of reality which underlies the common sense principle. Bradley would agree that the world is a totality; what he denies is that it is a totality either of things or of facts, since both those categories embody metaphysical assumptions abstracted from the forms of thought. But the point is, his idealism is not subjective: "There is a world of appearance and there is a sensuous curtain, and to seek to deny the presence of this or to

identify it with reality is mistaken."[168]

His idealism, then, so far from being mystical, reduces to two claims: (a) that the forms of thought are superimposed on, and are not part of the curtain, and (b) that "there is nothing behind the curtain other than that which is in front of it"[169] - not an affirmation of subjectivism but a denial of postulated supra-intelligibles. And the obverse of the denial that it makes sense to postulate a supra-intelligible "reality" is the denial that it makes sense to postulate a supra-intelligible truth: "Truth in itself, truth neither known nor recognised, may be anything you please ... for it remains beyond all and any knowledge, and is a mere name for nothing."[170] The point of this denial is the counterpart for the theory of truth of the denial that reality exists pre-ordered in ghostly propositional form, waiting to make our statements true by correspondence. Thus "we cannot separate truth and the finding of it, and treat these

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168 ETR, 218

169 Ibid.

170 Joachim, 51

as two independent factors which are externally combined in the apprehension of truth."[171] Consonant with this must go the reassurance to common sense that truth is not the subjective creation of an individual mind, (or any set of individual minds) just as reality was not: "It is only in poetry that America rose from the waves at the will of Colombus, and even in poetry the America which appeared was a thing found as well as done. There is for us no truth, we may say, save that which discovers itself to us,"[172] (I would draw attention again, here, to Bradley's contention that the contents of experience must be given as ordered; Cf. above, page 70)

What is being denied is that truth is a property of judgements about reality; for it is claimed (a), that judgements cannot express the non-discursive nature of reality (and therefore cannot be true in virtue of any structural affinity with the reality they attempt to express); and (b), truth is a property which, if anything has it, reality must. It might seem, however, that there is some sort of type-confusion here; (to raise such an objection is not necessarily to imply the acceptance of any sort of correspondence-theory - in

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171 Joachim, 51

172 ETR, 85

fact the same objection may be made against that theory insofar as it asserts that "facts" are true, meaning by facts, (in one sense) something in the world.) In the present case it seems that truth is not a property actually of the real but of whatever expresses something real - "real" and "true" are equivalent so to speak in evaluative import but are properly used, even evaluatively, of different sorts of things. In an argument discussing this difficulty, Bradley suggests that the only reply to the question how the truth about reality could be less or more than reality without ceasing to be the truth is, "that reality has something which is not a possible content of truth."[173] His reply does not really answer my objection and in fact gives rise to another: "If such an outstanding element is known, then so far we have knowledge and truth, while, if it is not known, then I do not know of it, and to me it is nothing."[174] But the reply made is to a very artificially expressed form of the objection - i.e. talk of content allows him to talk of an outstanding element, (qua part of the content), the sort of thing that might

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173 ETR, 85

174 Ibid.

175 Ibid.

be known or not known; a possible content of knowledge of that reality (as if, say, of ten marbles in a box the colours of nine were known, but the tenth remained in the box. But knowing that a marble remains in the box is quite different from knowing the colours of the nine marbles - the fact that a marble remains puts the box in a quite different category for certain purposes from what it would be in if it were empty.) The second part is badly expressed - I might know of it (e.g. of the existence of the marble) but not know it, (e.g. not know its colour) in which case it would not be nothing to me. But even if I did not know it and it were nothing to me that would not mean that it was nothing.

Quibbles aside, perhaps Bradley should be allowed the sense of his contention, which does, in fact, hold, given the full import of the transcendental analysis: "On the one hand to divide truth from knowledge seems impossible, and on the other hand to go beyond knowledge is meaningless."[175] The import is in fact most plausably understood in this negative sense in both cases: (1), "Apart from its aspect of truth the reality would not be the reality" (and we are even less likely to say that reality is the false than that it is the truth); then,

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[175] ETR, 85

<u>contra</u> the correspondence theory, "and there surely is no meaning in a copy that makes its original";[176] (2), "Truth is not perfect so long as it fails anywhere to include its reality, and its reality is not whole so long as any of its conditions are left out. Truth, compelled to select, is therefore forced to remain forever defective."[177] This is less easy to justify, given that we have denied the simple assimilation of truth to reality - certainly it seems that truth is not a quantifiable quality. Bradley does, of course, offer certain other arguments (for example, that no proposition can achieve uniqueness of reference and hence can only be hypothetical, short of having the whole of reality for its subject - these are the "conditions" referred to above) - but what is here being put forward is a direct route to the same conclusion via the metaphysical (rather than negatively metalogical) analysis of truth. The justification is, roughly, that when we make an assertion, "Our goal is, in the end, to gain Reality in an ideal form) ...."[178] That is, if, per impossible, thought were capable of it,

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176 ETR, 117

1177 ETR, 330

178 ETR, 329

to *think* the total experience which is (coextensive with) Reality. But no system of thought truths could accomplish *that*. (Cf. "For Bradley each separate judgement is an approximation towards the absolute predicated of itself, a barren tautology which we are forever prevented from reaching by the relational form which is essential to thought."[179])

But each individual judgement has, *insofar as* it is capable of being true, to be predicated of Reality - that is, if thought *were* able we should be able to think the judgement "this is how Reality is", but since this is impossible, we can say, in a partial sense (i.e. as expressing a part of reality), "this is how *these* things are, in reality": "'Reality is such that S is P' may be taken ... as a formula which expresses the nature of truth. S is P (to put it otherwise) *because* Reality is such"[180] (Cf. "We can say indifferently '*a* (*x*) *b* is real', or 'Reality is *a* (*x*) *b*'".[181]) The great advantage of this analysis, of course, is again in a sense negative, that it

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179 Cuming, 166

180 ETR, 383-384

181 ETR, 315

allows convincingly of the possibility of error - a major problem for Russell's counter-analysis, as we shall see.

This, then, is the sense in which all our truths are partial truths (not, as Russell misrepresents it, that all our truths are only partially true; and a fortiori not that they are not quite true - three quite different senses. Hence the invalidity of his counter-argument that "if no partial truth is quite true, it cannot be quite true that no partial truth is quite true; unless indeed the whole of truth is contained in the proposition 'no partial truth is quite true' ..." [182])

More to the point, perhaps, James remarked in a letter to Bradley, "I believe that your general conception of truth in the singular as a sort of entity trying to identify itself with reality, and of reality as a ditto trying to idealise itself into truth, is a perfectly true description of the state of affairs that exists, but too abstract a description to do much work of detail withal ...." [183] I have tried to explain why the sarcasm

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182 MTT, 152

183 Kenna, 324

is misplaced; and as to the last point, that the account does not furnish a criterion of truth for individual propositions; Bradley does in fact conclude from his analysis, that if the nature of truth is expressed in the formula "Reality is such that S is P", then "The 'such' is that order which we realise progressively in an ideal system."[184] The practical utility of the theory can them be shown: the criterion of truth in empirical statements is that they contribute to that order which in the "ideal system" (e.g. according to Joachim, "the organised whole of a science"[185]) we seek progressively to exhibit in the form of our accepted propositions. Thus "facts for 'sense' are true, we may say, just so far as they work, just so far as they contribute to the order of experience. If by taking certain judgements of perception as true, I can get more system into my world, then these 'facts' are so far true ... And there is no 'fact' which posesses an absolute right."[186]

A way in which this not unacceptable account helps to explain what was meant in the previous analysis,

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184 ETR, 334

185 Joachim, 73

186 ETR, 210

can be shown in the following way: no 'fact' posesses an absolute right in two senses; first, that it must be taken as being, however well-confirmed, not in principle unfalsifiable; second, that by virtue of the criterion which it satisifies, it is "true" only because of its coherence in the system; i.e. the sense in which it is true is entirely derivative from the sense in which the system is true, for that has sole right to the title. As Joachim says, "'Coherence' cannot be attached to propositions from the outside: it is not a property they can acquire by colligation, whilst retaining unaltered the truth they posessed in isolation."[187] This explains the doctrine of partial truth. In addition, the "systematic coherence" of the parts of a system "is the determing characteristic of a 'significant whole'".[188] Now Reality is (by virtue of the intelligibility criterion), if anything is, a significant whole. Therefore the whole Truth which consists in the systematic coherence of all truths predicable of reality as a whole, is coextensive with it. This explains the doctrine that reality and truth are indistinguishable.

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187 Joachim, 73

188 Ibid., 68

CHAPTER 3

Revolt: Logical Objections

1. Asymmetrical Relations

Having gone some way toward showing what logical monism and the monistic theory of truth actually affirm, it will be possible to resume discussion of Russell's metaphysical development. The next phase to be discussed consists in the total rejection (commencing around 1898) of the Idealist philosophy. I suggested at the end of Chapter 1, Section 3, that the motive for this lay in his failure to construct a satisfactory philosophy of mathematics within the restrictions imposed by Idealism. Certainly, the famous arguments in rejection of the doctrine of internal relations are derived from insights gained in his new study of the foundations of mathematics.

The chief logical impetus for Russell's rejection of the doctrine is expressed in his contention that "all order depends upon transitive asymmetrical

relations."[189] The rejection of a doctrine according to which such relations are unintelligible is an obvious requirement of the sort of philosophy of mathematics which Russell was now undertaking: "since such relations are involved in Number, Quantity, Order, Space, Time, and Motion, we can hardly hope for a satisfactory philosophy of Mathematicss as long as we adhere to the view that no relation can be 'purely external'".[190]

His arguments against the doctrine take two main forms - that asymmetrical relations cannot be understood adjectivally, as the doctrine requires (and hence, that not all propositions are reducible to subject - predicate form: some propositions are irreducibly relational), and, that if all relations are construed as holding internally of their terms an insurmountable problem arises concerning the identity of those terms. In this section I shall discuss the former.

Russell first argues against the possibility of construing <u>all</u> relations as internal: "we cannot without

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189 POM, 218

190 POM, 226

an endless regress, refuse to admit that sooner or later we come to a relation not reducible to adjectives of the related terms. This argument applies especially to all asymmetrical relations ..."[191] For example, a fundamental relational concept pertaining to the concept of order is the relation of between: e.g. where y is to be between x and z in the sense that "There is a relation R such that xRy, yRz, but not yRx, zRy."[192] The analysis of the possible ways of construing the status of R leads Russell ultimately to the conclusion that "we seem finally compelled to leave the reference to an asymmetrical relation in our definition .... A term y is betweenm two terms x and z with reference to a transitive asymmetrical relation R when xRy and yRz. In no other case can y be said properly to be between x and z."[193] Therefore, asymmetrical relations are essential for order. More precisely, the relation between an asymmetrical relation R and its converse ($\breve{R}$) is what is fundamental: "The relation of R to $\breve{R}$ is difference of sense .... its existence is the source of series, of the distinction of signs, and indeed of the greater part

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191 MTT, 167

of mathematics."[194] It is therefore clearly of prime importance to Russell that whatever theory of relations is held, that theory allow that asymmetrical relations be expressible.

But the doctrine of internal relations claims that the apparent externality of R in aRb is merely "our ignorance set up as reality"[195] on the grounds that "A relation is unmeaning, unless both itself and the relateds are the adjectives of a whole."[196] This view is essentially the Lotzean one that one explanation of relations must be, that they are "as internal states in the real elements which are said to stand in these relations"[197], which view Russell claims reduces to "the notion that the apparent relations of two things consist in the internal states of one thing ...."[198] Thus the doctrine of internal relations has as a consequence, what was derived in Chapter 2, Section 2, above, from the model of a plenum; viz. that (as Russell expresses it) "aRb" is to be understood as"(ab)r."

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194 POM, 228
195 AR, 517
196 AR, 394
197 quoted by Russell; POM, 446
198 POM, 447

But if R is asymmetrical, then, according to Russell,

> In order to distinguish a whole (ab) from a whole (ba), as we must do if we are to explain asymmetry, we shall be forced back from the whole to the parts and their relations. For (ab) and (ba) consist of precisely the same parts, and differ in no respect whatever save the sense of the relation between a and b .... Thus the distinction of sense, i.e. the distinction between an asymmetrical relation and its converse, is one which the monistic theory of relations is wholly unable to explain. 199

This is an argument against Bradley of the sort to which Russell almost always has recourse: it proceeds by establishing a conclusion to which Bradley himself would not have objected, and supposes that this conclusion refutes Bradley. But it is never the conclusion which is really at issue: rather it is Russell's assumption that there is, metaphysically speaking, nothing wrong with the forms of thought as such. Bradley takes as proofs that there is something wrong with intelligibility in terms of relations just the same sort of contradictions which Russell advances as arguments against Bradley's doctrine. The question of which account is to be preferred, therefore,

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199 POM, 225

cannot be settled just by considering the persuasiveness of Russell's arguments. Thus in the present case Bradley's point is that relational thought essentially misrepresents the nature of reality: a way to make it misrepresent it less is to construe all relations as internal. (Cf. "'internal' relations, though truer by far than 'external' are, in my opinion, not true in the end"[200]) But the fact that according to this construction asymmetrical relations cannot be adequately expressed cannot be taken as proof that in reality some relations are not internal, for in reality there are no relations at all: "the unity of feeling contains no individual terms with relations between them."[201] Yet Russell's argument is generally taken as a decisive refutation of the doctrine of internal relations. (Cf. Ayer: "There is no question, then, but that the dogma of internal relations is false."[202])

In fact, however, the doctrine of internal relations depends solely upon the sort of consideration

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200 ETR, 312

201 CE, 643

202 Ayer (B), 155

advanced in Section (2), and Russell's argument at most shows only that it is not the case that for all values of R we can give a satisfactory expression of aRb in the form of a proposition (ab)r. But according to Bradley, the separation in thought, of a, b, and R is in any case a vicious abstraction. "(ab)r" partially restores the unity which has been lost, but an objection to it as a metaphysically adequate translation is that the false discreteness of (ab) and r remains. A formulation slightly better, therefore, but still inadequate, might be (aRb), or indeed, why not ⟨a,b⟩? Bradley would certainly not claim that (ab)r is logically better formed than aRb, but he might claim that, in general, (xy)r is metaphysically better formed, so to speak, than xRy. But even so, no expression can be well-formed in this sense, although (xRy) is probably superior to (xy)r. Bradley's position is, that "aRb" fails to express the "union present in, and required for the relational fact",[203] where, by "the relational fact" is meant some state of affairs holding in reality which the proposition at best describes only imperfectly; and not, as Russell's counter

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[203] CE, 643

argument seems to imply, the proposition "aRb" which at this time is what Russell, under the influence of Moore, understands by a relational fact. For Bradley, the hypostatisation of propositions into facts is not good logic but bad metaphysics. According to him "every case of terms in relation is an individual and unique 'situation' - a whole, where any alteration on either side must affect the whole throughout and not leave that anywhere unaltered."[204] Even for Russell, "a proposition has a certain indefinable unity, in virtue of which it is an assertion: and this is so completely lost by analysis that no enumeration of constituents will restore it ..."[205] On this interpretation he is able to deny that analysis is falsification even though, "though analysis gives us the truth, and nothing but the truth, yet it can never give us the whole truth."[206] Ultimately, the justification for this conclusion is that the logically simpler has to be regarded as logically prior to the more complex: "We cannot conclude that .... the logically prior is not usually simpler than the logically complex."[207] In short, Russell's argument is that a relational fact is what a

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204 CE, 664

205 POM, 466

206 POM, 141

207 Ibid.

proposition, when true, states, such that while what makes a proposition assert a fact seems somehow not to be captured in the enumeration of the parts of the proposition; (i.e. it is the proposition which states the fact, not the mere sum of its parts), even so, the logically distinguishable parts of the proposition are prior to the proposition in the sense that they can function in other propositions in a way logically independent of their function in that proposition. In addition, the parts are prior to the whole because they are simpler: the proposition is resoluble into its components by a prior order of resolution than which the parts are resoluble, because the whole is complex, even if only by comparison with its parts. The argument to this is that wholes just are resoluble: "Where the mind can distinguish elements, there must be different elements to distinguish."[208] - an assumption that has been shown above to be false. The analysability of propositions does not imply that there exist discrete elements in reality which correspond to the component parts of propositions.

Russell's account essentially depends on the

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[208] POM, 466

mere affirmation that the only unities, in the sense of a whole which is not a mere aggregate (which is "definite as soon as its constituents are known"[209]), are propositions: wherefrom he is able to conclude that "nothing that exists is a unity. If, therefore, it is maintained that things are unities, we must reply that no things exist."[210]

This is based on the Humean consideration that "The only kind of unity to which I can attach any precise sense - apart from the unity of the absolutely simple - is that of a whole composed of parts".[211] This suggests that Bradley's idea of a whole is somehow occult. However, of course, Bradley's idea of a unity may be identified with one of the senses which Russell allows - the absolutely simple; for, as the model discussed in Section 2 shows, the unity of experience is absolutely simple from the logical point of view that it contains no conceptually bounded discrete parts. And where Russell claims that if the mind can distinguish elements there

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209 POM, 139

210 POM, 467

211 POM, 466

must be elements, Bradley allows, as was seen, that there are variegations in sense ("I am not sure that, if no diversity were given, the intellect of itself could invent it or would even demand it"[212]). But he further maintains, (1) that as regards reality the variegations in sense are not discrete and have no necessary (internal) coincidence with the essentially discrete elements of thought (this was shown in Section 2); and (2) that the unity of a proposition cannot reconstitute the unity of what it purports to state: "When we try to think its unity, then ... we end in failure."[213] This problem is discussed more fully in Section 3.

To conclude; since according to Bradley, it is not the case that 'a'and 'b' represent real individuals such that "aRb" establishes a relation between 'a' and 'b' which succeeds in representing a real relation between those individuals, it is not the case that he need allow that Russell's formulation "(ab)r" is in any more conformity with the metaphysical truth contained in the doctrine of internal relations that "aRb". He could insist, for example,that the whole of reality be denoted by a

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212 AR, 508

213 Ibid.; my underlining.

single substantive, which appears in all propositions and is to be represented as being qualified adverbially. This would have the advantage of expressing more nearly what he conceives a relational situation to be like in reality (i.e. as not containing in reality any discrete terms denoted by the abstracted substantives "a" and "b"). In addition this formulation would allow the possibility of expressing quite easily the direction of sense of an asymmetrical relation, as King-Farlow and Rothstein suggest: e.g., "It is shown A-ly first, B-ly second", or, "Whence It Bs, It lefts A-ly", etc. Therefore if the doctrine of internal relations appears, under Russell's interpretation, to be refutable because it requires that aRb be expressed (ab)r, Bradley is at liberty to reply that any other formulation may be substituted for (ab)r, because whatever in reality the proposition "aRb" imperfectly expresses is given quite independently of any expression of it. Therefore, Bradley can hold without self-contradiction both (1), that the proposition, in order to be less imperfect, ought to express the metaphysical fact that R holds internally of the propositional unity which purports to state the unity in reality within which whatever R purports to express holds; (2) that not any proposed reformulation of aRb which is claimed to fulfil this requirement, is implied by the

doctrine of internal relations. Therefore, the fact that (ab) in (ab)r is symmetrical does not constitute even any objection to the doctrine of internal relations, let alone the refutation of that doctrine.

2. Individuals

Russell's other form of objection concerns the identity of a term when all that term's relations are conceived to hold internally of it. Bradley's argument is, roughly, as I have said, that in reality there are no relations, and no terms; but if there were both, then metaphysically the least misleading way of regarding relations is as holding internally of their terms. This view leads, of course, to difficulties concerning the nature of the terms, and Bradley advances it just in order to show that the notion of a discrete real individual is self-contradictory: "the inner essence of what is finite itself both is, and is not, the relations which limit it. Its nature is hence incurably relative, passing, that is, beyond itself, and importing, again, into its own core a mass of foreign connections. Thus to be defined from without is, in principle, to be distracted from within."[214]

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[214] AR, 322

Russell's attack on this thesis is, as in the case of the argument from asymmetrical relations, misdirected, because his conclusion merely reinforces Bradley's argument. He asks, what is the nature of a term? Is this the same as the term itself or something different? If it is different, then "it must be related to the term, and the relation of a term to its nature cannot, without an endless regress, be reduced to something other than a relation."[215] On the other hand, if we conclude that a term is not other than its nature, "every true proposition attributing a predicate to a subject is purely analytic, since the subject is its own whole nature. But in that case, what is the bond that unites predicates into predicates of one subject? Any casual collection of predicates ought to be supposed to compose a subject, if subjects are not other than the system of their own predicates."[216]

Russell's demand is for a substance-like subject of predicates: i.e. his argument is that according to Bradley the nature of an individual is such that no identity-conditions can be specified for that individual

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215 MTT, 167

216 Ibid.

apart from the whole system of relations into which it enters. This is just the point Bradley wanted to make.

However, according to Russell, Bradley's antinomy concerning the nature of things is equivalent to the assertion that if two things have a certain relation, then they cannot but have it, since part of what makes each thing to be the thing that it is is the fact of its being related just in the way that it is, to the other. Russell says in effect, that what Bradley claims is that if, per impossible, a were not related to b, a would still be a qua individual, but its nature would be changed, since its relation to b is internal to it - i.e. part of its nature. Russell's argument therefore takes the curious form of a denial that a term can be modified.

According to what was discovered in Chapter 2, Section 2; in a plenum, if any change is made in the disposition of Parts, the Parts lose their identity qua "existents". Thus Bradley says: "a thing may remain unaltered if you identify it with a certain character, while taken otherwise the thing is suffering change. If, that is, you take a billiard-ball and a man in abstraction from place, they will, of course - so far as this is

maintained - be indifferent to changes of place ... But take them as existing things, and take them without mutilation, and you must regard them as determined by their places, and qualified by the whole material system into which they enter ..."[217]

Accordingly, Russell's argument is misdirected insofar as it is intended to show that a term cannot be modified - if by "term" he means "individual existent", for Bradley affirms no less. And in fact, as regards "the whole material system" Russell makes an identical argument from the point of view of the whole system of propositions: "if two terms are related in a certain way, it follows that, if they were not so related, every imaginable consequence would ensue. For, if they are not so related the hypothesis that they are so related is false, and from a false hypothesis anything can be deduced."[218]

Now he takes this argument to show that the statement "If a and b are related in a certain way, then of their nature they must be so related" is equivocal

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[217] AR, 517-518

[218] MTT, 166

between a fallacy and a triviality, and ought to be altered to the trivial form of statement, from which, by illicit assimilation, the fallacy gains its plausibility - viz. "if a and b are related in a certain way, then anything not so related must be other than a and b."[219] From this he concludes that "no relation ever modifies either of its terms. For if it holds between A and B, then it is between A and B that it holds, and to say that it modifies A and B is to say that it really holds between different terms C and D."[220] He claims that in order to deny this, we must assume the axiom of internal relations. "Hence the argument has only a rhetorical force, and cannot prove its conclusion without a vicious regress."[221] That is, we are to treat relata as being, qua relata, irreducibly simple, such that the symbol which denotes them in the proposition expressing the relation into which they enter stands for a non-transferrable individual.

But such an individual, I suggest, cannot be other than the sort of individual which, in the notation of Chapter 2, Section 2 is denoted by lower case letters; i.e., an x type or individual existent. According to

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[219] MTT, 166

[220] POM, 448

[221] MTT, 166

this, then, Russell's argument affirms a point identical with Bradley's; (1), that a's relation to b is internal to a and b, since if a and b were not so related it would not be a and b that were not so related, since a and b are only insofar as they are so related.

But at the same time Russell wishes to be able to say that the identity of a term is not dependent on the relation into which it enters, but persists throughout changes in relation: "What is called modification consists merely in having at one time, but not at another, some specific relation to some other specific term."[222] But given the logical characteristics adduced to specify the type of term the identity of which is dependent upon the relation in which it is entered (i.e. x type), plainly it is not this type that can have at one time but not at another a specific relation and yet retain its identity. Consequently, the type now in question is what was designated X type, or "character". As Russell says, (2), "the term which sometimes has and sometimes has not the relation in question must be unchanged, otherwise it would not be that term which had ceased to

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MTT, 168

have the relation."[223]

It seems therefore, that there is an equivocation in Russell's use of "term", between what satisfies requirement (1) above, = $\underline{x}$, and what satisfies requirement (2), = X. And of course, Bradley's account recognizes the equivocation: $\underline{x}$ stands to $\underline{X}$ as "existent" to "character". But Bradley did not wish to say that characters are modified internally by the relations into which they enter (for characters have no claim to reality in any case). And similarly what individuates the real existent which 'has' that character is its real position in the world, i.e. qua qualified by the "whole material system" into which it enters. Thus the doctrine of internal relations claims merely that the source in reality of the identity of an individual is just its unique determination qua existant by a set of relational co-ordinates. To see that Russell has misunderstood this it is enough to note what doctrine he thinks he has refuted: "We thus get a world of many things, with relations which are not to be deduced from a supposed 'nature' or scholastic essence of the related things."[224]

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[223] POM, 449

[224] MTT, 169; my underlining

The doctrine of internal relations states that there are no real individuals at all: but insofar as we speak of individuals, they become less incompletely specified the closer we come to regarding them as having no principle of individuation over and above being specifiable in terms of the system of relations into which they are entered. Characters, or X types, are farther from being conceived of in this way than x types, or existents. In the case of the latter it is correct to say, as Bradley implies, that if a and b are related, then if they were not so related, they would be other than they are; in the strong sense. And to say this is not to say "something perfectly barren"[225] in the sense that it says nothing more than, as Watling puts it, the "triviality that if two things are related in a certain way then they are related in that way",[226] because, as regards x types the consequence is that "if they were those two things they would be related in that way will be true if, and only if, their being those two things implies that they stand in that relation."[227] - a consequence which, as Watling points out, is not true of X types.

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225 POM, 448

226 Watling, 45

227 Ibid.

sufficient or necessary for the identity of A, but not such that (3), the identity statement "X is A" implies either the whole set, or any individual relation in particular. (From (1) and (2) above.) Whereas, since, for the reasons already discussed, (1) and (2) do not hold in the case of x types, "x is a" does not imply that all (and only) those relations of which a is a term, hold of x.

3. Relational Facts

Russell says, "When the axiom is rejected it becomes meaningless to speak of the 'nature' of the terms of a relation: relatedness is no longer a proof of complexity [i.e. in the terms], a given relation may hold between many different pairs of terms, and a given term may have many different relations."[229] This shows the important metaphysical results of denying the doctrine of internal relations. The doctrine was able to evade Russell's arguments by appeal to the fact of relatedness between existents: - i.e. by pointing out that Bradley's analysis is of the unique situation qua unique; whereas Russell's is of what is

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229 MTT, 169

For example, if we regard what is denoted by "St. Pauls" and "The Eiffel Tower" as X types it is true, as Watling says, that the argument "if A and B were not so related etc.", "may mislead someone into thinking that what was established was the impossibility of their existing apart"[228] - because the identity-conditions of these two objects qua X types do not make it impossible for this relation to cease to hold without loss of identity. However, the identity-conditions of these two objects qua existents or x types are such that no change in this relation is possible without loss of identity; for if the whole conjunctive set of relations into which each of these two objects respectively enters is taken into consideration, then it certainly is the case that their being those two things implies that they stand in that relation. For consider: we would ordinarily say that "being A" implies not the set of all A's relations, but the existence of a finite and more or less definite subset, which we construe as the identity-conditions of A, such that if the members of this subset hold, we take it as (1), a sufficient condition for the identity of A, such that (2), no one member of the set is ever either

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228 Watling, 45

thinkable in the situation - a requirement which necessarily abstracts from its uniqueness: (Cf. "The words, therefore in which I try to tell my experience will omit what is particular to it, and convey only what is universal"[230]). If Bradley's appeal to the given fact from which the logic abstracts is to be justified, therefore, it must be shown that his question: "What is the difference between a relation which relates in fact and one which does not so relate"[231] is capable of an answer which will justify the distinction drawn in it.

Russell's view in "The Principles of Mathematics" in a sense avoids the problem of uniqueness, by denying that relations at least, are instantiated (and thus denying that they are "characters"): "relations do not have instances, but are strictly the same ["precisely and numerically the same"] in all propositions in which they occur".[232] Joachim argues against Russell on the grounds of his supposedly holding this view of properties, also: "if it ["greenness"] does not become numerically

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230 ONA, 156

231 Reply, 374

232 POM, 51

multiple, how can it - a simple numerically identical entity - enter into different existent complexes?"[233] (And here, as in Bradley's case, the position is in a sense rather curious that the supposed opponent of all discrete real entities should appeal to the fact of their uniqueness, in order to dispute the view that the world contains a plurality of such reals.) The point is, that what the idealists are affirming is that if any thing is real, it is the individual, the indeterminate of which the universal is predicated; not, obviously, the occurence of the universal in the proposition. They make this negative point legitimately enough in that their opponents' ontology contains discrete particular things; they hold in reserve the denial that in fact any individual of that sort, short of the One individual, is real. (Cf. "Professor James assumed me to hold that terms are, as such, ultimately real, while relations are not so. He at that time apparently had no idea that the view to which he opposed himself was that both terms and relations are alike, as such, mere abstractions, and neither ultimately real, though of course, for certain purposes we use these ideas as true."[234]) - one purpose being the corrective one, of

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[233] Joachim, 47 n.; my underlining

[234] ETR, 151 n.1; my underlining

pointing out to pluralists that, given their ontology, they ought at least to regulate their metaphysical assumptions by reference to whatever it is of that sort that is at least less unlikely to be unreal, viz. the individual qua existent.

To revert to Joachim's criticism of Russell; Joachim notes that in a letter from Russell "He says that his argument applies only to relations"[235]. Russell presumably intended to escape Joachim's criticism (for even substituting "relation" for "property" the same argument holds, and in fact is the substance of Bradley's question; how can a simple numerically identical relation enter into different existent complexes?) by affirming simply that a relation is not an entity, nor a "character" but something more like a logical constant; for clearly, from a certain point of view there is only one relation of conjunction. Then the fact that it could not enter into different existent complexes as an entity would be no bar to its entering different complexes as a relation (i.e. relations are type-different in just this way.) This is, in essence, the answer given by Gram (Cf. below page 129).

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[235] Joachim, 47 n.

One reason Russell has for holding this view is that if there were such things as particularised relations then false judgement is impossible, "for it affirms the being of what ex hypothesi, does not have being, and therefore there is nothing of which it affirms the being, and therefore it affirms nothing and is meaningless."[236] (Cf. Euthydemus 284c - this is a problem which continued to dog his later accounts of truth.)

The Idealists' view is that it is not in any case qua the instance of a universal relation that a relation relates, but in virtue of the fact of really relating in the existent complex. The difference between the two viewpoints is as follows: Russell says "The proposition 'a has the relation R to b' is an object not to be obtained by juxtaposing a and R and b; it is a new object, having that special kind of unity that characterises propositions."[237] (Cf. above page 109 regarding Russell's definition of unity). On the other hand, Bradley holds that "you cannot say that the real fact is the relation and the terms; for obviously that is not enough, since the fact goes beyond a mere

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236 MTCA, 345

237 MTCA, 348

'and'."[238] The "real fact" for Bradley is just what is given as a unity in experience (not thought, i.e., but Experienced), whereas for Russell unity belongs only to propositions, and "I do not see why the thought of this [complex] object should not be called a presentation ..."[239] (Bradley's answer of course, is that "presentations exist and they say nothing" (Cf. above, page 46). I shall postpone to Chapter 4, Section 2, the subsequent history of Russell's ascription of a thinkable form to reality itself (from propositions themselves, to Objectives, to facts - all are ghostly propositions subsisting in the world).

For the present, as Russell notes in his Reply to Bradley, "everything here turns upon the sense in which such unities cannot be analysed."[240] In MTCA he had said "the inadequacy of analysis appears, in this case, in the fact that propositions are true or false, while their constituents, in general, are neither"[241] - that is, the analysis of a proposition cannot preserve its truth-functional form, which it has in virtue of being an assertion. On the other hand Bradley conceives

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238 CE, 657

239 MTCA, 348

240 Explan., 373

241 MTCA, 210

the impossibility as, again, consisting in the concrete nature of the situation - i.e. "A relation to be actual cannot itself be less than all and everything that makes the entire relational fact".[242] That is, the relational fact cannot be analysed because the "relation" so obtained would not be a relation that relates, and hence not the relation at all; because what makes the "actual relation" to <u>be</u> the actual relation which relates is, so he says, "the fact of relatedness".[243] (Incidentally, this is one expression of a way of obtaining the conclusion that relations are self-contradictory: in the sense above the relation must <u>be</u> the entire relational situation in order to relate. On the other hand, obviously, the constituents of the fact must include the terms <u>as well as</u> the relation, hence "A relation both is and is not what may be called the entire relational situation, and hence in this respect contradicts itself."[244])

There has recently been an exchange on this topic between Messrs. Gram and Gull in the course of which some interesting points emerge, but also the tradition of

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242 CE, 636

243 <u>Ibid</u>.

244 CE, 635

misunderstanding is maintained.

Gram quotes Bradley's identification of the relation as actual with the whole relational situation: "A relation as actual is not a mere abstraction. It means a relational situation which is an individual and unique fact".[245] This identification, according to Gram, rests on the "suppressed" premise "that a relation cannot account for the existence of relational complexes unless it is identified with the entire complex."[246] But certainly this is not a premise to the argument, and nor is any premise suppressed - as we have seen, Bradley argues quite extensively to this conclusion. It is not a question of a relation accounting for the existence of the complex but an account of what it is for the relation actually to relate - rather than, say, to be merely among the constituents of the complex (which of course, it is <u>also</u>). He then asks how, if the parts are distinguishable and cannot account for the unity, there can <u>be</u> any such unity, and claims that to say "as Russell does, that a relational complex is different from the elements

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245 CE, 638

246 Gram, 50

we can distinguish in it, is to state the conditions of the problem, not to solve it."[247] But the crucial question is, in what sense does Russell say it is *different*? - surely, in the sense that it has that *formal* unity which makes it an assertion and not, say, an enumeration of the proposition's constituents (Gull exploits this; see below). Gram further claims that Bradley's regress argument (a relation must relate the relation to the terms etc.) contains an indispensible assumption, "that whatever is distinguishable can exist separately."[248] He then attributes to Bradley the view that if we can show that something can be detatched from the complex in which it figures, we are "justified in inferring that it can exist apart from all complexes"[249], such that this effectively removes the distinction between a unity and a mere aggregate. Gram's counter argument is that 'all the argument forces us to concede is that a relation can occur in infinitely many other complexes."[250] This being the case we need not specify why it happens to relate any *particular* set of terms in order to show that

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[247] Gram, 50

[248] *Ibid.*, 56

[249] *Ibid.*, 65

[250] *Ibid.*

when it does combine with a pair of terms, it genuinely relates them."[251] In the first place, surely the principle he attributes to Bradley is in fact explicitly held by Russell and is just the contrary to what Bradley would in general have wished to hold. Secondly, Gram is wholly at odds with Bradley when he maintains that there are <u>two</u> facts:(1) <u>why</u> does it relate the particular pair?; (2) <u>how</u> does it relate them? , which duality "is obscured by talking about the fact of combination as though it were only one fact."[252] His failure here derives directly from his misconception at the start: what Bradley claims needs to be taken into account in order to explain how a relation relates <u>is</u> "the individual and unique fact" in which it relates actually - but <u>not</u> the one "fact of combination" in Gram's sense.

Gull sees Bradley's question as redundant: "to assert that relations relate is to be redundant, for that is what it is to be a relation".[253] What he claims is that analysis does not turn a relation into a non-relation.

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[251] Gram, 50

[252] <u>Ibid</u>., 65

[253] Gull, 328

It is only the name of the relation occurring in the list of constituents along with the terms which inclines us to think this. Thus "the distinction between analysis and representation, if observed, resolves the problem raised by Bradley. The representation, i.e. the sign-sequence '_aRb_', and the analysis, i.e. the list _a_, _b_, and _R_ are two distinct levels of language".[254] Only by illegitimately mixing the levels does Bradley generate the contradiction that the complex _is_ the collection.

However, this argument fails because the whole source of the problem is, in effect, the question; what _is_ it about "'_aRb_'" that distinguishes it from "_a_, _b_, and _R_" and makes the former a representation and the latter an analysis (the answer, "convention" will not do of course, for Gull cannot be talking about linguistic expressions). Finally, where Gram attributed to Russell the claim that the assertion is _different_ from the proposition, Gull says that "he hypostatizes the assertion and thinks of it as a _constituent_ of the

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[254] Gull, p.238

complex"[255] - again, not true of Russell.

However, Wolterstorff draws a distinction which seems to me to express roughly part of the point that Bradley must be understood to be making. He says that the key to the dissolution of Bradley's paradox lies "in the distinction between a relation and a case of that relation"[256] - "If we just have relations and things, we do not have things in relation; but we do have things in relation if we have cases of relations".[257] Interpreting this to be in accord with Bradley, we can say that the paradox arises out of (illustrates the logical folly of) abstracting from the description of a case in which terms are actually related the conception of the relation as such, as if anything corresponded in reality to that character except in the very particularity of that case of the relation. If the foregoing discussion proves anything in addition, it is that this folly is compounded when not merely the relation, but the relational fact (or the case of the relation) is abstracted in this way.

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255 Gull, p.330

256 Wolterstorff, 245

257 Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

Pluralism: Russell's Empiricism

1. Logic and Mathematics

I claimed in the Introduction that the development in Russell's metaphysics is to be understood as originating in the development of his philosophy of mathematics, and in Chapter 1 showed how his originally Kantian conception of the form the philosophy of mathematics must take led, via a Lotzean analysis of matter, to a form of monism. The discovery of the fundamental and irreducible role of asymmetrical relations in the analysis of mathematical concepts led him to challenge Bradley's doctrine of internal relations and to abandon monism in favour of a form of pluralism - again, derived from the logical requirements of an altered conception of the philosophy of mathematics.

In the new case this led also to a new metaphysical conception of logic itself - not merely to the technical innovations of Principia Mathematica but a metaphysical assumption concerning the foundations of knowledge. The fundamental nature of this assumption is the view that "logic aims at independence of empirical fact, and the existence of the universe is an empirical fact"[258] - this latter is, of course, a metaphysical pronouncement; and so, ultimately, is the former - in the use to which Russell puts it. In short, Principia Mathematica is for Russell a Logic of just the same sort as the logico-metaphysical systems current in the nineteenth century (e.g. those of Hegel, Mill, Bradley, Lotze, Bosanquet etc. etc.)

The key to Russell's metaphysics of logic is his belief that the import of what is expressed in Principia's calculus is true a priori absolutely and in a way independent of reliance upon anything else, together with the consonant belief that any form of necessary truths which can be shown to be true a priori only on transcendental grounds are, in a special and weakening

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[258] POM, intro. to 2nd ed. p.viii

sense, "subjective". Thus, "the possibility of mathematical knowledge ... shows that human knowledge is not wholly deduced from facts of sense, but that a priori knowledge can by no means be explained in a subjective or psychological manner."[259] Russell and Moore consistently thought of Kant's account as being subjective and psychological in this sense and it is clear that there is a basic misconception here directly analogous with the misconception that there is nothing unintelligible in asserting the existence of a supra-intelligible reality: in this case it is the assertion of a supra-transcendental sense of "true" which is at fault. The justification for it,(like the analogous justification that knowledge makes no difference to what (in the world) is known),is that knowledge makes no difference to what (in the proposition) is known: "When it is admitted that the proposition known is not identical with the knowledge of it, it becomes plain that the question as to the nature of propositions is distinct from all questions as to knowledge".[260]

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259 PIML, 493

260 MTCA, 204

The former great "Logics" were based on the transcendental analysis of "judgement" and "assertion"; they were as Bedell says, logics of content: "because judgement, as the fundamental cognitive relation qualifies reality through immediate experience. [I should prefer to say that only in terms of its expression in the judgement has "reality" any sensible meaning.] Its truth-claim must be made good or rejected by reality itself. This guarantees its metaphysical relevance ...."[261] What Russell believed himself to have done was to have abstracted from the psychological status of the judgement to its non-"subjective" import. However, what, apparently, he failed to recognise was that he thereby had abstracted also from the possibility of its being true or false of reality: "implication as above defined ($p \supset q$ = df. $\sim p \vee q$) is still the fundamental logical concept, and what is further required for inference is psychological, namely such conditions as shall enable us to perceive the implication without knowing first whether the conclusion is true or the premise false."[262]

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261 Bedell (B), 234

262 Explan., 375

The whole basis of Bradley's "Principles of Logic" had been the elimination of what he called "psychologism" - roughly what Strawson calls, in respect of Kant's talk of faculties, "transcendental psychology". This is indeed appeal to "subjective and psychological" factors in Russell's (rather strained) sense, but to eliminate all, even legitimate conditions of the possibility of knowledge, is directly analogous in the case of logic with the rejection of transcendentalism in the philosophy of mathematics (Cf. above, page 10), and is accomplished by the construction of just as false an alternative. In Joachim's words, according to Russell "knowledge qua 'belief' is the subject of Psychology, and qua belief in what is true presupposes the science of Logic"[263]; so that, just as the transcendental study of the foundations of geometry is eliminated by Russell on the grounds that it has no place in either study to which he allows legitimacy, mathematics or measurement, so also "The logician is driven to the uncomfortable conception of a 'strictly logical assertion'" while "The psychologist is condemned to study mental states, psychical existents ..."[264]

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263 Joachim, 54

264 Ibid.

Who has been excluded, again by fiat, is the transcendental logician. (As much later as 1938 Joachim declared, with an appearance of obscurantism which is witness of Russell's success, that this tendency "to worship instead at the shrine of the formalists, symbolists, analysts, and positivists - would be disastrous if it were anything more than a temporary phenomenon".[265]) Finally on the question of Logic, if there is any one way of best characterising Russell's new metaphysical position it is that his logic is, in Joachim's phrase, "a logic of abstract identity" - necessarily so, since all it treats of as regards individuals is their form qua individuals in abstraction from the question of their existence as individuals. It is not the case, simply, that logical pluralism is just a logically tidy expression of common sense; it is a metaphysical theory which hypostatises logical forms just as Aristotle's is. From one point of view it appears not to deny common sense; but then from the contrary point of view, neither does Bradley.

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[265] Joachim, 54

As for mathematics; Russell substitutes for Kant's transcendental proof that mathematics must be true of reality, the claim that mathematics is reducible to logic. His argument is then, that "the rules of deduction have a twofold use in mathematics: both as premises and as a method of obtaining consequences of the premises. Now, if the rules of deduction were not true, the consequences that would be obtained by using them would not truly be consequences, so that we should not have even a correct deduction setting out from a false premise".[266] Obviously this can only serve as a proof that mathematics is true <u>of reality</u> if we add the premise that reality must conform to logic - a principle no less necessary in a <u>general</u> form than Bradley's, that reality does not contradict itself: but certainly it is not unobjectionable if the sense of "conform" is taken in the particular sense, as it must be for the argument, that reality is to be defined as the independent correlate of what is thinkable under the categories defined in the logical <u>calculus</u>.

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[266] PIML, 489

2. The Atomistic Theory of Truth

Most of what there is to be said about the metaphysical presuppositions of Logical Atomism having been already said or suggested in the defence of the monistic theory, all that remains is a critical examination of Russell's positive alternative, the overt expression of his new metaphysics.

Bradley suggests that the central appeal of correspondence theories of truth lies in the feeling that "objective" ought to mean more than "intersubjective" - a feeling which, if indulged, results on the one hand in postulation of something like Berkeley's God to account for the co-ordination of intersubjective experiences, and on the other, to the postulation of a single supra-subjective reality (where "intersubjective" is construed conjunctively). For example, "truth implies agreement amongst the ideas of separate individuals. And, since this agreement is not made by one or another individual, and so not by all of them, it therefore seems due to all of them following one original fact."[267] The rough intuitive idea of

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[267] ETR, 107

following a fact has then to be explicated in terms of a relation between a true proposition and the reality it expresses. But, according to Bradley, "You cannot ask how in any proper sense truth is related to the real. For such a relation to be possible, you would require reality on one side and truth on the other. And, since without truth reality would not be real, and truth apart from reality would not be true, the question asked is ridiculous."[268] The latter point might be better expressed by saying that anything we can understand by "reality" is involved biconditionally with whatever we accept as "true" such that we cannot appeal (except in a circular way) to one in order to specify a criterion of the other.

Russell's theory of truth, like his account of relational facts, springs directly from his rejection of the doctrine of internal relations: "Having now decided that relations are not grounded in the nature of their terms, we have no longer any reason for supposing that 'experiencing makes a difference to the facts'."[269]; thus "From the moment when I abandoned monism I had no doubt that truth is to be defined by some kind of

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[268] ETR, 343

[269] Truth III, 44

relation to fact."[270] Clearly, on this view two theses will have to be maintained, (a) concerning the form of a true proposition (that it is structurally isomorphic with what in the world it expresses) and (b) concerning so to speak its content (that its terms have real values).

Russell's development of the theory has roughly three phases; 1899-1905, an obscure adaptation from Idealism consisting in the total assimilation of facts to propositions (propositions are in the world and a true proposition is one that is "asserted"); 1906-1918/24, the development of the isomorphic theory by an increasing separation of fact from proposition together with a correlatedly sophisticated account of the relation between them; and subsequently, a decreasing emphasis on the formal problem in favour of epistemological analysis of the content problem. I shall have least to say about the first and last, since metaphysically speaking the apogee of the theory is the philosophy of Logical Atomism. For convenience I shall call the thesis (a), above that the structure of true propositions

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[270] MPD, 175

reflects the structure of some situation in the world, "Isomorphism"; and thesis (b), that the basis of empirical knowledge, and hence of the true propositions in which it is expressed, consists in the infallibility of the perception of basic particulars, and hence the (more or less) incorrigibility of basic propositions, "Empiricism". The latter has been discussed already at some length (Chapter 2, Section 1).

The discussion in The Principles of Mathematics of the basic concepts of the truth theory - concepts, existents, complexes, term, propositions etc. is still heavily under the influence of Moore's early paper "The Nature of Judgement" (1899), the theory of truth contained in which was derisively called by Joachim, "truth by flavour". Moore's analysis is basically a Kantian account intended to be purged of "subjectivism" by attributing to reality the necessity which Kant had attributed to the conditions of thought. His thesis consists essentially in the identification of reality with what is thinkable; such that the only things which are capable of intelligible existence are possible objects of thought i.e. concepts or "logical ideas".[271]

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[271] Moore (C), 179

These have an ontological foot in both camps, being the only sort of existent and also the constituents of propositions. A proposition is defined as "nothing other than a complex concept",[272] hence states of affairs are nothing in excess of propositions, and "A proposition is constituted by any number of concepts together with a specific relation between them; and according to the nature of this relation the proposition may be either true or false".[273] Such a proposition is said to be true "if such a connection is existent."[274] But Moore also says that truth is dependent upon "the nature of this relation". He appears to mean not that the complex as such (qua real state of affairs) is existent but that the connection, is, and that it is of a certain sort if the judgement is true. The sense in which the connection can be existent is if the proposition affirming it is asserted. Then "What kind of relation makes a proposition true, what false, cannot be further defined, but must be immediately recognised."[275] The point of this is mainly negative; we are not to look for a relation of correspondence with

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272 Moore (C), 180

273 Ibid.

274 Ibid., 179

275 Ibid., 180

anything else; the judgement's truth or falsity "must be immediate properties of its own, not dependent upon any relation it may have to something else".[276]

Russell's first explicit discussion of truth along these lines is the critique of Meinong in 1904, where he identifies Meinong's "objective" with "what (following Mr. G.E. Moore) I have called a proposition".[277] By an Objective Meinong appears to mean some state of affairs in the world which is a proposition, that the judgement has as its object (N.B. not what a true proposition states, but the proposition which is the object of a judgement: Russell is still doing Logic in the former style at this time). Thus judgements do not have as their object the subject of the proposition in which the judgement is expressed - i.e. ontological priority is not given to individuals as such, but to the propositional states of affairs in which they figure: "the judgement or assumption 'A exists' has as its object, not A, but the existence of A, i.e. that which .... Meinong calls the Objective of the judgement or

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276 Moore (C), 296

277 MTCA, 350

assumption."[278]

The theory is, then, that the world consists of intelligible states of affairs. To be intelligible a thing must be an object of thought (i.e., in the case of a particular, a concept). To be significant, judgements must consist in the combination of concepts. The objects of judgements (Objectives) "can only be the whole propositions".[279] The objects of propositions are complex states of affairs. In this theory the correspondence theory is dismissed **not** as _false_ directly (as in Moore's paper) but as _otiose_: "What is a fact? And the difficulty of this problem lies in this, that a fact appears to be merely a true proposition, so that what seemed a significant proposition ["that true propositions express _facts_"] becomes a tautology."[280] But the main point is, that the definition of a "_complex_" (which is in essence the correspondence-theorists' "fact" without its supra-intelligible ontology) is offered not as an objection to the correspondence theory but as part of the Objective theory, such that what might have appeared to be irony is in fact a serious

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[278] MTCA, 345

[279] _Ibid_.

[280] MTCA, 523

affirmation; viz. "Complexes, as soon as we examine them, are seen to be always products of propositions: one might be tempted to describe them rather loosely as propositions in which the truth or falsity has been left out."[281] The justification for the view is, I suppose, that the world is complex and "the apprehension of a complex involves the apprehension of a proposition".[282] The hypostatisation of the proposition is due to the fact that at this point, although monism has been denied, some elements of the monistic theory of truth have not; while the correspondence theory has not yet been affirmed. Consequently the theory tries rather incoherently to apply the import of the coherence definition of truth, that truth is a property of propositions, and not definable in terms of a relation to anything else, to individual propositions. But lacking the criterion of coherence within a system of propositions and the criterion of correspondence between individual proposition and individual "fact", "What is truth, and what falsehood, we must merely apprehend, for both seem incapable of

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281 MTCA, 346; my underlining

282 Ibid.

analysis".[283]

But at least one important point which has a bearing on the theory shortly to be evolved, is first presented in this otherwise rather makeshift account: the distinction between a real relation and the "presentation" of it (later, the "representation") Russell says that in the same way that "the presentation of extension is unextended", "the presentation of a relation is not itself a relation. Consequently, if the presentation of a is related to that of b, the presentation of R cannot be what relates them".[284] This is a significant advance from the categories of analysis employed both by Russell and Bradley in the controversy about relational facts.

In 1906 Russell published as Section III of his objections to the Monistic Theory of Truth a much clearer statement of his developing counter-theory. Retained from the theory just discussed is the notion of the essential complexity of objectives (now called "facts"):

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283 MTCA, 524

284 MTCA, 517

"When we entertain a correct belief, that which we believe may be called a fact. A fact is always complex: thus when we perceive that something exists the something is not a fact, but its existence is a fact. If A exists, 'A's existence' is a fact; perception consists in the apprehension of such facts."[285] Furthermore, it is now claimed explicitly that facts are "non-mental complexes".[286] The problem of falsehood, however, now assumes an acute form: truth is still a "quality of beliefs"[287], but now the criterion of a belief's possessing such a quality is specified as being that if the belief is correct, that which we believe is a fact. The problem here, though, is that either facts are propositions or "fact" has a very curious status. We are said to perceive (the fact of ?) A's existence and believe truly the same fact; but do we believe A's existence or that A exists? (or that A's existence is a fact?). For if facts are non-mental complexes it will not do just to say we believe them: (e.g. how do we "entertain" a correct belief - at least what we entertain must be mental). And even if

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285 Truth III, 45

286 Truth III, 49

287 Ibid.

this would serve to define truth it leads to the view that falsity consists in a quality of beliefs which are not beliefs in facts - i.e., since false beliefs are not non-beliefs, the false is either a non-fact (in the world) or a false proposition; which latter involves the regress, what makes the proposition false?

Russell's suggestion is that we have either to regard the objects of belief as propositions, which are non-mental complexes and are of "two kinds, facts, which are true, and fictions, which are false ...",[288] or to regard false beliefs as failing to have objects. Russell allows that this latter is unsatisfactory, but the former is in any case no better, for it implies that either facts are propositions in such a sense as to make the truth-criterion of beliefs in them idle, or we must suppose the world to be occupied by concrete non-states of affairs. This shows that the notion of a false fact or "fiction" is incoherent. Russell concludes, perhaps wisely, that as between these alternatives "it would be rash to decide hastily."[289] (Russell criticises this theory himself in

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288 Truth III, 49

289 Ibid.

PLA in much the same way: (1) "You cannot say that you believe facts, because your beliefs are sometimes wrong." (2) "You have to say that you believe propositions. The awkwardness of that is that obviously propositions are nothing." (3) "To suppose that in the actual world of nature there is a whole set of false propositions going about is to my mind monstrous".[290] By "proposition" in this context, Russell of course means "ghostly fact", not the import of sentences, which become the bearers of truth and falsity in the later theory. I shall therefore not discuss Russell's later analysis of belief, which becomes the basis of a different, though related, problem.)

A clue to the eventual solution of the problem of falsity is given in "Some Explanations in Reply to Mr. Bradley" (1910), where it is pointed out that "In a negative judgement we may place the negation either in the act, or in that which is judged."[291] That is, we may construe a negative judgement either as the affirmation of not-p or as the denial of p.

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290 PLA, 222-223

291 Explan., 377

Correspondingly, in the case of the analysis of a *false* judgement, this indicates, what was later explicitly incorporated into the theory, that if we are not bound to construe a false judgement as affirming a non-fact we may construe it as denying a fact. Thus in the case of belief, it is not *what* is believed (qua substantive fact) that is false, but the belief in it. (Cf. "the belief does not really contain a proposition as a constituent but only contains the constituents of the proposition as constituents."[292])

In the meantime, however, Russell is still preoccupied with the problem in ONTF, which is the new version of Truth III published in 1910. He says of the theory of the existence of objective truths which are the objects of true judgements; "it is hard to maintain it with regard to truths without being forced to maintain it also as regards falsehoods."[293] He now has for consideration a set of alternative explanations *different* from those offered in Truth III: in either case it is still maintained that "Judgements ... consist of relations of

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[292] PLA, 224

[293] ONTF, 173

the mind to objects",[294] but the alternatives are (1) that the object is the complex fact, (2) the objects are the components of the fact. He now attributes (1) to Meinong, and although he thinks that the postulation of false objectives is an unsatisfactory multiplication of entities, he does not reject it very vigorously: "This view, though not logically impossible, is unsatisfactory ....".[295] He does, however, dismiss finally what was offered as an alternative to this in Truth III, viz. the view that false beliefs simply fail to have objectives. This cannot be maintained because the notion of an "objective" gets its meaning solely from the theory that judgement consists in the relation of a mind to an objective; therefore if false judgements do not consist in this they must be intrinsically different from true ones (NB. a view which, of course, he and Moore formerly held.)

The definition now given, therefore, is that "judgement is a relation of the mind to several other

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294 ONTF, 174

295 ONTF, 176

terms: when these terms have inter se a 'corresponding' relation, the judgement is true: when not, it is false.[296] That is, "if I judge that A loves B, that is not a relation of me to 'A's love for B', but a relation of me to A and love and B".[297] Then "the judgement is true when the relation which is one of the objects relates the other objects, otherwise it is false."[298] A further statement, from KAKD (1911) goes as follows: "If, e.g. I judge that A loves B, the judgement as an event consists in the existence, at a certain moment, of a specific four-term relation called "judging" between me and A and love and B."[299] (In a note dated 1917 Russell adds, "I have been persuaded by Mr. Wittgenstein that this theory is somewhat unduly simple." Cf. below page 180)

This is, in effect, the basis of the Principia definition; though what in KAKD is more plausibly described as an event is in Principia described as an entity: "When a judgement occurs, there is a certain

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296 ONTF, 178

297 ONTF, 187

298 Ibid.

299 KAKD, 159; my underlining

complex entity composed of the mind and the various objects of the judgement. When the judgement is true .... there is a corresponding complex of the objects of the judgement alone. Falsehood ... consists in the absence of a corresponding complex composed of the objects alone."[300]

What may be objected to in the theory so far evolved, is its use of the notion of a given complex. There are two ambiguities involved in this, one deliberate and the other perhaps unconsciously derived from an implicit metaphysical commitment. The first involves the "object" of perception: for the purposes of perception this is described as a unit: "the single whole 'knife-to-left-of-book'":[301] "The complex object 'a-in-the-relation-R-to-b' may be capable of being perceived; when perceived it is perceived as one object."[302] But for the purpose of judgement it is described as a complex of objects in relation. (Cf. "the severalness of the objects in judgement (as opposed to perception) ..."[303]).

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300 Principia, 44

301 ONTF, 182

302 Principia, 43

303 Ibid., 44; my underlining

The logical connection between the unity in the perception and the plurality in the judgement is made by means of the second ambiguity: "Attention may show that it is complex; we then judge ..."[304] Now "attention" here is clearly ambiguous between its perceptual and its reflective sense: metaphysically, what is offered is a simple denial of Bradley - i.e. "The universe consists of objects having various qualities and standing in various relations. Some of the objects which occur in the universe are complex."[305] The theory is, roughly, that in perception we are given as one what by attention we can discriminate as complex, and we can do so because what was perceived as one is, by virtue of the world's contents being as they are, logically complex. Mere perception has to discover to us infallibly a whole which attention reveals as complex such that a "judgement of perception", "being derived from perception by mere attention",[306] must be true, otherwise attention could not have discovered the relation. Then to allow for error even in perceptual judgements, it is said that we often

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[304] Principia, 43: my underlining

[305] Ibid.

[306] Ibid.; my underlining

unwittingly put more into the judgement than we got by mere attention. However, this shift will not save the theory, for plainly "attention" cannot coherently be said to serve both the perceptual and the reflective function; for however we coherently may define "perception", "attention" must be construed as a process of discrimination of an order different from it; for given that we cannot coherently define "perception" as consisting incorrigibly of the sensing of a particular under the form of a universal (Cf. Chapter 2, Section 1) the subsumption must be reserved to an order of discrimination subsequent to it. "Attention" just will not do to bridge the gap and carry over the infallibility of the perception into the incorrigibility of the perceptual judgement. Either attention adds no more to perception, in which case it is redundant, and so eliminates the distinction between perception and judgement; or it does, in which case it is different and so cannot serve the theoretical function required of it.

It is the admixture of epistemology as regards this, that weakens the theory; but logically the main point is the denial that "propositions", in the old sense of "unitary objectives", are the objects of judgements: "a judgement does not have a single object, namely the

proposition, but has several interrelated objects."[307] - "That is to say, the phrase which expresses a proposition is an 'incomplete symbol' ..."[308] That is, it has no meaning in isolation but is given a meaning in certain contexts; and in an act of judging "judgement in itself supplies a sufficient supplement" even though "judgement in itself makes no verbal addition to the proposition ..."[309] However, "proposition" is retained in the subsequent theory in a new meaning: "A form of words which must be either true or false I shall call a proposition. Thus a proposition is the same as what may be significantly asserted or denied."[310] And Russell adds that the former meaning of "proposition" was due to "poverty in the logical inventory."[311]

The metaphysical theory is that the world consists of objects and their relations and qualities, which in some way in combination constitute facts. In OKEW Russell takes the notion of a fact as sufficiently defined by the statement "Given any fact there is an assertion which

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307 Principia, 43

308 Ibid., 44

309 Ibid.

310 OKEW, 55

311 OKEW, 61

expresses the fact. The fact itself is objective, and independent of our thought or opinion about it ..."[312] But the nature of his conception of a fact is revealed elsewhere in its true colours: "facts (i.e. what certain propositions assert)..."[313] Indeed, Russell has the expressed desire to "preserve the parallelism in language as regards facts and propositions."[314] Hence he finds in the world "atomic facts" to correspond to the logically simple atomic propositions, e.g. "this is red." The advantage of this is that molecular facts can be construed with less embarassment to the theory (e.g. the necessity to construe disjunctive facts, for example, as existing in the world is avoided). In general the hypostatisation of spatial or quantitative relational facts as existent is far more plausible than that or relational facts whose relation is a logical connective. But even with this new explanation, the worldly existence of hypothetical facts are acutely unplausible.

The atomicity of atomic facts, seems intended to preserve in a logically more respectable-seeming form the

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[312] OKEW, 61
[313] ONA, 165
[314] OKEW, 56

function of "attention" in the Principia theory: what atomic facts and atomic propositions have in common, what allows one to assert the other is not just formally speaking their atomicity, but epistemologically speaking their simplicity. There is, it is implied, nothing simpler than, say, an example of red; and in experiencing nothing less fallible than the experience of a red datum, and in assertion nothing less corrigible than "this is red." And this is certainly the Empiricist intention of the doctrine: "I cannot with certainty communicate to another what are the things of which I am aware. But if I speak to myself, and denote them by what may be called 'proper names', rather than by descriptive words, I cannot be in error."[315] (But then, of course, neither can I be correct, and neither can I make an assertion using only those "proper names"). Clearly, the notion of correspondence with the fact in this theory does not stop short at the atomic fact but at the sense-datum: that is, the definition of atomicity by abstraction from logically more complex forms has ultimately, as regards the definition of truth, to be seen as in fact originating in the old Empiricist particular datum of

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[315] ONA, 130

sense, with its equivocal mind/world status. As Russell says "Given a form of words which must be either true or false ... we may either assert or deny this form of words ... Whether an atomic proposition is to be asserted or denied can only be known empirically .... The atomic facts which we come to know in this way are the facts of sense-perception ..."[316]

But as I have argued, nothing of this status is logically fit to count as a fact - even an atomic fact: "you may go so low that, when you have descended beyond the level of error, you find yourself below the level of any fact or of any truth you can use."[317] (Cf. Quine: "atomic facts are atomic as facts go, but they are compound objects. The atoms of Russell's logical atomism are not atomic facts but sense data."[318]) The distinction between sense-data and atomic facts in Russell's conception is definable in terms of the distinction between knowledge of a truth and mere aquaintance with a particular - the former "involves the propositional form on the object

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316 OKEW, 56

317 ETR, 204

318 Quine, 12

side."[319] Then just as "aquaintance with a particular" essentially depends on the assimilation of the content of the particular to the content of the aquaintance with it, so "knowledge of a truth" depends on the assimilation of the form of the fact to the form of the knowing of it. I should agree with Bradley that "the whole theory goes to wreck in principle and at once on a fatal objection. Truth has to copy facts, but on the other side the facts to be copied show already in their nature the work of truth-making. The merely given facts are, in other words, the imaginary creatures of false theory."[320]

And that it is expressly a theory and not just an ingenuous hypostatisation of linguistic form is borne out by Russell's declaration at the start of the most developed exposition of it: Logical Atomism is "a kind of logical doctrine which seems to me to result from the philosophy of mathematics ... a certain kind of logical doctrine, and on the basis of this a certain kind of metaphysics."[321]

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319 RSDP, 109; my underlining

320 ETR, 108

321 PLA, 178; my underlining

Russell accepts the intelligibility principle, but on epistemological grounds, from the standpoint of the individual: (Cf. "All theory of knowledge must start from 'what do I know?' not form 'what does mankind know?'"[322] - this on the grounds that my understanding of "what mankind knows" depends on what I accept as being known by mankind). Thus he now affirms what previously he had raised as an objection both to Kant and to Idealism, i.e. "you are more or less tied to a certain unavoidable subjectivity, because you are not concerned simply with the question what is true of the world but 'what can I know of the world?'"[323] But perhaps as a result of having falsely construed Bradley's analysis of experience as being psychogenetic in intention, Russell proposes only to appeal, on the contrary, "to data which will be quite ludicrously obvious";[324] and puts forward as his own first "truism", "that the world contains facts, which are what they are whatever we may choose to think about them, and that there are also beliefs, which have reference to facts, and by reference to facts are either

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322 IMT, 143

323 PLA, 179

324 PLA, 181

true or false."[325] A fact is to be understood as "the sort of thing that is expressed by a whole sentence, not by a single name ...", "part of the real world", and "not created by our thoughts or beliefs ...."[326] Facts cannot be either true or false: truth-bearers are severally "judgements", (reserved to epistemology), and "statements and propositions" which, for the purposes of logic are identified with indicative sentences. Russell characterises the proposition as a complex symbol and himself adds a warning, the disregard of which, as I have already indicated and shall argue further, vitiates his account: "You will find yourself attributing to the thing properties which only belong to the symbol."[327] (He claims, incidentally, that "the theory about every proposition being really a description of reality as a whole and so one" is itself entirely "the outcome of a muddle about symbolism")[328]

Russell's main tenet is that analysis is legitimate and so too, therefore, is the analysis of

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325 PLA, 181

326 PLA, 183

327 PLA, 185

328 PLA, 186

complex facts. The evidence that facts are analysable, he finds in the circumstance that "the proposition which asserts a fact consists of several words, each of which may occur in other contexts."[329] Then similarly the individual to which a word in a proposition corresponds is able to be the subject of different facts also, such that, since that individual is not the whole of any of the facts of which it is the subject, it must be a component of such facts; therefore "there is a possibility of cutting up a fact into component parts ...".[330] But the example he gives hardly makes the theory plausible. He says "you may have 'Socrates is human' and 'Socrates is mortal', both of them facts, and both having to do with Socrates, although Socrates does not constitute the whole of either of these facts."[331] But "'Socrates is human'" is a proposition, not a fact (though it states the fact that Socrates is human); and the individual Socrates is obviously not a constituent of either of Russell's propositions (nor could he be a constituent of any expression of a fact), even though the expression 'Socrates' is. Russell claims to be "meeting the prima facie

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[329] PLA, 192

[330] PLA, 193

[331] PLA, 193

objections of philosophers who think you really cannot analyse at all",[332] but of course, what these philosophers maintained was just that the possibility of cutting up propositions does not imply that there is anything discrete in the world which corresponds to the parts of the propositions cut up in this way. Certainly we can analyse linguistic expressions, or think propositions as dismembered; and we can cut up things in the world, but we cannot (and we cannot think we can unless we assume the truth of Isomorphism) cut up the "facts" in the world - we cannot cut up the fact that aRb even though we can cut up "aRb".

As against this it could perhaps be argued that what Russell is claiming is that the world is intelligible just in so far as we conceive of it as consisting of things isomorphic categorially with the parts of propositions, and that to deny this is unintelligibly to deny that the world is intelligible. I should agree that this specifies the conditions alone under which the world is thinkable; but of course, the converse implication does not hold, viz. that the world is in some a priori sense cut up

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[332] PLA, 193

into the sort of discrete things capable of being thought by a process of direct correlation with the parts of propositions. And a further consideration is, that, as has been urged, in order to specify reality it may not be enough to specify just the conditions of intelligibility (Bradley's argument). As a corrective to Russell's assumption it could be pointed out (1) that the fact that whatever can be thought must be thinkable as analysable does not imply that whatever can be thought as discrete is discrete. (2) That whatever can be thought must be thought in propositional form does not imply that whatever cannot be put into propositional form cannot be experienced as real. Therefore the intelligibility principle, though true, does not warrant the metaphysical conclusion Russell draws from it, for unless we exhaust "experience" in "thought" his appeal to the principle reduces his remarks about facts to remarks about propositions, and if we do, the isomorphic theory of intelligibility reduces to a tautology.

However, Russell holds that the fact is objectively complex: "not that you think it complex".[333]

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[333] PLA, 196

This being so, it might be supposed that the proper order of analysis ought to start from the complexity of the world; however "The only reason for going the other way round is that in all abstract matters symbols are easier to grasp."[334] This is disingenuous to a degree: the form of the world's complexity is essentially and expressly got from the form of the propositional symbols' - if not by mere hypostatisation, then at least in a way which necessarily precludes analysis of the world's complexity except in terms of the analysis of the propositions which express it. He at first gives the impression that it is merely easier to analyse the symbols; he then comes to doubt whether "complexity, in that fundamental objective sense in which one starts from complexity of a fact is definable at all",[335] and finally to acknowledge that "There is nothing one could say about it ..."[336] Now since it is impossible that Russell can mean by this to endorse Bradley's argument, it is obvious that he is admitting what was the case all along, that it is not merely that the analysis of propositions is easier than the analysis of facts, but that

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334 PLA, 196

335 PLA, 197

336 Ibid.; my underlining

any analysis of a "fact" is actually the analysis of a proposition. The rhetorical purpose of the former suggestion was to reinforce the claim that there are real complexes to be analysed. However, Russell does not accept that this constitutes any objection in principle to isomorphism: "it is quite directly evident to inspection that the fact ... is itself objectively complex and not merely that the apprehension of it is complex."[337]

This remark is an extension of, and shows even more clearly the incoherence of Principia's distinction between "perception" and "attention" - now we are told that we can see by "inspection" a complexity which is not merely the result of "apprehension"; but how inspection and apprehension are related, and more importantly, how they differ, is not made clear. The near assimilation of these is a reflection of the confusion to which extreme isomorphism leads Russell, even in stating the theory: e.g. "The fact that two things stand in a certain relation to each other, or any statement of that sort, has a complexity all of its own"[338] - and this is

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337 PLA, 197

338 Ibid.; my underlining

intended to urge the objective independent complexity of facts.

Russell concludes: "I shall therefore in future assume that there is an objective complexity in the world, and that it is mirrored by the complexity of propositions."[339] In sum, I have argued against the first part of this assumption that the notion of "objective complexity" is incoherently got by hypostatisation of the complex form of propositions: but with the second half of the assumption a new consideration emerges: the complexity of propositions is not just so to speak configurative - propositions mean what they say by means of their complex form. We have been considering the theory from the point of view of how the notion of a fact is derived: but Russell of course intends to assert more by his theory than an ontological doctrine, the discussion of which is essentially a preliminary. He intends to affirm also, that because the world is as it is, propositions are able to say something about it, such that, if the proposition "mirrors" the world in this sense, that it accurately reflects it, it is true.

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339 PLA, 197

Unfortunately, objections arise also to this side of the assumption, to the desire, as Davidson says, "to include in the entity to which a true sentence corresponds not only the objects the sentence is "about" (another idea full of trouble) but also whatever it is the sentence says about them".[340] The relation of "mirroring" has a dual purpose; firstly, metaphysical, to define from considerations of propositions what facts are; and secondly, logical, in the other direction, to lay down that since the fact is what it is, the proposition says something true of the world just insofar as it copies the fact. But of course this second definition is as incoherent as the first: "Our truths in short can all of them in some sense be verified in fact, but, if you ask if they are all copied from fact, the answer must be different."[341]

Just possibly, the intelligibility principle might be invoked once again here, in support of Russell. It might be claimed that "mirroring" is just a pictorial way of expressing the truth that the intelligibility of the world consists not just in the intelligibility of the things

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340 Davidson, 759

341 ETR, 109

in it, but, as Russell claims, in the intelligibility of the factual complexes in which the things in the world exist. Then by invoking the principle Russell could say that the complex situations in the world have being only insofar as they have being as the complexes that they are. But this will not do, for in the case of each thing qua potential, it is wholly indeterminate: there is no x to which the determination corresponds and a fortiori no sense in which it corresponds correctly. If the Aristotelian analysis were to hold in the case of facts, all empirical propositions must be true of necessity; or else to obtain a truth-determining correspondence incoherent appeal must be made to a determinate complex behind the informed fact.

As for particulars, I have already discussed their epistemological status in the theory: they are defined logically as "terms of relations in atomic facts".[342] Ontologically speaking, "Particulars have this peculiarity ... that each of them stands entirely alone and is completely self subsistent .... That is to say each

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[342] PLA, 199

particular that there is in the world does not in any way logically depend upon any other particular."[343] This is a plain denial of Bradley's thesis; and the difficulty here again is that it is not independent of isomorphism: there is a clear violation of type-difference involved in affirming that things in the world are logically independent. This is obscured by talking of the "terms" of facts, which itself is plausible only by analogy carried to the point of isomorphism.

Russell effects the type-assimilation by the device of claiming that "this" is the only logically proper name. What corresponds in the fact to the "this" of the proposition is said to be "an actual object of sense".[344] Now the theory of descriptions showed that any merely grammatically proper name is reducible to a definite description which more than one thing may satisfy: that is, insofar as it serves in the proposition "this" necessarily cannot designate uniquely, for propositions are not just strings of names; i.e. no word can function in the proposition as if it alone were in fact functioning

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[343] PLA, 201-202; my underlining

[344] PLA, 201

in a list. This is the basis, not realised by Russell apparently, why "it is an ambiguous proper name"[345] - not just that it can name anything, but because in a proposition it effectively names nothing. His attempted way out of this difficulty is the re-invocation of the Principia idea that the assertion itself, by a sort of conversio ad sensu completes the proposition's meaning by securing temporary uniqueness of reference - we must name the object of sense "this" in order to gain uniqueness of reference for our proposition.

But this naming is logically quite peculiar: "And here we may indeed fancy naming to be some remarkable act of mind [i.e. we intend "this" to mean this object of sense to which we are attending,] as it were a baptism of an object. And we can also say the word "this" to the object, as it were address the object as 'this' ..."[346] Russell's own remark sums up the incoherence involved: "To understand a name you must be aquainted with the particular of which it is a name, and you must know that it is the name of that particular.

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[345] PLA, 201

[346] Wittgenstein (A), 19

You do not, that is to say, have any suggestion of the form of a proposition ...."[347]

Apart from particulars, "The only other sort of object you come across in the world is what we call facts ...." and these "you cannot name ... because they are not there to be named ..."[348] Thus the final result of Russell's denial of Bradley's monism is the affirmation that there is only a plurality of simples (facts "are not there" etc.); plus the seemingly contradictory affirmation that there is in addition a plurality of facts ("the only other sort of object you come across" etc.) We cannot name facts because they are not there to be named. We can assert them of particulars, but if the world is a plurality of facts only in this sense, then Logical Atomism has no further utility as a theory of truth.

The obvious solution to the apparent contradiction, given Russell's assumptions, is the interposition of a new ontological type between particulars and propositions; and this, unfortunately, is his recourse in the paper

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[347] PLA, 205; my underlining

[348] PLA, 270

"On Propositions" (1919) - really the nadir of the theory.

Accepting the correspondence theory as correct, Russell now calls the fact, correspondence with which is to be the criterion of the truth of the proposition, its "objective" - distinguishing this from Meinong's theoretical entity of the same name by stipulating that in the new usage an objective cannot be _false_. He then draws a distinction _within propositions_ between _word_-propositions and those which these "refer to" and may also be said to "mean"; i.e. _image_-propositions. These latter do not mean but only refer to, their _objectives_. This new shift is intended entirely to exclude ideality from the analysis of truth - a significantly new development: "Propositions are facts in exactly the same sense as their objectives are facts."[349] The theory is, that the word-proposition means the image proposition and the image-proposition of course is _pictorial_. Then in the simpler cases of propositions _the very same relation_ holds between the constituents of the image-proposition (if it is true) as holds (or held, in the case of a proposition about the past,) between the constituents of the objective - "in my picture the window is to the left of the fire."[350]

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[349] On Props., 315

[350] _Ibid_.

Russell does not, however, linger on the "idyllic simplicity"[351] of the correspondence relation so portrayed; and for good reason. As he points out, in the word-proposition it is not the fact that "A" is to the left of "B" in "A is to the left of B" which constitutes its formal correspondence with the objective, because the word-proposition that states a dyadic relational fact must contain three terms with a triadic relation between them: "A", and "B", and "R". However, he sees this as due in some sense only to the convenience of non-pictorial linguistic forms: "'AB' might have meant 'A is to the left of B'"[352] - i.e. its spatial configuration might have meant that.

But in any case, the correspondence relation between word-propositions and image-propositions may be left undefined, it is said, because the relation is psychological. It seems better to Russell to leave this undefined, whilst allowing the correspondence between image-proposition and objective to consist in identity of relation between their respective constituents, so as to

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[351] On Props., 316

[352] Ibid.

avoid having to postulate an "ultimately indefinable" relation between the word-proposition and the objective without benefit of the intermediary. Thus the "general nature of the formal correspondence" is given as follows: "You have an image of A which is to the left of your image of B: this occurence is an image-proposition. If A is to the left of B, the proposition is true; if A is not to the left of B, it is false. The phrase 'A is to the left of B' means the image-proposition, and is true when this is true, false when this is false ..."[353]

The only recommendation for this theory is that it allows a way out of the impasse of logical atomism proper by reducing both word-propositions and facts to the same ontological type, between which correspondence may be effected by means of the objective-like psychological "meaning" or image-proposition. But, to list only a few of the disadvantages: isomorphism is retained in the objective, entities are multiplied, an incoherent theory of meaning is assumed, and, perhaps most important, even if it were allowed, the theory can account for only a small minority of relational facts. Russell claims that "It

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[353] On Props., 319

is easy to see that the same kind of definition can be extended to more complicated cases",[354] but on the contrary, it is not clear how the theory could even be stated where the relation in the objective is not capable of being visually represented: this is the inherent limitation of "images".

If the theory of logical atomism is to be made any less unplausible at all, a very much more sophisticated account of the formal structure between the proposition and the fact is required (though of course, this will not save it from the ontological imperfections fatally inherent in its conception of a "fact".) This sophistication is to be found, of course, in Wittgenstein's Tractatus, to which Russell contributed an Introduction in 1922. Among the points which Russell there thought worth expounding is the following: "In order that a certain sentence should assert a certain fact there must, however the language be constructed, be something in common between the structure of the sentence and the structure of the fact."[355] The "something in common", however, it

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[354] On Props., 319

[355] Intro., 8

is now perceived, is something quite different from any pictorial similarity or even any transformation of dyadic relation in the fact to triadic in the proposition: what is required is a relation of projection. Thus in Wittgenstein's words, "We must not say, the complex sign 'aRb' says 'a stands in a certain relation R to b'; but we must say, that 'a' stands in a certain relation to 'b' says that aRb"[356]. That is, in the sophisticated version, the conception is of a wholly logical picture and not of one fundamentally relying, as in Russell's version, on a spatio-visual analogy. As Russell now says, "We speak of a logical picture of a reality when we wish to imply only so much resemblance as is essential to its being a picture in any sense, that is to say, when we wish to imply no more than identity of logical form"[357]. But here already, in the explication of "the resemblance essential to its being a picture in any sense" in terms of "identity of logical form" even the sophisticated theory (or Russell's understanding of it) threatens to lapse back into the former and as I have suggested, ultimately incoherent sense of identity of form. And "logical" as

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356 Wittgenstein (B), 3.1432

357 Intro., 10

a qualification either merely conceals the essentially non-logical conception of the similarity in form (for what does "logical" add beyond the empty earnest that the identity conceived of is not intended to be non-logical?), or it asserts again directly the unsatisfactory thesis of isomorphism. For it seems the theory must opt between two possibilities: either both fact and proposition fall on the fact side (are both things in the world) and the identity of their structures is not in virtue of logical form; or else both fall on the proposition side, such that the factuality of the fact is largely got by hypostatisation of the proposition. What the theory requires, on the contrary, is a sense in which the logical form of the proposition can express the alogical form of the fact - a fundamentally different idea from that of "picturing" it, however abstract the conception of picturing involved.

3. Conclusion

The history of the subsequent development of Russell's theory of truth finds him, by 1940, arguing against Neurath and Hempel, who from acceptance of Wittgenstein's version of the theory of atomic propositions had moved, via identification of these with observation statements, to a theory of protocols conceived

of as basic in a less incoherent sense, and thence to the view that no class of statements is basic in knowledge or in the definition of truth. According to Russell, this new version of the coherence theory reduces to "so it is, if you think so"[358], an objection which in its misdirection is equivalent to another; viz., that in the theory "It is implied that there is no definite world with definite properties."[359] But what he is objecting to now, more than thirty years later, and in terms precisely similar to those he used of the monistic theory of truth is not, as then, an Idealism already suspect on other grounds, but a theory evolved step by step in reaction to the progressively realised difficulties inherent in his own original counter-thesis.

This circumstance is instructive in itself. In addition, it is clear from the foregoing examination of the thesis that Russell had not succeeded, even with regard to the original coherence theory, in accomplishing what is essentially required to sustain such objections; viz., the coherent specification of any stronger sense of "world", "truth", "definite" etc. than the one given in

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358 IMT, 140

359 IMT, 143

that theory. And in fact no stronger sense is required to explicate the commonsense considerations which Russell's objections purport to defend. Furthermore, the demand for any stronger sense must reduce ultimately to the demand for some sense in which reality is to be thought of as "in itself" supra-intelligible. Russell, of course, does not affirm this. His thesis does deny that reality conforms with our thought about it, in the sense that it is constituted by it, but affirms not that reality as such is supra-intelligible but that the form of reality is identical with the form of our thought about it, such that while truths are formulable no truth is dependent upon formulation. In short, reality is not supra-intelligible in the sense of being unknowable, but logic is, in the different sense of being a condition both of thought and of reality. What persuades Russell that this formula establishes a sense in which the objectivity of reality exceeds the mere intersubjectivity claimed by his opponents, is the belief that the thesis is not transcendental; and what persuades him of this is the belief that the analysis of logical form, as opposed to the analysis of judgement, is an undertaking free from the "subjective or psychological manner" of explaining a priori knowledge which vitiates Kant's account. (Cf. above, page 135). I hope to have shown that both these beliefs

are false, whence it follows that his objections are unfounded.

ABBREVIATIONS

Works by Russell

Archives (1)	=	On the Conception of Matter in Mixed Mathematics
Archives (2)	=	Time but not Space as Necessarily a Plenum
CEPL	=	A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz
EFG	=	An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry
Explan.	=	Some Explanations in Reply to Mr. Bradley
Intro.	=	Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractus
KAKD	=	Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description
LA	=	Logical Atomism
ML	=	Mysticism and Logic
MMD	=	My Mental Development
MPD	=	My Philosophical Development
MTCA	=	Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions
MTT	=	The Monistic Theory of Truth
Notebook	=	Notes for a Lecture etc.
OKEW	=	Our Knowledge of the External World
ONA	=	On the Nature of Acquaintance
On Props.	=	On Propositions etc.
ONTF	=	On the Nature of Truth and Falsehood
OP	=	An Outline of Philosophy
PIML	=	The Philosophical Importance of Mathematical Logic
PLA	=	The Philosophy of Logical Atomism
POM	=	The Principles of Mathematics
RSDP	=	The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics
Truth III	=	On the Nature of Truth, Section III

Works by Bradley

AR	=	Appearance and Reality
CE	=	Collected Essays
ETR	=	Essays on Truth and Reality
PL	=	The Principles of Logic

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