Russellian *Annahmen*

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More than any other early analytical philosopher, Bertrand Russell extended philosophical grammar ([1903]1938:42) to areas of interest beyond logic alone. On one occasion of doing so, he made use of nominalizations in representing propositional concepts and assumptions. Nino Cocchierella deserves the credit for recognizing the importance of nominalization in the evolution of Russell's views on logic (1980). Here the philosophical grammar of nominalization within the framework of Russell's early philosophy of language and mind will be examined. What I intend to show is that Russell's use of nominalizations in coming to represent asserted and unasserted (or assumed) propositions is, at the very least, incomplete in its details. As part of this effort, I will consider his theory of assertion and attempt to undermine the idea that when we nominalize a verb occurring in a sentence we thereby cancel the assertive quality that such a verb may impart to that sentence. I will argue that nominalizations of sentences in isolation and nominalizations constitutive of other sentences present us with different properties, properties essential to a complete understanding of the logic of nominalization and how it relates to the semantics of assertion and assumption. This will have consequences for what Russell called "the problem of the nature of belief," as well as a number of other issues. I will close with some critical remarks on Michael Dummett's assessment of Russell's views on the subject of assertion.

In the Kantian tradition, representations are of only two sorts: concepts and intuitions. Besides representations there are judgments. Until Meinong this taxonomy went largely unchallenged. What Meinong did was to introduce a category occupying a logical space between representations and judgments, a category he called *assumptions* ("annahmen"). Someone who judges is convinced of something; and that about which he is convinced is either affirmative or negative. But one who assumes, may affirm some proposition while suspending conviction in its truth. To take Meinong's often quoted example, if one were to imagine "that the Boers were not obliged to yield to the superior force of the British" (1910:11) one might suspend conviction even while affirming that the Boers went undefeated. In this sense, an assumed proposition is an unasserted proposition.

Many of the differences between Russell and Meinong result from Russell's treating assumptions as propositions or propositional contents lacking an affirmative aspect. Let me make this clear, because it is crucial to what follows. I may suppose without conviction, and therefore assume, that Hitler survived. What I assume has affirmative content; but if I refer to the proposition so assumed by entertaining the idea of Hitler's survival, I am not affirming a proposition: there is neither conviction, nor affirmative content. This assimilation of assuming and the absence of affirmation, which is not always obvious, was no doubt encouraged by Russell's taking the view that there is no good reason for distinguishing between an assumption and the presentation of a proposition (1904:339). Russell in effect collapsed the Meinongian notions of assumption and

idea into one, leaving only the idea. The way Russell elucidates this economy is by way of nominalizations of propositions such as the one just mentioned, viz. *Hitler's survival*. Such nominalizations and how they are used will be at the center of our examination of Russellian "assumptions."

Later Russell would abandon propositions altogether, and since assumptions in his early work presuppose propositions, his views on assumptions would inevitably change. Whereas the early Russell would not distinguish the presentation of a proposition and an assumption, Russell during what might be called his "middle period" abandoned the concept of assumption in favor of "understanding a proposition" (1913:108) while ultimately rejecting propositions as mere "incomplete symbols" (1913:109). To some degree, Russell may have been anticipated in his abandonment of assumption in favor of the understanding of a proposition by C. D. Broad, who in a review of Meinong's *On Assumptions* averred that the author had confused the ideas of supposition and entertainment (1913:92). Russell appears to have embraced something much like what Broad had in mind when Broad spoke of "entertaining" a proposition. While Russell would eventually reject the philosophy of the mental act in its entirety, describing the "act" as "the ghost of the subject, or what once was the full blooded soul" (1921:18), and even go so far as to say (1920:401) that the concept of meaning is outside the purview of philosophical method, being of scientific interest only, it was the early Russell who plumbed the depths of the metaphysics of his day, and it was the early Russell who displayed an insiders grasp of its details. It is this Russell who will concern us. The view here is that the later Russell was a philosopher of language and logic who lost touch with many of the issues central to general philosophy.

The early Russell didn't consider the possibility of eliminating assumptions as a matter of logical economy. Besides the psychological facts attesting their existence, which we may credit to Meinong, there was also the important matter of their role in explaining the nature of inference. In *Principles of Mathematics*, Russell had argued that the propositions of mathematics have the form *p implies q*. In his remarks on Meinong (1904:343) he is explicit in his belief that without assumptions "inference would be inexplicable." This is because in inferring *q* we judge that *p* and assume *p* and *q* in the premise *p implies q*. One thing that remains unclear is whether we are committed to asserting *Caesar died* if we deny *Caesar's death implies 2=2=5*? While there is considerable uncertainty as to what Russell's views on assertion entail, there is even more uncertainty as to what he takes an assumption to be. In that much will be said here concerning the relationship between assumptions and the use of nominalizations in representing them, it may be useful to have before us a representative sample of what Russell has to say about it. Typical is the following:

> We can transform "Caesar died" into "the death of Caesar is true":
> or if "Caesar died" is not asserted, but merely (in Meinong's phrase)
> *assumed*, into "the death of Caesar". The object denoted by "Caesar
> died" and by "the death of Caesar" is exactly the same, but the
> meaning is different...The object denoted by "the death of Caesar"
> is a proposition, though it is not *asserted* in this phrase. (1903b:289)

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Meinong, also, spoke of such nominalizations, and he too believed that the reference, i.e., the "object related material" went unchanged. Whether meaning is also untouched is difficult to judge. What he says is that something is lost, viz. the "peculiar function of the sentence," (1910:29) but here I take him to mean only what Russell means by the assertive function of the sentence.

Russell held that a proposition may be divided into two parts ([1903]1938:39). One part is a term, which is the subject of the proposition, and another part is what is said about the subject. This latter part he calls the *assertion*. Thus in *Socrates is a man* the assertion is *is a man*. Russell may not always be consistent in his adherence to this characterization of assertion. Later ([1903]1938:48) he tells us that in the proposition *Caesar died* what is asserted "must be" *the death of Caesar*. One would have expected Russell to say that in this case what is asserted is death and that about which it is asserted is Caesar. We shall soon discover that this encourages a confusion between affirming and asserting.

According to Russell, an assertion always has verbal content ([1903]1938:44), and it is because "x is a man" contains such a verbal content that "is a man" is not to be regarded as a function (1903b:337). Although Russell's distinction between subject and assertion parallels Frege's between argument and function, properly speaking it is the assumption corresponding to the assertion and not the assertion itself that contributes to the formation of the function ([1903] 1938:506). There is, nonetheless, a more general principle operating here: one and the same expression cannot simultaneously designate a proposition and affirm that proposition (1903a:320), any more than an expression can be at once verbal and nominal. Frege makes a related point, saying that in his system his assertion sign cannot be used to construct signs for functions because they cannot combine with other signs to designate objects. ([1891]1966:34). Frege seems to be begging the question, whereas Russell's principle has broader implications; thus, to designate a proposition the expression would have to be a nominal or at least capable of being a logical subject, but an expression cannot be an assertion and a logical subject, for Russell, at the same time. This explains *why* Wittgenstein was correct to point out that a proposition cannot state its own truth ((1922:4.463), for to do so would require treating a proposition as both a term and an assertion.

Not only does the presence of a verb typically indicate assertive content, it is crucial to Russell's understanding of how the constituents of a proposition are bound together to form a "unity" ([1903]1938:52). The fact that the verb performs both functions leads naturally to the question whether assertion is a necessary condition of propositional unity. That there are unasserted propositions implies that this cannot be the case. But if not, then that which accounts for the assertiveness of a proposition and what accounts for its unity must differ. The confusion most likely derives from the fact that Russell is not treating the Meinongian notions of affirming and asserting as independent. It is doubtful that for Russell a propositional concept whose nominal designator lacks verbal content also lacks unity. If so, the unity of propositional concepts and the unity of a proposition must differ. But if one supposes that affirmation is not assertion, then there may be a way out of the puzzle: what accounts for the unity of a propositional concept may be

something that a deverbal nominal and the verb from which it is derived have in common, while what provides the character of assertion may be external to the content of the proposition.

Russell was very much aware of the problems associated with the unity of propositions. Such unities consist in there being a relation (the verbal component) which actually relates constituents and does not itself occur as just another term. Perhaps the most striking fact is that from its constituents alone one cannot infer a given proposition as a "whole" ([1903]1938:140). Russell rejects the idea that the parts of a proposition are united by some external relation not included in its analysis (ibid). Instead we must regard the relational component, the verb, as something different when it occurs as an actual relating expression and when it occurs as a term, such as within a nominalization. By speaking as if both propositions and their constituents are asserted Russell tends to conflate affirmation and assertion as ruling out agnosticism with respect to some proposition. Russell's intent is better (although not perfectly) expressed by saying that a verb affirms a proposition by displacing a nominalized verb in what would otherwise designate a propositional concept, whereas an assertion relates a predicate (containing the verb) to a logical subject. More simply we might say that a verb affirms, whereas an assertion relates a verb, along with what it affirms, to a logical subject. Such a manner of speaking is consistent with Moore's view, which Russell repeatedly cites, that affirming and asserting differ and that a proposition is a "complex of concepts which is affirmed" (1899:183).

One distinct advantage of this interpretation is that it allows for an explanation of how it is that a sentence containing a tensed verb may not be asserted in the context of another sentence, even though the sentence expresses a proposition that affirms a predicate of a logical subject. The point being that the verb may concurrently account for the unity as well as the affirmative quality of a sentence, whereas something "external" to the sentence determines whether the proposition is asserted. Because assertion depends on something external, the possibility is left open that whether a nominalization designates a proposition that is asserted may depend on some verb (or for that matter mental episode) that is external to that proposition. This consideration will be crucial when I attempt to show that nominalization does not necessarily cancel the assertive quality of a sentence correlated with such a nominalization.

THE PROBLEM OF ASSERTED AND UNASSERTED PROPOSITIONS

For Russell, *being* belongs to every conceivable term ([1903]1938:449). The terms of a proposition are whatever the proposition is about ([1903]1938:45), and every constituent of a proposition can be made the subject of some proposition ([1903]1938:48). It is argued that were it the case that a constituent of a proposition could not be made the subject of some proposition, then contradiction would result. To see how such contradiction comes about consider *true* and the consequence of denying that its denotation as a logical subject differs from that of *truth*. Suppose (A):

A. *True* as an adjective differs from *truth* as a term

The problem is that *true* occurs here *as* a term, in particular a logical subject. Consequently, either *true* has become *truth* and (A) is false, or (A) is true and *true* has some property distinguishing it from *truth*. Unhappily for (A), if there is such a property then there is a proposition asserting it of *true*. *True* would then become a term in such a proposition, falsifying (A). Indeed, in this circumstance all propositions containing *true* as subject become false. Even the proposition that all such propositions containing *true* become false itself becomes false, and this is clearly a contradictory state of affairs. This is a reductio argument showing that *true* and *truth* cannot be different objects. The argument is clearer if we reformulate it thus: Assume A_1.

A_1. *True* cannot be made a substantive

But if such is the case then

B. *True* is not a substantive

must be false, since in (B) it is a substantive. However, now it must be that © is true.

C. *True* is a substantive.

A contradiction has surfaced, viz. (C & A_1). Russell concludes that substantives and predicates must both be terms ([1903]1938:44); that is, both have being ([1903]1938:449). In the same way that the substantive, *truth* and the adjective *true*, must refer to identical terms, whether asserted or unasserted a proposition must remain the same term. But here is where contradiction looms even larger. To see why, we must first consider how the difference between asserted and unasserted propositions is to be represented. Russell says,

> By transforming the verb, as it occurs in a proposition, into a verbal
> noun, the whole proposition can be turned into a single logical
> subject no longer asserted, and no longer containing in itself truth
> or falsehood. ([1903]1938:48).

The essential idea here is that such a transformation must make no difference to the object despite the fact that the propositional content is no longer asserted. Later, Russell will move away from this position, saying that a proposition is *sui generis* and that as an object it is not identical to any associated complex (1903a:327). But at this time, on this matter Russell says (1904:339) that he is more in agreement with Meinong (1910:29) than Frege who believed such a transformation would make a difference to the object denoted. Suppose, then, that we nominalize the verb in *Caesar died*. One thing we might get is *the death of Caesar*. But truth is a property of *Caesar died*, it is not a property of *the death of Caesar*, and because there is a difference in properties, what we have are two objects rather than one. This is what leads to contradiction; for now, *Caesar died is a proposition* is not true of the intended object (and is therefore false) since *Caesar died*, as we have just seen cannot be made a logical subject without a change in the object denoted - keep in mind that *Caesar died* and *the death of Caesar* are only grammatical variants

and that *The death of Caesar is a proposition* is similarly false. Not only is *Caesar died is a proposition* false, but so is its negation and for the very same reason that *Caesar died* cannot be made a logical subject. This is the problem of asserted vs. unasserted proposition. In fact it is a problem for the theory of propositions more generally, but what it may be asked is to be done?

One way around the problem is to maintain that there is no real difference between an asserted and unasserted proposition and that the apparent difference is merely psychological. While Russell acknowledges this possibility, he finds it unsatisfying. The root of his dissatisfaction is his belief that there is yet another sense of *assertion*. By this he means the quality that some propositions have of being true ([1903]1938:49). This sense of assertion he calls the "logical" sense and it almost certainly goes back to Frege.

Frege distinguished three components to judgment: an acknowledgment of truth, a thought, and a truth value ([1893] 1967:6). Russell's chief criticism of Frege is that by separating assertion and truth Frege would be compelled to introduce a psychological element into assertion. But the reasoning to this conclusion appears to have been accepted only for a short while. In *Principles* ([1903]1938:503) we are told that what the sentence *Caesar died* asserts is the propositional concept corresponding to *the death of Caesar*, rather than *the truth of the death of Caesar*, which he associates with *The death of Caesar is true*. But shortly afterwards (1903b:289), Russell seems to have reversed his judgment, saying that when unasserted *Caesar died* can be rendered *The death of Caesar is true*, and that it is when *Caesar died* is assumed that it transforms to *the death of Caesar*. Without attempting a final resolution of this discrepancy, there is at least the intimation that Russell no longer believed truth value belongs as part of the content of assumption. Later we will find stronger reasons for believing this to be the case. It is convenient, however, to consider that Russell is beginning to change his mind, owing to a serious revision of his views on the Fregean distinction of sense and reference (or sense and "meaning").

Russell enjoins us, at one point ([1903]1938:48), to consider the relation of truth to a nominalization as "external," whereas the relation of a proposition to truth is best thought of as one of "containment." It would appear that Russell is again under the influence of Moore, who it will be recalled, drew what he took to be an important distinction between "natural" and "non-natural" properties. Herbert Hochberg has maintained, correctly I believe, that the difference between these two sorts of properties is the very same distinction as that between properties which are "exemplified" by objects and those which are in some sense constitutive of objects which do the exemplifying (1969). If this is the correct view, then Russell may have regarded a nominalization as referring to something that exemplifies the property *true* while regarding the corresponding proposition as in some sense contains the concept *truth*. Later (1904:523), when Russell rejects the idea of truth's being such a constituent, it may have reflected a desire to remove any obstacle to identifying the objects referred to by propositions and nominalizations. This in turn would obviate what we have called the problem of asserted and unasserted propositions.

As we have seen, Russell resisted the idea that the difference between asserted and unasserted

propositions was merely psychological. But if assertion is merely the nonpsychological fact that a proposition is true, then a number of peculiar consequences follow. I shall discuss only one. If F.P. Ramsey's theory that *truth* is redundant ([1931] 1960:143) is defensible, then the distinction between propositions and asserted propositions vanishes. Conversely, if there is a difference between propositions and asserted propositions, then it is the redundancy theory that suffers. In the case of *Caesar died* Russell sometimes speaks as if truth were a constituent in a proposition and other times he explicitly rejects the idea, even when the asserted proposition is true (1904:523). The instability of his changing model defies control and yet it excites the philosophical imagination.

While adopting the "logical" sense of assertion, Russell appears to have been working with the idea in mind that there is a sense of assertion that belongs with propositional concepts (perhaps a psychological sense) as well as a sense that properly belongs to referents (which in the case of sentences for Frege are truth values. It is at least not unreasonable to believe that when Wittgenstein says:

> Every proposition must *already* have a sense: it cannot be
> given a sense by affirmation. Indeed its sense is just what is
> affirmed (1922:4.064)

that he is reacting against Russell's defense of the "logical" sense of assertion. Consistent with this interpretation is that if there is no "logical" sense of assertion then one is compelled to accept the remaining psychological sense. This is precisely the conclusion Wittgenstein reaches when he claims that all assertion is psychological ([1914-1916] 1961:96). But there is a much larger issue, one closely related to the nature of assertion and affirmation but one which I can mention only in passing: According to Russell it is never the "concrete fact" which is affirmed. Concrete facts are denoted but not affirmed (1903a:326). What requires careful consideration is the relationship between what is affirmed in making an assertion and what makes an assertion true. If a concrete fact is not what is affirmed in making an assertion, then what makes the assertion true cannot be the fact affirmed in making it. But, then, what makes the assertion true? If we say that it is the fact denoted, then we are left with the puzzle of how what is affirmed is related to the truth making fact. Wittgenstein went a ways towards addressing this problem when he identified the truth conditions of a proposition not with concrete facts but, rather, with the "range which it leaves open to the facts" (1922:4.463).

If it can be shown that nominalization is not sufficient to cancel the feature of assertion, then we cannot be certain that *no* proposition can be made a logical subject. Furthermore, as Russell feared, if it could be shown that *only* propositions that are asserted can be nominalized, then we would have taken at least one step in the direction of saying that only asserted propositions have being, or at least this would open up the possibility that where it appears that nominalization cancels the quality of assertion that this is illusory and that the proposition lacks this quality to begin with; or at least that there is no reason to suppose it present.

THE SEMANTICAL CONSEQUENCES OF NOMINALIZATION

Meinong and Russell are preoccupied with "secondary expressions of judgment" such as "I doubt that..." (1910:63). Sometimes, however, I will be concerned with are tertiary expressions of judgment such as "I believe John doubts that...". Notice the semantic contrasts in the following pair:

1. I don't anticipate John's being here
2. I don't regret John's being here

In particular observe that only (2) involves assertion of the corresponding sentence *John is here*. Being embedded is no reason for serious concern, since Russell accepts that propositions flanking *therefore* are asserted ([1903]1938:35). What is basic to my argument is that even as a logical subject the nominalization in such sentences as (3)

3. Bill's fear that they will not go on vacation is regretted by his parents

expresses an asserted proposition, viz. *Bill fears that they will not go on vacation*. However, strictly speaking, the nominal subject of (3), which in isolation would designate a propositional concept or assumption, may not be what "does" the asserting. Instead, it might be better to say that it is the entire sentence, (3), that supplies the assertion and that the fact *it* makes this assertion is part of the contribution that the nominal makes to the sentence as a whole. We will soon discover that there is an interaction in the case of embedded nominalizations between such nominalizations and the main verbs of the sentences containing them. That the proposition which corresponds to the nominal is asserted will be seen to be a consequence of semantical features of the embedding ("matrix") verb.

Nominalizations necessarily cancel assertion only when the sentence nominalized occurs in isolation. Meinong found reason to believe that only sentences which are embedded are presented and therefore that only they have "proper signification" (1910:48). The principle that a sentence cannot assert while at the same time being a term in a larger sentence is weakened by the fact that its application is constrained by properties of the matrix verb of the sentence which contains it. This requires further argument.

For Russell, nominalization is supposed to yield an object that differs from its corresponding sentence in that it lacks the character of assertion. In (4), however, the sentence *B believes p* is not asserted, and when it is nominalized the result, (5), is not even equivalent to (4).

4. A denies that B believes p
5. A denies B's belief that p

(5) is ambiguous - on one reading only is the sentence *B believes p* asserted. In order to disambiguate (5), we need to know which of the following is intended:

6. A denies the proposition B believes that p
7. A denies the proposition p B believes

If we examine the actual facts of the language, we find that in the case of psychological verbs we are drawn to very different conclusions than Russell was when he looked at verbs occurring in sentences such as *Caesar died*. What we find are verbs nominalizable in propositions without change of reference or meaning only when they *are* asserted. A look at paradigms (D) and (E) supports the point.

D1.   Mother fears Tom is angry
  2   Mother fears Tom's anger
  3   Mother fears Tom's being angry

E1   Mother regrets that Tom is angry
  2   Mother regrets Tom's anger
  3   Mother regrets Tom's being angry

What these examples demonstrate is that the occurrence of a nominalization in a sentence does not guarantee that the sentence corresponding to that nominalzation is asserted, nor does it guarantee that the sentence is unasserted. Everything depends on the main verb.

Russell adheres to the theory that nominalization leaves content unaffected. But if this is so whether we nominalize the adjective in (D2) or the verb in (D3) the truth conditions should remain unchanged. This, however, leads us to the false conclusion that D2 and D3 are equivalent (along with E2 and E3). Yet this is simply untrue. In other words, contrary to hypothesis a change in grammatical form has resulted in a corresponding change in truth conditions. The object content is therefore affected. A correlative fact is that while there is little, if any, semantical contrast between E1 and E3 there is at least *some* contrast between D1 and D3. Not only may D3 be true because D2 is true, D3 suggests that under the circumstances mother somehow fears Tom: D1 does not. We see now that whether nominalization the assertive quality of sentences not occurring in isolation depends on the verb of the sentence containing the sentence.

But what then is the philosophical significance of such facts? Russell ([1913]1956:225) appeals to the fact that in *A believes B loves C* 'loves' cannot be nominalized, remarking that because it cannot be nominalized it is left to function as a verb that actually relates the terms *B* and *C*, even when the belief is a false one. How can this be? This he says "constitutes the problem of the nature of belief." Russell, we have found, is indiscriminate in his treatment of nominalizations that occur in isolation and those which occur as parts of a larger sentence. If he had been more cognizant of the subtleties that attach to certain differences between nominalizations of sentences in and out of contexts, he would have realized that a nominalization cancels assertion only when the original sentence is asserted. He was misled by the fact that sentences used in isolation carry the feature of assertion, and failed to consider that in the given sentence *B loves C* may be unasserted. While the presence of a tensed verb may be a necessary condition of assertion, there is

little if anything to suggest that it is sufficient. In fact, in a number of examples, e.g., *Caesar died is a proposition* ([1903]1938:48) it is clear that the tensed verb *died* is not suffiecient.

DUMMETT ON RUSSELL ON ASSERTION

Over the years, Russell has suffered the slings and arrows of critics who haven't taken the trouble to read him carefully. Wherever possible the effects of this happily diminishing trend must be contained. Michael Dummett in his now classic work on Frege (1973) provides an occasion for just such containment. Dummett says that the Russell of the *Principles of Mathematics* located the notion of assertion in "the indicative mood of the verb." Much of Dummett's criticism depends on this, but his claim is verifiably incorrect. While Russell sometimes speaks as though assertion depends on tense alone (1903a:337), elsewhere ([1903]1938:44) he is quite explicit in taking the presence of a verb as the only "universal" property of assertion. For Dummett what makes an assertion is the "utterance of a sentence which by its form and context is recognized as being used according to a certain convention" (1973:311-312). Dummett says that not only Russell, but Wittgenstein as well as Frege erred in this regard, not seeing clearly that it is a mistake to make "internal mental attitudes" a prerequisite of assertion. Dummett may be right to the extent that Russell was certainly strongly influenced in understanding of the nature of assertion by Meinong whose philosophy was largely about mental "acts." But Dummett, himself, shares with Meinong a similar interest in unasserted propositions in the context of performance art. Dummett is apparently unaware that Meinong discussed this and other such contexts in considerable detail (1910:85-86).

Both Meinong and Dummett regard a sentence uttered in the context of a dramatic performance as unasserted. According to Dummett it is the context of the performance not states of mind that determine that utterances are not assertions; but, imagine that the actor doesn't know that he has been placed in the context of a play; are the propositions he utters, then, unasserted? Furthermore, suppose that a part of the audience does not know that what they are witnessing is a play. Are the actor's utterances assertions for some but assumptions for others. Or imagine that the actor believes that he really is the character portrayed and utters the sentences he does because he actually believes them, and suppose further, that he has forgotten that they are in the script. We can easily imagine improvisations, as in soap operas, where the utterer is not following a script. Is the context what *makes* his utterances assumptive? One is inclined to say that occurring in the context of a play is not sufficient to guarantee that the actor is merely acting *as if* he is making assertions: it is not context but rather the intention that makes the difference, that is, something about a state of mind.

Dummett is also of the opinion that "there is no significant contrast between a conjunction of assertions and an assertion of a conjunction." The hedging term here is 'significant', but this notwithstanding consider the sentence of Moore's Paradox: Someone asserts: "I assert p but not p." Compare this to another occasion, one where someone asserts: "I assert p and I assert not p." It is my contention that in this latter case no contradiction is asserted. Even if one were to argue

that there is no explicit contradiction in the earlier case, there is a contrast, in that in the former case I may be contradicting myself without reporting that I am doing so, whereas in the latter case I am reporting that somewhere I have asserted two sentences that contradict one another. I take this as a "significant" distinction. Now a second observation. Suppose I say, "If the sun rises tomorrow, I will win that game." Here it seems clear that I am affirming the consequent by using the antecedent assertively.On a related matter, Dummet has alleged that given his view that assertion is a force indicator no disjunctive command consists in a disjunct that is itself a command, but here we have a conditional assertion that consists in an antecedent that is itself an assertion. This I take to be a crucial asymmetry between force notions and the notion of assertion.

By considering one instance of Russell's use of philosophical grammar, nominalizations, one comes not only to appreciate how deeply he could probe an issue, but the array of philosophical problems he could hold together at one time. As Russell developed his theories of descriptions and types, the relevance of philosophical grammar as a source of new ideas would become subordinated to the enterprise of extending his results in logic to a restricted domain of problems. This was particularly true after his encounter with Wittgenstein. When the issues of general philosophy discussed by Russell prior to these developments are placed in proper perspective, the fecundity of Russell's philosophical imagination as well of the resourcefulness of those, such as Meinong, who animated his interest becomes increasingly evident.

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