New Method for the Analytic Interpretation of Kant:
Comparing Three Forms of Neo-Meinongian Readings

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Introduction

This paper aims to locate the new interpretation of Kant called “Meinongian interpretation” within the current framework of analytic interpretation of Kant and to clarify its implications more precisely. The pioneer of the groundbreaking Meinongian interpretation was Tobias Rosefeldt. He showed that it is highly plausible that Kant’s approach to the concept of existence is Meinongian (Rosefeldt 2008: 664). He has consistently described the advantage of the Meinongian interpretation of Kant’s thesis of existence, and recently, his longstanding reflections were combined in a 2020 article titled “Kant’s Logic of Existence.” In this article, he succeeded in putting forward the Meinongian interpretation as a comprehensive and consistent method to explain not only Kant’s thesis of existence, but also to focus on all related issues concerning the conception of existence in Kant’s entire transcendental philosophy. His findings deserve high appreciation because he clarified the seven appropriateness conditions of the Meinongian interpretation of Kant and explained how and to what extent this interpretative tool is convincing, when compared with other popular understandings, such as Russellian and Quinean interpretations.

However, as I will show in this paper, there is room for a detailed reexamination of the previous Meinongian interpretation. There are at least two problems with this new position. First, it has not been considered that there are at least three possibilities with respect to the Meinongian interpretation of Kant, reflecting the multiple positions in contemporary Neo-Meinongianism. An overview of both tripartite Meinongianism and the new interpretation of Kant based on these are necessary. Second, previous research findings in Rosefeldt (2008, 2020) have been open to different interpretations in essential respects. A systematic explanation of which of the three Neo-Meinongianisms is most appropriate for Kant’s interpretation and why such an interpretation is preferable needs to be examined. Providing such fair viewpoints is essential to assessing the success of the Meinongian interpretation of Kant.
To meet these two points and enrich the Meinongian interpretation further, the rest of this paper proceeds as follows. The first section identifies the analytic interpretation of Kant in the history of Kant studies. Then, I present three conditions that today’s sophisticated analytic interpretation of Kant must meet. The second section outlines the historical background of Meinong’s philosophy and the development of Neo-Meinongianism. I demonstrate the basic idea of the three forms of Neo-Meinongianism and the point of contention in each. The third section reviews two Meinongian interpretations of Kant as proposed by Rosefeldt. I show that he took different positions on Meinongianism in his studies. I examine the reasons for and the consequences of these differences. Finally, I consider a third possible Meinongian interpretation that has not been considered before. This is tantamount to a comprehensive picture of the Meinongian interpretation of Kant. I compile a comprehensive list of methodological possibilities and some problems in this paper rather than a specific argument concerning Kant’s texts. While I offer some hints, though tentative, to resolve existing problems with the Meinongian interpretation of Kant, I leave it to future research to demonstrate them in depth.

1. What Is the Analytic Interpretation of Kant?

I begin with a brief description of the research method called the “analytic interpretation of Kant,” with a particular focus on the criteria for the success and appropriateness of this interdisciplinary research method. Compared to historical philosophy, there are at least two positions in the systematic study of philosophy: either explaining a philosopher’s thoughts in his or her own words or clarifying the thought by importing the ideas and conceptual schemes of others based on a given theme\(^1\). The latter position has been studied in several ways for centuries, such as studies comparing Kant with Hume, Baumgarten, and German idealists. In contrast, the position broadly referred to as the “analytic interpretation of Kant,” combines Kant and analytic philosophy and has evolved over the last few decades\(^2\). However, this position is not monolithic because of its two different starting points, analytic philosophers and Kant scholars. The following motto can be seen as a common goal of early analytic philosophy represented by Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, and Carnap: traditional philosophies, especially metaphysics, that are purported to engage in so-called profound “philosophical” discussions were based on a misunderstanding of the nature of language and logic. Therefore, they are actually a pseudo-problem and should be eliminated through the analysis of logic and language. This view influenced the early analytic interpretation of Kant significantly, as seen in the works of Jonathan Bennett and Peter Strawson. For example, Bennett stated in the preface to
Kant’s Analytic, “Like all great pioneering works in philosophy, the Critique is full of mistakes and confusions” (Bennett 1966: viii).

Many Kant scholars have tried to repute these hostile studies, but this has often had the unfortunate consequence of altering the ideas of analytic philosophy in a way that was favorable to Kant. The trend of analytic interpretation that began in the 1960s made further progress in the 21st century with the publication of Warum Kant Heute? in 2004, the 200th anniversary of Kant’s birth. Although early analytic interpretations of Kant were either too hostile or too favorable, that this research method has survived so long is remarkable.

As analytic philosophy has become a common foundation of discussion for philosophers in recent years, it is possible to propose a criterion of appropriateness for the analytic interpretation of Kant. Here, I abbreviate matters relating to analytic philosophy as $A$ and matters relating to Kant’s philosophy as $K$:

1. The introduction of $A$ has positive consequences for the interpretation of $K$.
2. Regardless of whether a theory of $A$ produces a disadvantage or advantage for $K$, a context is not changed in $K$ and vice versa.
3. The introduction of $A$ into $K$ has positive consequences in the original context of $A$.

I call (1) the $K$-advantage condition, (2) the $K$-$A$ preservation condition, and (3) the $A$-advantage condition. Some may argue against the third condition. However, analytic interpretation of Kant is developing, and there have been a few, but good, examples that satisfy this condition in recent times. Thus, we can see that the analytic interpretation has finally been able to achieve these three criteria, almost half a century after its genesis$^{(3)}$.

Previous studies have developed in line with the “standard view” of analytic philosophy, such as the theories of Frege, Russell, and Quine. In recent years, however, the analytic interpretation of Kant has undergone additional development, and the new analytic interpretation presents a full-fledged interpretation based on a non-classical and extended logic. For example, Kiyoshi Chiba’s Kants Ontologie der Raumzeitlichen Wirklichkeit (2012) adopted an intuitionistic logic, and Nicholas Stang’s Kant’s Modal Metaphysics (2016) adopted a modal logic. Neither are based on the propositional logic used by Kant nor the standard type of predicate logic from the 20th century, but rather on their extended logic, which sheds new light on Kant’s philosophy. In the context of this expansion of analytic interpretation of Kant, the most noteworthy and epoch-making study is Tobias Rosefeldt’s Meinongian interpretation of Kant’s well-known
dictum, “being is not a real predicate” (KrV A598/B626)\(^4\). I contend that Meinongianism is one of the few hopeful positions in contemporary analytic philosophy that competes with the standard view, and it is both a logically and philosophically “non-standard” strategy. Before examining the merits of introducing such a position into the interpretation of Kant, I provide an overview of the background of contemporary Meinongianism.

2. Background of Meinongianism

The philosophical and logical position, commonly referred to as “Meinongianism,” began in the late 19th century with Alexius Meinong, a philosopher and psychologist who was active in Austria around the early 20th century. Meinong published his famous work *Object Theory (Über Gegenstandstheorie)* in 1904, in which he expressed his basic position. According to his diagnosis of the early 20th century, when the growth of empirical science was remarkable, “the prejudice in favor of the actual (Das Vorurteil zugunsten des Wirklichen)” (Meinong 1904: §. 3) was also outstanding. This bias for the actual led us to an “exaggeration of the non-existent as mere nothing” (ibid.). In such situations, he sought to elucidate, from a psychological perspective (though today it is considered merely philosophical), the fact that the intentional activity of “assuming [annehmen]” is possible regardless of whether there is an actual object or not. Meinong’s argument is sympathetic to ordinary language. For instance, when we talk about Sherlock Holmes, we do not think that we are talking about *nothing* but that we are making meaningful utterances about an object called Sherlock Holmes. Meinong’s view was also friendly to metaphysics, unlike the scientism and logicism of his time, as the concept of “intentionality” stemmed from the tradition of metaphysics from the Middle Ages\(^5\).

Meinong proposed a literal understanding of the description of the object being characterized in our assumptions. For example, a golden mountain is made of gold and is a mountain. The point of Meinongianism is that it accepts the judgment of these things as *true*. It is a crucial point in Meinong and E. Mally’s discussion of the “Principle of *Sosein*’s Independence from *Sein*” (Meinong 1904: 8). Usually, if there is an empty term in judgment, the entire judgment either has no truth value or is trivially false. However, according to Meinong, if we consider only the proposition of the *Sosein*, that is, the “such and such” of the object, then it can be independent of the *Sein* of the object, that is, its “reality.” Thus, we can at least assume the true characterization of objects regardless of their existence. More naturally, when we say, “The golden mountain is made of gold,” we mean that with an intuitive conviction, we are characterizing an object and whether the object in question exists or not is secondary. We do not expect
this sentence to be entirely nonsensical. This is called the “characterization principle,”(6) and is based on two presumptions about our assumption (Griffin 2009: 204-5; Berto & Plebani 2015: 108-9)

(a) Whatever properties we regard as characterizing an object.
(b) the object really has the properties it is characterized as having.

From these, we can obtain an unrestricted characterization principle (UCP) as follows:

(UCP) For any condition $a[x]$ with a free variable $x$, some object satisfies $a[x]$.

Strictly speaking, Meinong and Mally did not insist on this principle. They were aware of some crucial problems with it. In later years, Meinong attempted to make some modifications to this principle, especially concerning the argument called the “modal moment” (Meinong: 1915: 280-283). Thus, we have to keep in mind that there is both naive and orthodox (revised) Meinongianism. Meinong discussed the former only in a very early discussion of the theory of objects. The modified arguments of Meinong and Mally are archetypes of today’s two-property and dual-copula theories, respectively(7).

It is not our goal to consider the history of the modified principle in detail. For our current purpose, it would be helpful to formulate the extreme consequences of the original arguments as long as it is necessary to bring the discussion into the most obvious conflict with the standard view offered by Russell. There is evidence in Meinong’s writings that this principle appears to have been considered to hold in every case. Meinong stated that “the scope of this principle is best illustrated by the fact that this principle applies not only to objects that do not actually exist but also to those which cannot exist because they are impossible. Not only is the famous golden mountain made of gold, but the round square is certainly round, so much as it is square” (Meinong 1904: 8). Here, Meinong acknowledged that we can characterize not only objects that do not exist but even those that are impossible because they contradict themselves. In this sense, (UCP) is by no means an irrelevant formulation for Meinong. On this point, Meinong was subjected to a harsh rebuttal by Russell.

In his famous article “On Denoting” (1905), Russell directly criticized Meinong’s idea. For accuracy, I follow Berto and Plebani’s (2015: 109) approach by dividing Russelian criticism into two parts. The first is the well-known objection from “contradiction” and the second is the
objection from “triviality.” As Meinong mentioned, we can say that “a round square is round and square.” However, as “roundness” is (at least semantically) equivalent to “not being square,” this proposition can be rephrased as a “round square is a square and not square.” The essence of the first objection is that this consequence clearly violates the law of non-contradiction. The second objection is that it becomes self-evident that everything exists. As we saw in (UCP), the extreme example of the characterization principle literally characterizes “all properties.” Thus, the property of “existing” may also be included in the characterizing property. We can also characterize the object as an existent golden mountain. Thus, we can prove the existence of any alleged object trivially. Even if we leave the validity of their criticism aside, it is crucial because when we combine (UCP) with the basic rules of inference of standard logic\(^{(8)}\), it is impossible to confirm with fundamental logical principles, such as the law of contradiction. Owing to these unacceptable consequences, the Meinongian theory of objects was also rejected.

Russell’s criticism was passed on to Quine, and people even began to think that Meinong’s ideas had vanished (Ryle 1973: 255). However, in response to these criticisms, a movement (called “Neo-” Meinongianism) began in the late 1970s that aimed to impose some restrictions on (UCP) to establish a number of non-classical logical positions\(^{(9)}\). Kit Fine wrote, “It has come to be appreciated that, in the debate between Russell and Meinong, Russell was perhaps mistaken in his criticisms and Meinong was perhaps correct in his views” (Fine 1984: 95). There are at least two possible paths that this new Meinongianism could take, and they relate to Meinong’s two presuppositions about the assumption. In other words, the revised Meinongianism attempted to put a limitation on (UCP) by rejecting either premise (a) or (b). The position that denied premise (a) developed into the two-property theory, and the one that denied premise (b) became the dual-copula theory. In contrast, surprisingly, the third and most recent strain of Meinongianism, modal theory, retains both premises.

It is widely known today that there are these three positions in Meinongianism, and Francesco Berto (2012) made a fair comparison of these three positions as far as is possible. I start by listing the three positions according to Berto (2012) and Berto and Plebani (2015), while focusing on the main arguments and the restricted characterization principle provided by each of them. A table at the end of this section summarizes the three Meinongianisms. Those who are already familiar with the following discussion only need to look at the table. I also encourage readers who are new to this discussion to keep an eye on the table while reading.

I start by examining two-property Meinongianism. This position denies premise (a). They revise “whatever properties,” that is, “every (describable) property” in (UCP) to “all nuclear
properties.” The crux of this approach is that the predicate “existence” is not counted as a “nuclear property” of an object, but rather constitutes an “extranuclear property.”\(^{(10)}\) This nuclear characterization principle (NCP) can be formulated as follows:

(NCP) For any nuclear condition \(a^y[x]\) with a free variable \(x\), some object satisfies \(a^y[x]\).

By the distinction of properties, they answer Russellian criticism. We cannot characterize an object as “x is round, square, and exists,” simply because “exists” is not a nuclear property. Every object is assigned its unique set of essential, nuclear properties, but there are properties that can be added to it independently, which are called extranuclear properties (Parsons 1980: 25, 168). It is similar to the distinction between “constitutive” and “extra-constitutive” determination, which appears in Meinong (1915: 176-177). There is a consensus that consider Meinong’s own revised version of the theory of objects and its logical development as proposed by Parsons and Routley as “orthodox” Meinongianism\(^{(11)}\).

The problem with two-property Meinongianism is that it does not present a clear and objective touchstone for the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties. It solely presents an incomplete list of properties, and thus we can take the other sets. Here, the suspicion arises that two-property Meinongianism is an ad hoc response to Russellian objections.

I focus on the second position, called the dual-copula Theory. This theory emerged from the rejection of Meinong’s fundamental premise (b): the object really has the characterizing properties. According to dual-copula theorists, some objects do not “really have” or “exemplify” their properties, rather they only possess properties as “encoding.”\(^{(12)}\) The concept of “x encodes \(P\)” was proposed by Edward Zalta, but similar concepts can be found in the works of other theorists such as Castañeda (1972), van Inwagen (1977), and Rapaport (1978)\(^{(13)}\). Their dual-copula characterization principle (DCCP) is formulated as follows:

(DCCP) For any condition \(a[x]\) with a free variable \(x\), some abstract object encodes \(a[x]\).

In (DCCP), “round square” does not exemplify “roundness” or “squareness” but merely “encodes” these properties. An encoded object characterized as a “round square” is not an ordinary object but a “Meinongian” or “abstract” one (Reicher 2019: §. 5.5). According to Zalta (1983: 18), the distinction between abstract and ordinary objects is primitive, and by definition, \(A\!x = a/\lambda y^{-E\!y}y\!x\). This means that no abstract object exists. However, it has some property in the
unique sense of \( xF \), that is, as an encoding property\(^{14}\). Thus, strictly speaking, such objects are neither round nor square, literally. Instead, they are associated with these properties in a special sense, that is, by being encoded.

Perhaps, the criticism of dual-copula theory can be summed up in two primitive ideas: “encoding” and “abstract objects.” First, many readers think that there is a lack of explanation of what encoding is and how it differs from an ordinary copula. As a logical notation, it is possible to make a reasonably clear distinction between \( Fx \) being the usual exemplification and \( xF \) being the encoding. If one concurs that analytic philosophy improves the ambiguity of everyday language, his argument seems thoughtful. However, “the dual predication view must face the task of giving a satisfactory account of the notion of encoding” (Byrd 1986: 247). Hence, the dual-copula theory is susceptible to the same charge of ad hocness of division as the two-property theory. Insofar as the criteria for the distinction are not explicit, it remains possible that the distinction is ad hoc (cf. Berto & Plebani 2015: 111-112)\(^{15}\).

Second, the idea of an abstract object is fraught with difficulties in that it undermines an essential advantage of Meinongianism, which, unlike Russellianism, does not necessarily see ordinary language and our intuitions as confused, but rather finds some truth in them. Among other things, our intuition about non-existent objects is essential. When we have an intentional relationship with something, we characterize or explore that object. As Tomberlin pointed out, Ponce de Leon, for example, was looking for a concrete fountain of youth and not an abstract and necessarily non-existent fountain that he would never have looked for (Tomberlin 1996: 272)\(^{16}\).

Further reflection on the interrelationship between the dual-copula and two-property theories is needed. Each has its pros and cons. In the course of this discussion, the difference between the third position (the modal theory) and the other two Meinongianisms should become clear. The two-property theory preserves the most attractive theory of Meinongian logic: the claim that non-existent objects also actually have (nuclear) characterizing properties without a contradiction. However, some argue that it is unlikely that non-existent objects are “bearers” of properties in the same way as are existent ones. The dual-copula theory responds to this by understanding the non-existent object to be an encoder rather than an ordinary property bearer. However, an encoding object is abstract, which means that it is necessarily a non-existent one.

Despite these differences, the two theories hold common ground in important respects. First, both the classifications of the property (nuclear/extranuclear) and the predication (exem-
plification/encoding) are logically capable of being paraphrased (Fine 1984: 97-99). Thus, it may be possible that there is a correspondence between what they claim and how they solve the problem of Meinongianism. Eklund encompassed these two positions in what he called “modes-of-being” Meinongianism (Eklund 2006: 328). They both consist of a distinction between two different modes of being, either as property or as predication. This provides a second common starting point for the theories.

However, this second common element poses a severe threat to Neo-Meinongianism because, as Berto and Plebani emphasized (2015: 101-102), echoing Eklund’s point, both positions are subject to the criticism that they are “watered-down” versions of the Quinean position, a view that equates existence with quantifiers. Even if a non-existent object does not have “existence E!,” a “quantification ∃” is still entailed in the same context, and thus, it may again be subject to Quine’s criticism. That is, as long as both extranuclear properties and encoding are existence committal, they can be seen as a watered-down version of the Quinean position.

I move on to the third and most recent explanation of Meinongianism. Eklund called it “non-commitment” Meinongianism to distinguish it from the previous two positions (2006: 328). As Eklund argued, “non-commitment Meinongianism has a completely different view on quantification and the semantic role of singular terms. If the non-commitment Meinongians are right, indispensability arguments, focusing on the need to quantify over a particular type of entity, are at best problematic.” While the proponents call their position “noneism” (Routley 1980: iii; Priest 2005: vii), I would like to follow Berto and call it “modal Meinongianism” (Berto 2012: 137) (18). The most important supporter of the modal theory is Graham Priest. The core idea of modal theory is based on world-semantics and intentionality, that is, the idea that the nature of the characterizing principle is relative to different worlds. In terms of a logical system, this position is an expanded layer of possible world-semantics and uses modalities as a primitive tool. The concepts of modality and intentionality are considered a developmental or additional theme for the axiomatic system of the two previous Meinongian logics. As Griffin (2009) emphasized, a truth-value of the characterization should be determined relative to the world and context in which it is spoken of and should be understood independent from its relation to our real world (19). For modal theory, the characterizing principle should be qualified by the world in which it holds. This new qualified characterization principle is as follows:

(QCP) For any condition \( a[x] \) with a free variable \( x \), some object satisfies \( a[x] \) in some world.
It is remarkable that (QCP) does not limit the properties of a certain kind (such as the nuclear property) or prescribing a special sense in which objects can have their characterizing properties (such as encoding). Originally, one of the most important motivations for Meinong’s theory of objects was to establish a consistent explanation of the mental phenomenon of intentionality. Thus, this third Neo-Meinongianism has an essential justification.

In Priestian modal Meinongianism, propositions about detective Holmes, the ancient Greek God Zeus, and the planet Vulcan can be true but each in a different world. Furthermore, even contradictions hold true in the impossible world. In the broadest sense of world-semantics, which implies impossible worlds, even a proposition about the self-contradictory entities are true in impossible worlds. Such a view may seem “pretty anarchic,” yielding an overpopulated world (Priest 2005: 25). However, the point of Priest’s noneism is that this position explicitly refuses to give non-existent objects a bizarre reality in the actual world, and leads to an ontologically overpopulated universe (Wyman’s slum), as Quine criticized. The non-existent object is nothing more than a non-existent object in the actual world. The judgment about them is only possible because of their intentional relation to other worlds. In this sense, modal Meinongianism defends our intuition by claiming that non-existent objects exist relative to each context or world (Priest 2005: 107-8). In terms of the population in the world, “a noneist, who takes only concrete objects to exist, has a very spare universe” (Priest 2005: 108); “in the context of noneism, the obvious policy is to take all worlds other than the actual to be non-existent objects. [...] all worlds other than the actual have the uniform status of nonexistence” (Priest 2005: 139). Therefore, the third Meinongianism will never increase the population of objects in the actual world. This is an interesting position within the recent philosophical topic of modal metaphysics. Noneism differs from both actualism and possibilism. I will return to this point below.

Two obstacles are probably crucial to modal theory. The first, as Priest is aware, is that they consider the notion of intentionality primitive. There is room for a philosophical reexamination of this point. Second, the notion of an impossible world is controversial even from a logical perspective: the possibility of considering the impossible requires further consideration. As for the current state of the modal theory, Berto (2012) recently revisited Priest’s argument. However, his argument is not Priestian in several respects. In my opinion, sticking to noneism is valuable to modal theory.

Throughout the discussion so far, I have presented a rough sketch and suggested some problems with three types of Meinongianism. I have listed the three characterization principles
for simplicity’s sake. I encourage the reader to reflect on this table in the latter part of our discussion (Table 1). Next, I discuss the possibility of a Meinongian interpretation of Kant as proposed by Tobias Rosefeldt.

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<th>Theory</th>
<th>Proponents</th>
<th>Main Claim</th>
<th>Restricted Characterization Principle</th>
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<td><strong>Two-Property Theory</strong></td>
<td>Routley (1980)</td>
<td>Premise (a) holds only if “property” is understood as “nuclear property ( F^N ).”</td>
<td>For any nuclear condition ( a^N [x] ) with free variable ( x ), some object satisfies ( a^N [x] ). (NCP)</td>
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<td>Parsons (1980)</td>
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<td><strong>Dual-Copula Theory</strong></td>
<td>Castañeda (1972)</td>
<td>Premise (b) holds only if “having ( F )” is understood as “encoding ( F )”</td>
<td>For any condition ( a[x] ) with free variable ( x ), some object encodes ( a[x] ). (DCCP)</td>
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<td>Rapaport (1978)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Modal Theory</strong></td>
<td>Routley/Silvan (1995)</td>
<td>Both premises hold only if it is considered relative to each “world.”</td>
<td>For any condition ( a[x] ) with free variable ( x ), some object satisfies ( a[x] ) in some world. (QCP)</td>
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<td>Priest (2005)</td>
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3. Two Meinongian Interpretations of Kant

As mentioned in the Introduction, I focus on Rosefeldt’s 2008 and 2020 articles. Although both articles are important, he suggested in his latest work that his Meinongian interpretation has developed from the basic ideas that he formed almost 20 years ago. He mentioned in his monograph *Das logische Ich* (2000) that “in a broad, non-metaphysical sense of ‘object,’ even a Meinongian square circle would be an object for Kant” (Rosefeldt 2000: 72, translated by the author). Given this, I argue that his 2020 article is a remarkable accomplishment of his longstanding research goals. The Meinongian interpretation of Kant, though certainly a less explored option, is by no means a haphazard way, but rather a well-considered reliable alternative. I examine how and why Meinongianism is a desirable option for the interpretation of Kant.

Rosefeldt (2008) showed that Meinongian logic is the only position that can offer a complete understanding of Kant’s thesis on the existence of analytic interpretation. Neither the standard theory (Fregge, Russell, and Quine) nor non-classical negative free logic is sufficient for a complete explanation. The point of contention was that Kant described a judgment about something that does not exist as *true*. Among other things, it is important to note that Kant wrote, “The
proposition ‘God is omnipotent’ must remain true even for someone who does not acknowledge the existence of God, provided that he understands how I construe the concept of God” (AA. 2: 74)(20). For a subject who does not acknowledge the existence of God, this proposition contains an empty reference. Usually, such propositions are either trivially false or meaningless. The point is that this proposition remains true in Kant. We can thus assume that Kant’s position may differ quite substantially from the standard view concerning the treatment of truth values for non-existent objects. Here, Rosefeldt drew attention to Meinongianism as a logical position that could have similar consequences. He pointed out that Kant’s central claim about existence – the thesis that existence is not a real predicate – overlaps with the distinction between nuclear and extranuclear properties, the central claim of Parsons’ two-property theory of Meinongianism (Rosefeldt 2008: 664). Owing to this similarity, he concluded that Kant was “doubtlessly a Meinongian with regard to [in puncto] existence” (Rosefeldt 2008: 664).

This result was certainly groundbreaking. The phrase “in puncto” must be noted carefully. In my reading, one critical motivation of Rosefeldt (2020) is that Rosefeldt (2008) discussed only one theme, namely existence. Thus, there is room for further consideration because the conception of existence has a broad impact on the entire argument of KrV. Hence, he expanded the frontlines of the debate in his latest study. As a consequence of this expansion, we can see a decisive shift in which Meinongianism is an adequate tool for the interpretation of Kant.

One of Rosefeldt’s (2020) most important achievements is that he proposed a fair list of the adequacy conditions required for a complete (analytic) interpretation of Kant’s thesis on existence. He made it explicit that neither a Fregean nor Quinean approach could satisfy these conditions consistently and that only a Meinongian approach could. Thus, Rosefeldt showed that the Meinongian interpretation of Kant not only is a useful view of one issue of existence but also has a broad efficacy regarding Kant’s transcendental philosophy in general. It is an essential argument for the objective assessment of K-advantage (mentioned above), at which Rosefeldt succeeded. He offered seven conditions, which are not necessarily well ordered. So, I summarize them here. The adequacy condition presented by Rosefeldt can be roughly divided into three parts: Type-I, concerning Kant’s explanation of the concept of existence(21); Type-II, concerning Kant’s account of nothings; and Type-III, concerning each argument “related” to the previous two issues (Table 2). According to Rosefeldt (2020), we have to argue the following seven questions (the order was adjusted by the author. For the original, see Rosefeldt 2020: 523)(22).
Both the Fregean and Quinean approaches explain three of these seven conditions but the rest of these are not vindicable. For instance, the Fregean approach cannot meet the fourth condition because, if the sentence involves a word that does not refer to anything, then the entire sentence should be false. The Quinean approach cannot conform to the third condition because it takes existence as a quantification. In contrast, Meinongianism can illustrate all seven conditions with a single logical system. Therefore, it is clear that the Meinongian interpretation of Kant should be adopted.

However, Rosefeldt adopted different strategies of Meinongianism as time passes. He employed two-property Meinongianism in 2008 and criticized it in 2020, employing dual-copula Meinongianism as a plausible option instead. He insisted that Kant’s “distinction between two forms of ‘positing’ can be seen as a forerunner of a distinction between two ways of understanding the copula that is central for the so-called ‘dual-copula Meinongianism’” (Rosefeldt 2020: 523). There may be two reasons for this alteration: the first is found in two-property Meinongianism itself, and the second is related to evidence from Kant’s texts.

First, Rosefeldt showed that there is a risk of unacceptable ontological consequences from two-property Meinongianism. That is, if two-property theory is correct, all objects (regardless of their existence) really have characterizing properties. Then, the only difference between being existent and being non-existent is an extranuclear property, that is, “being” (Rosefeldt 536-7). Second, Rosefeldt focused on the fact that when Kant talked about the truthfulness of the proposition about non-existent objects, he consistently used a “counterfactual conditional” sentence. For example, to “the eternal Jew, Ahasverus,” a possible nonexistent person, Kant does not directly ascribe properties but says that such determinations “would inhere in such a person, if he were to exist, even though he does not actually exist” (AA. 2: 76).

Hence, we cannot assume that an alleged object really has a set of properties in an ordi-
nary sense. We should rather take what Kant wrote as a “counterfactual exemplification-in-case-of-actual-existence” (Rosefeldt 2020: 537). Rosefeldt uses Zalta’s encoding theory to explain this counterfactual and less demanding exemplification. Therefore, both reasons compel us to interpret Kant with dual-copula Meinongianism and not two-property, orthodox Meinongianism.

However, the counterfactual conditional is a key element of modal logic, which is closely connected with the third alternative of the Neo-Meinongianism, modal Meinongianism. Modal theory can easily depict the pivotal argument that existence is a matter of modality rather than quantity in Kant. We must consider this third option at least because of the K-A preservation condition, namely, the problem and connotation of the theory from analytic philosophy must be preserved in a different context, such as in the interpretation of Kant. Even if we can never completely meet this condition because of the inescapable brevity of our lives, it is not fair to ignore one of the three accepted positions of Neo-Meinongianism.

From a logical perspective, Rosefeldt’s conclusion is more easily approached from modal theory than from dual-copula theory. Modality and intentionality are considered to be a further development of the basic logic in the dual-copula theory (23). The “modal metaphysics” of Linsky and Zalta (1994), to which Rosefeldt referred, was developed under the axiomatic system of the dual-copula theory in Zalta (1983). It has also been pointed out that their discussion of “concrete objects” is isomorphic to Priest’s idea of “existence entailment” (Berto 2012: 146). This concept was primitive in the system of Priestian modal Meinongianism (Priest 2005: 59-60). In other words, if one only considers it from the perspective of logical simplicity, Rosefeldt’s consequence can be grounded in a simpler and more straightforward theory.

Taking Priestian theory as a distinct motivation within Zaltian modal metaphysics would facilitate important progress in recent Kant studies. In recent years, scholars such as Nicholas Stang (2016) presented work on Kant’s modal metaphysics. Based on Stang, we may claim that Kant is an actualist: there are no mere possible non-existent objects. If Rosefeldt was sympathetic to Linsky and Zalta (1994), he would have taken Zaltian actualistic view of possible objects which is also compatible with full-fledged possibilism, and interpreted Kant’s position as a type of actualism known as abstractionism: possible non-existent objects exist in the actual world as abstracts. In contrast, Priestian Meinongianism is an independent position called noneism: when not part of a causal relation, possible non-existent objects do not exist in the actual world. Comparing these positions as equals would further enrich the connection between modal metaphysics and Kant studies. We will consider the differences between these positions of the modal metaphysics in detail later.
4. Alternative Interpretation

So far, it has been understood that the previous two Meinongian interpretations of Kant by Rosefeldt began with two-property theory and then changed to dual-copula theory. We have also confirmed that this is by no means an arbitrary choice, but rather a claim that the dual-copula Meinongian interpretation is more appropriate than the two-property theory. Finally, I describe how our modal Meinongian interpretation of Kant functions. Then, we can cover all three potential Meinongian interpretations of Kant and resolve the problem of fairness (K-A preservation condition).

The basic argument of the modal Meinongian interpretation of Kant is quite simple. The logical techniques required here are possible world theory and the concept of existence-neutral quantification. Perhaps the main source of resistance to introducing a theory of possible worlds into Kant is that it is somewhat evocative of a Leibnizian understanding of Kant. As Kant is an explicit opponent of Leibnizianism, such an interpretation would be unacceptable. However, if we ignore the metaphysical status of possible worlds and argue only about counterfactual conditions, there is no problem at all\(^{(20)}\). As an interpretation of Kant, the point is that we take intentional relations as a primitive notion in Kant (I discuss the notion of intentionality in Kant below).

Following Rosefeldt (2020), I illustrate this point by focusing on Kant’s theory of relative and absolute positing. Some of the most critical findings in Rosefeldt (2020) are that Kant accepted true judgments about non-existent objects in terms of relative positing and that, while relative positing is a matter of counterfactual conditionals, absolute positing is expressed in the indicative mood. He redefined positing thus as follows (modified by the author): Here, we use double brackets \([A]\) to denote what Kant called the “extension” of the predicates, \(E\) as the 1-place existence predicate, and \(\gg\) for the counterfactual conditional.

(R) A judgment of the form “Every/ some/ the \(S\) is \(P\)” is true, iff (i)\([E!x \gg Sx] \neq \emptyset\), (ii) For every/ some/ the \(a\), if \(a \in [E!x \gg Sx]\), then \(a \in [E!x \gg P\alpha]\). (Rosefeldt 2020: 538)

Less formally, this denotes, “Every/ some/ the \(S\) is relatively \(P\)” is true only if (i) At least one object \(x\) is to be counted as \(S\), as long as \(x\) exists. (ii) For every/some/ (the\(^{(25)}\)) \(a\), \(a\) is a member of the set of objects which is \(S\) in case it exists. Then, \(a\) is also a member of the set of objects which is \(P\) in case it exists.
(A. 1) A judgment “Every/ some/ the $S$ is$_A$” is true, iff (i) $[E!x \gg Sx] \neq \emptyset$, (ii) For every/ some/ the $\alpha$, if $\alpha \in [E!x \gg Sx]$, then $\alpha \in [E!x]$.
(Rosefeldt 2020: 539)

(A. 2) A judgment “Every/ some/ the $S$ is$_A$ $P$” is true, iff (i) $[E!x \land Sx] \neq \emptyset$, (ii) For every/ some/ the $\alpha$, if $\alpha \in [E!x \land Sx]$, then $\alpha \in [E!x \land P\alpha]$. (Rosefeldt 2020: 539)

Less formally (A. 1) says, “Every/ some/ the $S$ absolutely is” is true only if (i) At least one object $x$ is to be counted as $S$, as long as $x$ exists. (ii) For every/some/the $\alpha$, $\alpha$ is a member of the set of objects which is $S$ in case it exists. Then $\alpha$ exists. (A. 2) means, “Every/some/ the $S$ is absolutely $P$” is true only if (i) At least one object $x$ is to be counted as $S$ and $x$ exists. (ii) For every/some/ the $\alpha$, $\alpha$ is a member of the set of objects that exists and $S$. Then, $\alpha$ is also a member of the set of objects that exists and $P$.

Leaving aside Meinongianism, we can adapt possible world semantics to this segment of the counterfactual conditionals. There is a lot of debate around the semantics of the counterfactual conditional and its truth-value conditions. However, the point here is that a world where “if $x$ existed, it would have been $S$” is nothing but a possible world, a representation of “the way things could be.” Thus, Kant’s positing theory can be reinterpreted thus:

(R) A judgment “$S$ is$_R$ $P$” is true, iff it holds in at least one possible world.

(A. 1) A judgment “$S$ is$_A$” is true, iff it holds in at least one possible world and in the actual world.

(A. 2) A judgment “$S$ is$_A$ $P$” is true, iff it holds in the actual world.

Naturally, the expression (A.1) appears very clumsy. Rosefeldt detected these two expressions in Kant’s theory of absolute positing with great delicacy. However, the “object that belongs to $[E!x \gg Sx]$ exists” ends up dissolving the counterfactual clauses (Rosefeldt 2020: 539). As $E!$ in the counterfactual conditional is talking about an arbitrary world that is not necessarily the actual world, but the fact that “exists” is at the end of the sentence means that it exists in the actual world. The point of emphasis of Kant’s theory of absolute positing is not (A.1), but rather (A.2) (KrV A599/B627; AA. 2: 72, 74). Thus, the counterfactual conditional of (A.1) can be rewritten as occurring in an usual conditional, and it logically follows that it is equivalent to $[E!x \land Sx]$. In other words, (A.1) can be summarized in (A.2), and we shall simply call it (A): A judgment “$S$ is$_A$” and “$S$ is$_A$ $P$” is true, iff it holds in the actual world. Thus, the contrast is clear: (R) is concerned with whether a proposition is true in a possible world or not, while (A)
is concerned with whether it is true in the actual world or not.

I now introduce modal theory into the discussion insofar as (QCP) of modal Meinongianism holds relative to the world in which it is discussed. This “world” does not necessarily have to be the actual world. We have “intentional relations” with various non-existent objects. For example, we intentionally relate to non-existent possible things: we can think, believe, and imagine them. As Kant claimed even if we cannot cognize an object, “I can think whatever I like, as long as I do not contradict myself, [...] even if I cannot give any assurance whether or not there is a corresponding object” (B XXVII Anm.). I take this spontaneity of understanding – “thinking” – as one of the fundamental intentionalities in Kant’s philosophy. Following Priest, I take \( \phi \) as an arbitrary intentional operator, such as “think” here\(^{(27)}\). Let \( A(x) \) be any condition and let \( C \) rigidly designate an object of thought characterized by \( A(x) \). Then, although it cannot be concluded unrestrictedly \( @ \urcorner^w A(C) \), we do have \( @ \urcorner^w a^A A(C) \) as a true proposition as long as it is considered in proper intentional relations. This means that for every world \( w \), such that \( @R^w_\phi w \), \( w \urcorner^w A(C) \) is true. Less formally, it is saying that if someone characterizes something in his/her thought, it is held to be true, at least in that specific world or context of thinking (cf. Priest 2005: 84-85, 92-93). (R') and (A') can be written thus in accordance with the ideas of modal Meinongianism:

\[
\text{(R')} \quad \text{A judgment ‘‘S is}_A \text{ P’’ is true, iff S is thought to satisfy P in a certain set of worlds that is accessible by the intentional act of relevant agents a, although it may not include the actual world}^{(28)}.
\]

\[
\text{(A')} \quad \text{A judgment ‘‘S is}_A \text{’’ is true, iff S satisfies all S’s characterization properties P in the actual world}^{(30)}.
\]

Let us explicate (R') and (A'). It is clear that Kant considered the truth of the judgment about nonexistence to be dependent on its contextual circumstances. For example, Kant wrote, “The proposition ‘God is omnipotent’ must remain true even for someone who does not acknowledge the existence of God, provided that he understands how I construe the concept of God” (AA. 2: 74; emphasis added.). Thus, the truth value of a proposition is never independent of the context of the utterance. Kant made the same claim about contradictory objects as well\(^{(31)}\).

\[\text{[In the concept of a figure that is enclosed between two straight lines there is no contradiction because the concepts of two straight lines and their intersection contain no}\]
negation of a figure; rather, the impossibility rests not on the concept in itself, but on its
construction in space. (KrV A220/B268)

I assume that this sentence means that there is no apparent and syntactical contradiction, such
as “a figure is not a figure,” in saying “a figure that is enclosed between two straight lines.” If
what is meant in the proposition is merely a formal and symbolic connection, then this proposition
is not contradictory, but if it is meant semantically or ontologically, then it is. Therefore,
for Kant’s relative position, we find that it has a relative truth value for each context or world
in which it is discussed.

Although (A”) is slightly changed from (A”), there is no trouble with the main discussion.
This is because Kant defined the absolute position as follows:

If I [...] say God is, or there is a God, then I add no new predicates to the concept of God,
but only posit the subject in itself with all its predicates. (KrV A599/B627; emphasis added)

Hence, we can take absolute positing as both simple existential statements and as a complex
proposition attributing a series of properties to an existent object. This judgment does not hold
unless it is true in the actual world (@). Both (R”) and (A”), which rely on modal Meinongian
theory are considerably more concise and straightforward than the original (R) and (A)
formulations. It is not clear how the dual-copula theory affects the formulation of Kant’s positing
theory in Rosefeldt (2020). However, the relationship between modal Meinongianism and Kant’s
interpretation is clear in our scheme.

Finally, I briefly demonstrate how the modal Meinongian interpretation of Kant satisfies
the adequacy condition proposed in Rosefeldt (2020)(32). First, I verify whether we have made
sufficient traces of the Type-I adequacy condition, that is, Kant’s notion of existence. I have
already explained the modal theory regarding the theory of positing. The core idea is that relative
positing is true relative to the world or context in which a representation is situated, while
absolute positing is true only if it is true in the actual world. It can also be understood almost
directly from this explanation that existence belongs to the category of modalities. The modal
theory provides an unmediated explanation of this point rather than the dual-copula theory.
Finally, what about the condition that all existence judgments are synthetic? This can be
addressed by a supplementary account of intentionality.

We can classify all intentional verbs in general into two groups. The criterion of distinction
is the idea of the “direction of fit” (Searle 1983: 7-8). We can distinguish the verbs according to the truth of propositions based on the world or agent of judgments. Given that thinking, the spontaneous faculty of human understanding, can function independently from the sensible affection without an external counterpart, this verb has a world-to-word direction of fit. The thoughts and mere judgments can be true or false regardless of the facts in the world. In contrast, a relation like being affected is grounded in external facts and (if we eliminate the difficulty of illusion) has a word-to-world direction of fit. In sum, “S thinks x is P” is possibly true regardless of how x actually is, but “x is tasty for S” cannot be true unless x exists. Similarly, the relationship between subject and predicates in the relative positing takes a subject-dominant direction of fit. However, in the case of absolute positing, we need not only a subject of judgment but also an existent external object. This object cannot be created by our thoughts but is rather “given” to us through our sensible affections. Therefore, the existential judgment as absolute positing is synthetic because it requires both directions of fit.

Focusing on Type-II, that is, Kant’s affirmative stance toward nothings, it is clear that the Type-II adequacy condition has been met. This is not a matter for which Neo-Meinongianism is to be employed, but rather an intriguing feature of the Meinongian interpretation in general. This is because Meinongian logic distinguishes between quantification and existence predication. Although both the dual-copula and modal theories have something in common, there is a difference in the treatment of non-existent objects. The proposition around non-existent objects is true for the former because it encodes abstract objects. In the latter, non-existent objects are not abstract ones but are targets of intentional relations, and propositions about them are true in the usual sense rather than as encodings. These propositions are not necessarily true in the actual world but in some kind of world of thought.

The last remaining point is the so-called cost-benefit analysis, the evaluation of whether the dual-copula or the modal interpretation is preferable. It is clear from the preceding explanations that the main advantage of modal theory is theoretical simplicity. The modal theory, as a Meinongianism, is immune to the suspicion of ad hocness and defend its position against the impending threat of the Quinean strategy. As for the interpretation of Kant, it can also offer much more succinct answer of why existence should be a category of modality. However, apart from this simplicity, a similar consequence of the modal theory may be drawn in the developed discussion of dual-copula theory too. A detailed explanation of the effect of dividing the copula into two categories on the behavior of the modal operators and the concept of the possible world seems missing from interpretations of Kant based on the dual-copula theory. The key
perspective for comparing these positions is not their logical explanatory capacity, but rather their metaphysical, ontological outlook.

Whereas in dual-copula theory, non-existent objects are abstract and their relation to the subject is encoding, in modal theory, they simply do not exist but relate to the subject intentionally in precisely the same way as ordinary objects do (35). I now return to the thesis of the noneists. They believe that only some objects — those with causal powers — actually exist. All the rest simply do not. In contrast, the positions in Zalta (1983, 1988) and Linsky and Zalta (1994, 1996) — although partially compatible with possibilism — are known as “new actualism” and “actualist realism” (Berto & Plebani 2015: 172). The core idea is that all objects are actual and do exist, but some are necessarily non-spatiotemporal, that is, abstract, and others are possibly spatial and possibly non-spatial, that is, concrete (Zalta 1983: 50-52; 1988: 102-104; Linsky & Zalta 1996: note 8). Again, the distinction between exemplification and encoding, which is the central point of Zalta’s dual-copula theory, is evident here. Tomberlin (1996) refuted this new actualism of Linsky and Zalta (1994), but Linsky and Zalta easily rebutted this refutation in their reply (Linsky & Zalta 1996). They emphasized that there was a distinction between encoding and exemplification. Abstract objects have a different status from contingently nonconcrete objects. The latter could be a concrete object in other worlds, but the former is necessarily abstract. They do not exist in all possible worlds. As Linsky and Zalta (1996) argued, abstracts and concretes are different “in kind.”

Abstract objects are fundamentally different in kind from objects that are concrete at some world or other. Among other things, they encode as well as exemplify properties, and in particular, they can encode incomplete (and even inconsistent) groups of properties. (Lisky & Zalta 1996: 285-6)

Contrary to Linsky and Zalta, Priest wrote,

There are some important differences between paradigm fictional and mathematical objects, especially concerning the modal status of their existence. There may also be some differences when it comes to a priori and a posteriori knowledge about them; but not substantial differences of the kind one might have thought. (Priest 2005: 149)

This claim is clearly discernible from the Zaltian position (36). Given such a modal metaphysical
outlook, it can be said that the disagreement between these two Neo-Meinongian positions is on how to deal with non-existent objects in comparison with existent ones and whether they should be distinguished as decisive as the abstract and concrete. Consequently, if we consider this in terms of the interpretation of Kant, the question will be whether it is better to leave all objects undefined as components of “objects in general” or to admit some abstract objects that differ in kind. For the first time, it is possible to compare these two positions and identify which is preferable in the context of Kant studies. I am inclined toward adopting the modal theory, but further discussion is required to put forward a convincing argument.

Concluding Remarks

This paper set out to establish a new perspective on Meinongian interpretations of Kant within the methodology of analytic interpretations of Kant. I concentrated on giving an even-handed and balanced prospect of the Meinongian interpretation. It has been essential to this aim to juxtapose and compare three versions of the Meinongian interpretation of Kant: the two-property (Rosefeldt 2008), the dual-copula (Rosefeldt 2020), and the modal interpretation which I added here.

Previous studies have already shown that the Meinongian interpretation of Kant has a superior $K$-advantage, but in the present paper, the $K$-$A$ preservation condition has been achieved. As I have shown, according to Rosefeldt (2020), the dual-copula theory has precedence over orthodox Meinongianism in its metaphysical outlook. That is, the two-property theory would mean that non-existent objects only differ from existential ones in one respect: whether they have the property of being or not. On the other hand, in the dual-copula theory, non-existent objects can be qualitatively discerned as encoding abstracts from other objects. I discussed modal theory as a more open-minded approach to avoid this issue. This theory has the advantage of presenting a fairly simple explanation system when compared to dual-copula theory.

What will eventually determine the future of the Meinongian interpretation of Kant is not only its logical feature, but also its metaphysical outcome. The final question is how non-existent objects should be considered. This line of research has an $A$-advantage in the modern account of Kant’s concept of being and continues to enrich this advantage in the modal metaphysical debate. It needs additional consideration, however, to examine the multiple positions in modal metaphysics. Future research should examine this.
Notes

(1) There is a traditional conflict in the way philosophical works are interpreted, that is “spirit and letter.” For a relatively recent example, see Paton (1957).

(2) Many readers may have two questions: What is this interpretation analysis? Does this interpretation not fall into anachronism? There are many things to say about each issue, but I only explain them in brief. First, this interpretation analyzes the logical aspect of the text. Among other things, it is characterized by the utilization of the perspective of logical philosophy that has developed since the 20th century. Second, this interpretation presents extrinsic considerations rather than intrinsic claims. It is possible to propose the best explanation of what Kant has stated from a logical perspective. His account is often confused and difficult to explain intrinsically. The extrinsic research fills such gaps, and one such perspective is the analytic interpretation of Kant.

(3) I do not maintain that we have to meet these three conditions in every article. Rather, I suggest that if the analytic study of Kant is to be established as an objective and acceptable strategy for interpreting Kant, we can hope that these three conditions are covered as a whole by research offered by proponents of this approach.

(4) I will identify passages from the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (KrV) by the page numbers of the first (A) and second (B) edition.

(5) This concept was originally invented by Franz Brentano, and Meinong was his disciple.

(6) In the context of Meinongianism, the same principles are also called characterizing postulates and comprehension principles. Both are referred to here as a characterizing principle as each is synonymous with the other. Historically, it is known that this principle is not ascribed to Meinong himself, but rather to his pupil Ernst Mally. Mally stated that “Every object is either is or is not. But every object is somehow conditioned [irgendwie beschaffen]. So every object, whether being or not being, has a *Sosein*. The *Sosein* of an object is independent of its *Sein*” (Mally 1904: 126). Meinong adopted the same idea with reference to Mally’s initial idea in his *Object Theory* (Meinong 1904: 8, fn. 1).

(7) The two-property theory clearly relies on Meinong’s (1915) division on determinations (*Bestimmung*), that is, the distinction between *konstitutorisch* and *außerkonstitutorisch* (Meinong 1915: 176). This was succeeded by Parsons (1980) when Findlay (1963) translated it as nuclear and extranuclear properties (Parsons 1930: 176). An alternative position to this was Zalta (1983), who adopted a modified Mally-type Meinongianism. He stated in his preface that “Parsons had developed an axiomatic version of Meinong’s naïve theory of objects. [...] I discovered, indirectly, that Mally [...] had had another idea which could be developed into an alternative axiomatic theory” (Zalta 1983: xi-xii). Thus, the prototype of the dual-copula theory was a Mally-type Meinongianism, and in this sense, it can be distinguished from the “orthodox” one.

(8) One can, as an example, mention the principle of substitutability of identicals for the first objection, and conjunction elimination for the second.

(9) One must be careful to consider Meinongianism a separate position from Meinong’s own thought. Today, although Meinongianism certainly takes Meinong’s thought as a significant trigger, however, their arguments are not word-for-word loyal to him. Rather, Meinongianism is a neutral revision of his thought from a logical perspective.

(10) “Nuclear” and “extranuclear” properties are English translations coined by Findlay (1963: 176). Parsons (1980), one of the leading proponents of two-property Meinongianism, also followed Findlay’s translation of the two properties.

(11) See Reicher (2019: §. 5.4) and Rosefeldt (2020: 536-537).
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(12) Formally, "Fx" stands for "x exemplifies the property of being F". "xF" stands for "x encodes the property of being F".

(13) They use a different word for what Zalta called an encoding, and they differ in important points about the criteria for the distinction and how it works. For an introductory list of each conception, see Reicher 2019: § 5. 5.

(14) In his updated version, he distinguished abstract objects from ordinary ones as follows (Zalta 1988: 20-21). Here, he utilized not only normal modal operators (□: necessarily and ◆: possibly), but also their counterparts in the tense logic (■: always and ♦: sometimes).

\[ O! = \lambda x [F(x) \land \Box x E(x)] \]

Says that, being an ordinary object by definition means being an object that possibly and sometimes exists.

\[ A! = \lambda x [F(x) \land \Box x E(x)] \]

Says that, being an abstract object by definition means being an object that necessarily and always does not exist.

We understand that every thing encoded must be abstract objects. Then, it can be concluded, by the definition of an abstract object, that every encodee does not necessarily and always exist. Encoding objects are not like contingently non-concrete possible objects but are like Platonic “Form” or Leibniz’s “monads” (see Zalta 1983: 2-3; Linsky and Zalta 1996: 285-6).

(15) As Griffin (2009) pointed out, there is a hidden imbalance in the division of predication in the dual-copula theory (Griffin 2009: 214). Encoding and exemplification are not translatable because of the axiom “\( \lambda \text{-identity} \)”. \( \lambda x Fx=F \) (Zalta 1983: 30). One of the most fatal problems is that if Griffin was right that the dual-copula theory is parasitic on the two-property theory, then “there would, of course, be little to be gained from distinguishing two types of predication” (Griffin 2009: 214 and Jaquette 1996: 27).

(16) Zalta, with Linsky, argued against this issue again, but this point will not be addressed in this paper. See Linsky and Zalta 1996: 285 ff.

(17) The basic structure of an “indispensability argument” is: (i) Quantification over Fs indispensable in our best theory of the world, (ii) So, Fs exists. In combination with Quinean “naturalism,” it becomes an orthodoxy in contemporary ontology.

(18) Reicher correctly referred to this position as “the other worlds strategy” (Reicher 2019: 5.3). These different names are tailored to the context of each discussion. In my opinion, modal Meinongianism is the most neutral name for it.

(19) Before Priest (2005), Griffin (2009) and Routley/Silvan (1995) clearly supported the modal theory. Griffin pointed out that the problem of the other Meinongianism is that it has tried to determine the truth value of non-existence in relation to the real world (cf. Griffin 2009: 220). They clearly proposed relativizing truth values into “contexts of supposition.”

(20) All of Kant’s works, excepts KrV, are cited according to the volume and page numbers in Akademie-Ausgabe.

(21) Here, we will just blink at subtlety, namely the traditional question of how we should understand the various linguistic expressions of existence. In German, for example, there is a tradition of understanding \( \text{sein} \), \( \text{existenz} \), \( \text{es gibt} \), and \( \text{dasein} \) as different technical terms. In Kant’s case, further discussion will be necessary to see how these words should be classified. At first glance, Kant treated them interchangeably in the pre-critical period. However, there seems to be a distinction in the usage of the word Dasein and Existenz in the course of KrV.

(22) In my opinion, these conditions vary depending on the scope of discussion. For example, we can add Kant’s distinction between “real and logical predicate” as a Type-I condition, his argument on the “table of
nothings” as a Type-II condition, and his criticism of the Leibniz-Wolffian understanding of “existence as a supplemental property” for the mere possible things as a Type-III condition. This does not, however, deteriorate reliability of Rosefeldt’s line. Clearly, his contention is logically an essential point of departure. It is easy to imagine, however, that as an interpretation of Kant, there would be room for further development. I think it is important to emphasize that Rosefeldt has provided a basis for a comprehensive assessment of the three clearly different types of issues mentioned above.

(23) Rosefeldt’s (2020: 542) justification for why existence is not a quantity but a modality in Kant is not satisfactory. This is because Rosefeldt explained modalities in terms of the “counterfactual condition” but not in relation to the dual-copula theory. Although this explanation is sound, it is not sufficient to explain why we should adopt dual-copula Meinongianism. Perhaps, if we understand Linsky and Zalta (1994) as derived from Zalta’s dual-copula theory, it is still possible to make sense of his argument. However, I do not think this is the most direct and simplest method of explanation.

(24) The main reason for it is that we can easily assume that Leibnizian possibilism is different from Kant’s understanding of possible objects. How we should interpret Kant’s understanding of possible worlds is controversial, but it can be assumed that it will settle on some kind of actualism. It is not Kant’s position that every possible objects have their reality in other possible worlds on a par with things in the actual world. Possible nonexistent objects (i.e. ens rationis) in Kant is simply nothing, it is not something existent in the mind of God as is the case of Leibniz.

(25) The aforementioned conditions are not enough to verify the definite description. In my opinion, the following definition of “the” is required. “The” means \( \{x : E \supset x \supset S|\} \).

(26) It is clear in BDG that Kant considered linguistic expressions such as (A.1) superficial. Kant gave examples of fictional objects such as unicorns and mathematical and abstract objects such as hexagons. For example, there are no unicorns on land, but there are unicorns in the sea. Thus, the correct paraphrase of the statement, “(sea-)unicorn exists,” is that “the predicates, which I think collectively when I think of a sea-unicorn, attach to a certain existent sea-animal” (AA. 2: 72-73). Proof of this proposition is possible from a posteriori experience, such as “I have seen it” (direct empirical knowledge) or “I have heard about it from those who have seen it” (indirect empirical knowledge). As Kant wrote, “all human languages have certain ineradicable defects which arise from the contingent circumstances surrounding their origins” (AA. 2: 73). Therefore, such linguistic expressions as A.1 are an unfortunate result caused by the contingency of our language and what Kant found important to discuss was not (A.1) but (A.2).

(27) Priest applied \( \Psi \) to intentionality in general and \( \phi \) to the special intentionality called “representation” (Priest 2005: 9, 84-85). However, in line with Kant and classical philosophers, the verb “representation” has both an intellectual and a sensible connotation (Cf. A320/B377). In Priest’s argument, “representation” is used in a rather similar way to offer a “description” of a fictional object, which is different from the usual sensible representation, depending on sensitivity. From Kantian perspective, the best way to describe this situation is to define “representation” as “thinking” in the intellectual sense.

(28) The symbol “@” denotes the actual world, \( w \in W \) is some world (regardless of whether it is a possible or impossible world). \( R \) is the accessibility relation from one world to the others, \( \phi \) expresses the act of representation, \( \delta(a) \) assigns some constant \( d \in D, (D \neq \emptyset) \). Thus, if \( \Psi \) is any intentional verb, \( \delta(\Psi) \) is a function that maps each \( d \in D \), to a binary relation on the closed worlds. According to Priestian notation, it should be expressed as \( \delta(\Psi)(d) \) and as \( R^d_\Psi \); See Priest 2005: 9-10.

(29) At every \( w \) such that \( @R^d_\psi \psi, w \ \psi^{-1} A \in \psi \). We do not require particular acts of intentionality \( \phi \) be \( \in R^d_\psi \psi, \), that is a certain representation is satisfied in exactly this actual world.
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(30) Berto (2012: 175) introduced an additional sentential operator, “Act,” whose reading shall be “actually” or “it is actually the case that.” Its truth conditions are as follows.

\[ w \models + \text{Act } a \text{ if and only if } \Phi \models + a \]

\[ w \models - \text{Act } a \text{ if and only if } \Phi \models - a \]

Reading: “it is actually the case that \( a' \)” is true at a world if and only if \( a \) is true at the actual world. Therefore, if we employ this operator “Act”, \((A')\) will be described in a much simpler manner. For example, \( \neg S \text{ is}_a \) is true if \((\neg E')E(S). \) However, it may make it difficult to understand that all existential judgements are “synthetic” in Kant. Thus, our tentative formalization will be: \( \Phi \models + (E\neg )A P_1...P_n). \)

(31) Rosefeldt (2020) rightly withheld his decision on whether Kant thought true judgments on contradictory objects were possible or not (Rosefeldt 2020: 542, note 40). I agree with him on this, but to strengthen the validity of the interpretation of Meinongian-Kantian theories, I think it is preferable to model it so that true judgments can be made about impossible objects as well. For more detailed discussion, see Peters (1966) and Shigeta (2021, forthcoming).

(32) Owing to space constraints, it is not possible to discuss the adequacy condition of Type-III in this paper. However, it is not so difficult to reconstruct Kant’s criticism from the perspective of the modal theory, because both issues of the proof of God’s existence and the Cartesian cogito argument are subject to whether we can infer existence from modal concept, e.g. “necesity.”

(33) I change Searle’s original description partially, because of two reasons. First, he discusses intentionality as linguistic expressions, and not explains it as a relation operator between subject and object, as Priest does. Second, Searlean concepts of the direction of fits seem to be the opposite of Kant’s copernican turn.

(34) The verb “being” is clearly not intentional. Thus, my argument is intended to be that “\( S \text{ is}_a \)” should be understood as an abbreviation for “I think that \( S \text{ is}_a \) P_1...P_n” and also I have corresponding sensible data for those properties.” It is also highly plausible to presume that all our existential judgments can be accompanied with a tacit support of the “I think” (B131-2).

(35) The positioning of Priest’s noneist and new actualism in Linsky and Zalta (1994) in the context of modal metaphysics is not entirely transparent. Although it remains as an open question (cf. Berto 2012: 194), we can emphasize that there is an apparent difference; noneists consider non-existent objects as nothing (at least in a certain world), but Zalta considered them abstract encoding objects.

(36) We should pay attention not to confuse Priest’s noneism with Lewis’s possibilism known as modal realism. Although they both accept an positive relation, such as reference, between subjects to other worlds where non-existent objects exist, Priest did not think that possible worlds are as real as an ordinary actual world, as Lewis did. Rather, noneist simply denies the reality of all possible worlds excepts our actual world.

References


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