

DIALOGUE ABOUT REFERENCE

Peter F. STRAWSON - Pavel CMOREJ

CMOREJ, P: Professor Strawson, your work has long been of importance to those in the Slovak and Czech philosophical community interested in analytical philosophy and, in the last few years, has also become known more generally. Seven years ago there appeared a Slovak translation of your seminal article "On Referring"; in 1997 the journal *Organon F* published the translation of your article "Individuals", and the same year saw the translation of your book *Individuals* which, since its publication in 1959, has become a classic (I cannot forbear from mentioning the fact that the translation of your *Analysis and Metaphysics* has been lying in the publishing house Archa awaiting publication for nearly two years). Our readers can thus become acquainted up to a point with your philosophical views, though those seeking a more complex and deeper understanding of your work cannot avoid going to works which have not yet been translated. One of your central concerns in the works which have been translated, particularly in "On Referring" and in the *Individuals*, is reference. Since both works have appeared a while ago, our readers would be interested in your present view of this topic. Reference was of interest to you also in some other articles in which you developed, and in certain details perhaps also modified, your original views. I would therefore like to ask you a few questions about reference, questions which might occur to some readers of your works published in Slovakia.

STRAWSON, P.F: In my reply to your opening paragraph I would like to thank you for your choice of the very important and searching questions which you raise on the central issue of reference. Second, I would like to say that the answers to some of your questions are implicit in some of my articles which may not yet be available to you. I have in mind particularly the articles "Direct Singular Reference: Intended Reference and Actual Reference", which first appeared in *Wo Steht die analytische Philosophie Heute?*, ed. L. Nagel and R. Heinrich, *Wiener Reihe*, 1986, and "Concepts and Properties", which first appeared in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, (1987). Both these articles are reprinted in a collection of my papers, *Entity and Identity*, Oxford 1997.

CMOREJ, P: Perhaps I should begin by mentioning that the English expressions 'refer to' and 'reference' do not have exact Slovak equivalents, which is why Slovak philosophical literature has imported the English terms. Our intuitions connected with these terms lack therefore the background which 'refer to' and 'reference' have in English. They were formed under the impact of various, often not easily identifiable,

views and conceptions about reference, rather than in everyday use of these terms in the natural language. I mention this only because some of my questions might reflect the difference in the understanding of these terms.

English-speaking philosophical literature uses the term 'reference' in several senses. In many contexts it means the object referred to by the referring entity, that is, the object often called the referent of this entity. This use of the term 'reference' seldom leads to misunderstanding: the context makes it usually clear that the author has in mind the referent of the referring entity. This sense of the word 'reference' can be ignored for the present purposes and in place of 'reference' we can consistently use 'referent'.

'Reference', however, has also some further meanings which are not only more important but also more interesting. In your work, 'reference' seems most often to mean a certain *act* performed or made by a speaker. Since what is under consideration here is an act performed by a speaker, I assume that you have in mind a speech act. In what way does this act differ from other speech acts? Would you consider every act of referring to be a speech act performed in the presence of another person or audience?

STRAWSON, P.F: I agree that the term 'reference' is sometimes used for the *object* and sometimes for the *act* of reference. The act may be performed by a writer as well as by a speaker and is normally audience-directed, though the audience need not be present to the performer of the act at the time of its performance. I say 'normally' audience-directed because of the case of soliloquy and private diary writing: Though one could also say that these are limiting cases of audience-direction where the audience is the performer himself.

CMOREJ, P: Do you take reference to be an intentional act directed at a referent of the used linguistic expression? What if the speaker does not know which particular object is the referent of the description? To what object is then his intentional act directed?

STRAWSON, P.F: Provided that there exists, and is known or believed by the speaker to exist, just one object or person to which the speaker's definite description as used in the circumstances uniquely applies, then the speaker's intentional act is directed to that object or person, whatever or whoever it or he may be even if the speaker possesses no other identifying knowledge of the object or person in question. If there is just such an object or person (i.e. one to which the description in the circumstances uniquely applies), but the speaker neither knows nor believes there is, then the speaker performs no intentional act of reference at all, *unless* he thinks his audience will interpret him as using the description to refer to some other object or person to which he does indeed intend to refer; in that case, his intended act of reference is directed to that other object or person.

CMOREJ, P: The expression 'reference' is often used to point to a certain *relation* between the referring entities and the referents, or perhaps to some other entities. I assume that you will not have objections to such relational understanding of reference. For it seems to me to be required by the logical analysis of the statements of the form 'X refers to an entity E' (here it seems reasonable to assume that other entities - such as time, states of affairs, the context in which the term is used, etc. - also enter this relation, but this may be left aside here). With respect to relational understanding of reference there appears the question as to which entities are doing the referring. As I already suggested, in your article "On Referring" you explicitly express the view that the referring entities are persons.

But referring entities are often taken to be linguistic expressions. Indeed, my impression is that this may even be the dominant position in contemporary literature. Your work too contains formulations which suggest that you consider also linguistic expression to be referring entities, though I feel that this is reference in some secondary, derived, sense. In the above mentioned article you objected against reference by linguistic expressions when you argued that "'mentioning" or "referring", is not something an expression does; it is something that someone can use an expression to do. Mentioning, or referring to, something is a characteristic of a use of an expression'. Does this remain your present standpoint? Does it not seem to you that beside this understanding of reference, according to which it is persons who refer, we might also need a notion of a referential relation where linguistic expressions feature as the referring entities?

STRAWSON, P.F: Viz. the answer to the next question.

CMOREJ, P: Let me please give a reason for asking that last question. Let's assume that D is a description which describes a person P, e.g. the well-known K. Donnellan's description 'the man drinking a martini'. K. Donnellan wrote that 'in the referential use of a definite description we may succeed in picking out a person or a thing to ask a question about even though he or it does not really fit the description'. Though I have not come across reference of this kind in your work, yet if it is persons who refer, then it seems to me that we have to take it into account. That means that a person may, by means of D, refer to a person P, who fits the description D, as well as to one who does not fit it, e.g. a person who is not drinking a martini but some other drink. Might this not constitute a sufficient reason for introducing a referential relation between linguistic expressions and objects which correspond to them? Is this not required by the need to distinguish the case where a person refers to the same object as the used linguistic expression from the case when he is referring to an object other than this expression?

STRAWSON, P.F: I take the last two questions together. I assume the relevant expression used to be a definite description and call it 'the expression' and its user I shall call 'the speaker'. In a particular case in which (a) the expression is used by the

speaker with the intention of referring to a particular object and (b) the expression correctly applies to the object and (c) the audience correctly identifies the intended object, we have a fully successful and satisfactory case of identifying reference and both *the speaker* and *the expression* may correctly be said to refer to the object in question. In a case in which condition (a) and (c) are satisfied but condition (b) is not, it may *still* be correct to say that the speaker and that the expression *as used* in those circumstances both refer to the object in question; though it may be as well to add that though the expression in question was *used* by the speaker to *refer* to the object in question, the *expression itself* does not *really* refer to that object in the circumstances, but, if to any at all, then to some other.

CMOREJ, P: Since I cannot but agree with your claim that 'the expression itself does not refer to anything' ("On Referring"; I'm not sure, however, that this applies to all expressions, e.g. mathematical ones), it must be added that this relation depends also on time, states of affairs, context and other factors, and so is not a relation constituted solely by expressions on the one side and objects corresponding to them on the other. It is not the expression as such which is referring, but expression in such and such a time, states of affairs, context, etc. This reference is not a binary relation between expressions and their referents, but between expressions, states of affairs or possible worlds, moments of time, etc. on the one hand, and referents on the other. The expression 'The American President' itself does not refer to anything: its referent depends also on the states of affairs, time and perhaps other factors.

A relational construal of the expression 'reference' is therefore at least ambiguous: according to one of its meanings it is people who refer; according to another it is (some) linguistic expressions. There is a close relation between these two senses of reference: we usually employ the description D to refer to an object which D refers to at the time of its use; this fact explains, and up to a point also justifies, the use of same term 'reference' in both cases. In this context there appears the question regarding the relation between these two notions. Do you consider these are two independent notions or do you think that reference by expressions is derived from reference by persons, so that the former might be determined by means of the latter? What would such determining look like?

STRAWSON, P.F: (First, with your parenthetical point about e.g. mathematical expressions and perhaps some other designations of abstract objects, I am inclined to agree: their reference, in a given language or system may stand constant independently of circumstances of use). On the major point about the relation, *in ordinary cases*, between reference by persons and reference by expressions: a person P in circumstances C refers to an object O by the use of an expression D; and the expression D, as used by P in C, also refers to O. The two notions of reference are certainly not independent of each other, but neither does it seem to me that either is *determined* by the other. Rather they are mutually dependent and co-equal in standing.

CMOREJ, P: In the case of reference by persons it is not clear to me whether the person using the description D can refer to an object O only when he knows that O is the referent of D, or whether he can refer to it also when he lacks that knowledge, though he knows that there exists exactly one object fitting the description D. In your *Individuals* you wrote 'that in order for an identifying reference to a particular to be made, there must be some true empirical proposition known, in some not too exacting sense of this word, to the speaker, to the effect that there is just one particular which answers to a certain description' (p. 183). This, however, does not as yet entail that the speaker must know the referent of the description D, that is, that he must know who or what is its referent. For example when we hear someone singing in the adjoining room, we shall know that the expression 'The person who is singing in the adjoining room' is true, but we do not have to know what particular person it is (I assume that we know that there is only one person in the room and that the room does not contain some machinery broadcasting or reproducing singing).

To take another example concerning the same problem. Does a person refer to the President of the USA if he 'knows' that the USA have only one President, and claims that 'The President of the USA is a Democrat', yet does not know that the President of the USA right now is Bill Clinton? And is one referring to him if one takes for the President of the USA a person who is not so? We could formulate the problem in the following way: let's assume that a person X knows while a person Y does not know, that Bill Clinton is the President of the USA and that they both use the given sentence at the same time. Can we then say that they are both referring to Bill Clinton? And could we say this even if the person believes that the President of the USA is someone else?

STRAWSON, P.F: Part of my answer to this question is already given in the answer to your third question. If the speaker knows there is just one person who currently fits the description, then he is referring to that person, even if he has no other identifying knowledge of him. Thus both X and Y in your second example are referring to Bill Clinton *except in the case* where Y thinks the President is someone else of whom he knows. In that case a person Y can be said to be referring *in intention* to that other person, although it may or must be added that, in the circumstances, the expression he uses *really* refers to Bill Clinton.

CMOREJ, P: Some descriptions describe objects which either no longer exist or don't yet exist, e.g. 'the first President of the USA', or 'The last Pope elected in the 21st century'. To whom does a speaker who uses such a description refer? Given that the first of the given descriptions does not satisfy the existence requirement, a speaker who says today 'The first President of the USA was murdered' speaks neither truly nor falsely - something which a historian would, presumably, be less than happy with. The referent of the second description presumably does not exist yet; this implies that the prediction 'The last Pope elected in the 21st century will be an Arab' also lacks truth-

value, which in turn might distress a prognostician. Or can we say that the referents of these descriptions do nevertheless exist in some way?

STRAWSON, P.F: The circumstances that the object which uniquely fits the description *no longer* exists makes no difference at all to the genuineness of the reference. Thus the speaker who says 'The first President of the USA was murdered' refers to Washington and he says something false. The speaker who says 'The French Emperor who was defeated at Waterloo died on St. Helena' refers to Napoleon and says something true. The case of a description for which there does not yet exist, though there may in the future exist, an individual which uniquely fits it is different. The speaker, to use Donnellan's terms, does not make a referential, but an attributive or hypothetical, use of the description. Thus, in your example, 'Whoever turns out to be the last Pope elected in the 21st century ...'. Or, in the case of a man who hopes for children but as yet has none and says 'My son will follow in my footsteps' he is saying 'If I have a son, he will etc.'.

CMOREJ, P: I have already asked you the question to what object the intentional act of reference is directed when the person using the description D does not know which particular object is being described by this description, though he knows that there exists precisely one object fitting the description D. Could not this object be the sense or the intension of the description D (I have here in mind Frege's sense or its *explicatum* in intensional semantics, or something similar)?

STRAWSON, P.F: It follows from my answer to your third and seventh questions that my answer to this question must be: No, the object of the act of reference is the object the description fits and *not* the sense of the expression.

CMOREJ, P: Let's turn now to the reference of certain categories of expressions. In your works, at least those accessible to me, you are concerned primarily with reference of expressions which take the place of the subject in subject-predicate statements of the form $F(x)$. You seemed less concerned with statements of the form $G(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ in which G is an n -argument predicate. If I understood you correctly, any argument a_i of the predicate G in the statement $G(a_1, \dots, a_n)$ refers to the same object as in the subject-predicate statement $P(a_i)$. I am, however, uncertain whether this is the case also when G is an intensional predicate, such as e.g. the expression 'to think of'. For the truth of the statement 'X is thinking of D', where D is a description of a certain object, does not seem to depend on whether D satisfies the requirement of existence and uniqueness. We can think of the president of a country which at the moment happens to be without a president. Doesn't this possibility have an effect on the reference of the expression D in the above statement? And would it not, in this case, be more suitable to take sense, perhaps intension of the description D , as the referent of D ?

STRAWSON, P.F: 'Thinking of'. Consider 'I am thinking of the King of France'. Uttered in the context of a historical discussion, this might be a true remark, the description being used perhaps to refer to Louis XIV. Taken out of any such context and uttered today, no reference is made by its use; the remark, however, does not lack a truth-value, but is simply false (see my "Identifying Reference and Truth Values") unless uttered by some old-fashioned royalist who believes, of someone X, that X is by right of descent, the true King of France; in which case the reference is made to X, and the remark is true.

CMOREJ, P: A similar possibility seems to arise when a statement of the form $F(X)$ or $Q(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ is within the scope of some modal operator or some propositional attitude expression. What, e.g. does the description 'The President of the USA' refer to in the statement 'It's possible that the President of the USA is a Republican', or in the statement 'X believes that the President of the USA is a Republican'? Does there seem to you to be any point in thinking about reference of such expressions in contexts of this kind?

STRAWSON, P.F: Viz. my answer to the following question.

CMOREJ, P: The answer to the last three questions depends evidently also on whether one accepts the principle according to which the statement S' obtained from the statement S by means of replacing the referring expression D by expression D' which refers to the same object as does D , has the same truth-value as the statement S . What is your view of this principle? In this connection there also emerges the question whether the referent of a compound expression is unequivocally determined by the referents of its constituents.

STRAWSON, P.F: Here we enter the tricky area of modal or propositional attitude contexts. I shall say that when an expression D is used *directly or purely referentially* in such a context, then the replacement of D by another expression having the same reference as D does preserve the truth-value of the original statement. In these cases the principle of substitutability of co-referential expressions *salva veritate* holds good. But of course an expression D in such a context is often not used in this way as illustrated in the two examples in your question 11. The question of the reference here does not normally arise; though it is perhaps worthwhile adding that there might be someone X acquainted with recent gossip but profoundly stupid or ignorant of American politics of whom it could truthfully be said using the expression 'the President of the United States' purely referentially, that X believes that the president of the United States (i.e. Clinton) is a Republican. So both types of use occur; and examples of both can readily be devised.

CMOREJ, P: Your conception of individuals is very tolerant and, in the good sense of the word, broad. In your article "Individuals" you wrote: 'So an individual is

anything which exists which is, in principle, an identifiable object of singular reference'. Can this be understood so that truth values too are individuals? Are they not being referred to by the arguments of the predicate 'the same' which appears in the proposition 'The truth-value of the proposition that the president of the USA is a Democrat is the same as the value of the proposition that Bill Clinton is a Democrat'? In this connection I cannot help asking whether propositions too refer and whether their referents are, as in Frege, the truth-values.

STRAWSON, P.F: The answer to the first part of your question is 'Yes'. The truth-value of a proposition may indeed be an identifiable object of singular reference and hence an individual, as in the case of your cited proposition. But saying this gives me no reason for agreeing with Frege that *propositions* refer and have truth-values as their reference; and I see no valid independent reason for accepting this.

CMOREJ, P: Now I would like to ask a few questions concerning reference to universals. Every universal can figure as an object of a singular identifying reference. What is unclear to me, however, is whether universals are being referred to also by expressions which occur in predicates. The position taken by you in your article "Individuals" seems somewhat equivocal. For there you first offer the suggestion to consider as expressions designating or standing for universals also adjectives, common nouns and verb-stems which occur in predicates. Later, however you cast doubt on this. At one place you write that 'singular reference to universals can (perhaps) properly be held to be effected, not only by grammatically singular reference substantival or noun-like expressions in subject positions, but equally by adjectives, common nouns or verb-stems figuring as parts of predicate-expressions'; yet a few lines later you cast doubt on this by presenting it as a 'controversial contention'. Here you are appealing to the philosophical tradition which 'interprets the notion of being an object of reference in such a way as to rule out the idea that a universal figures as an object of reference when it is expressed by an adjective, a common noun or a verb-stem occurring as a mere part of a predicate expression'. Is this tradition your only reason for later doubting the original suggestion?

STRAWSON, P.F: Viz. the answer to the next question.

CMOREJ, P: Might this tradition not be rendered doubtful by arguments such as:

Wisdom is a rare quality
Socrates is wise

Socrates has a rare quality ?

This argument seems intuitively valid. Will it, however, remain valid even when one of the expression 'wisdom', 'wise' - do not refer to wisdom? Can the intuitive validity of such arguments be preserved unless both expressions refer to the same thing or at least are so connected that the noun expression 'wisdom' refers to the property and the adjective 'wise' to the extension of this property? In favour of reference we can also mention the fact that the second premise could be formulated as: 'Socrates has the property of being wise' (I assume that the expressions 'the property of being wise' and 'wisdom' have not only the same referent but also the same meaning).

STRAWSON, P.F: I still adhere to the suggestion made in "Individuals" (and in the article "Concepts and Properties" referred to at my first answer) that singular reference to universals can be effected by adjectives etc. occurring as parts of predicate expressions. I call this contention 'controversial' not because I doubt it myself, but because I suspect that many other philosophers would find it difficult to accept because it runs counter to established tradition. So I thoroughly endorse the implicit argument against that tradition in your following paragraph; and would insist that reference is to the universal itself and not to its extension.

CMOREJ, P: We run across the same problem with individual descriptions. Does e.g. the description 'the President of the USA' which occurs in the predicate 'is married to the President of the USA' lose its referential character? Or does it retain this character merely because the expression 'is married to' can be regarded as a two-argument predicate, and the expression 'the President of the USA' is its second argument?

STRAWSON, P.F: In 'N is married to the President of the USA' both nominal expressions are referential and 'is married to' is a two-place predicate with two argument places.

CMOREJ, P: If we use Carnap's terminology from *Meaning and Necessity*, we can say that an individual description D refers in the statement 'D is P' to its extension (the described individual), and the general term G in the statement 'G is S' to its intension (property). Unless I am mistaken, the theory you later characterise as controversial also takes adjectives, common nouns and verb-stems *qua* parts of predicate-expressions to refer to their intension. There thus seems to be a certain asymmetry and this compels me to ask a question which, from your standpoint may seem strange, perhaps even incomprehensible, and which occurs to me perhaps only because my intuitions regarding 'refer to' and 'reference' may not have the natural language background which yours have (I've mentioned this in my second question). Namely: Why does the general term not refer either as a subject or as part of the predicate-expression to its extension? Does not the difference between the form of the general term in the subject ('wisdom') and its form in the predicate ('wise') point to the possibility of a different interpretation of their reference? Why should we, without

further investigation, reject a conception according to which the general term occurring in the predicate does not refer to property (or relation) as such, but to its extension? Or are you of the opinion that only expressions of the form 'the class of (-e)s' (as e.g. the expression 'the class of philosophers') can refer to the extension of general terms? Do these expressions refer to sets?

STRAWSON, P.F: Of course reference to particulars and reference to universals are different in that their objects are of different categories. But there is no other asymmetry. When, making a singular reference to a particular man, I say 'the man speaking now is clever', I attribute the individual universal cleverness to the individual particular man who in the circumstances fits the description. The particular man referred to is not the *extension* of the phrase, or, of course, its intension. When we are discussing a particular *use* of such a descriptive phrase, it makes no sense to ask either for that *use's* intention or extension. The phrase *itself* may indeed have both: an intension (i.e. sense) and, more dubiously an extension (i.e. perhaps all men speaking anywhere at the moment of utterance). So I question there being any asymmetry involved in the 'controversial' view except that between reference to a particular on the one hand and reference to the universal on the other.

CMOREJ, P: In your analysis of singular statements 'S is P' you pick out the copula 'is' as an indispensable constituent of the predicate 'is P', which does not stand for anything, does not refer to anything, though you allow, at least within the controversial theory, that the expression 'P' does. Would you analyse in the same way also statements of the form 'G(x₁, x₂, ..., x_n)'? What is the predicate of this statement? Is it the expression 'are in the relation'?

Does the copula 'is' occur also in statements such as 'Bill Clinton is an element of the class of Americans', or is there in this case instead of the copula an expression for a class membership?

STRAWSON, P.F: First, relational statements in general. Take 'Othello loves Desdemona'. Here are three references: to the two particular s O and D, an ordered pair, and to the relational universal signified by the verb-stem 'love', the non-referential copulating function being performed in this case by the finite form of the verb.

Now, the particular case of class membership: 'Clinton is a member of the class of Americans'. Here again there are three references: to Clinton, to the class of Americans and to the relational universal of class-membership, the copula performing its usual non-referential function.

CMOREJ, P: Nearly half a century has passed since the publication of your article "On Referring". Your criticism of Russell's theory of descriptions has been extremely influential and stimulating and has for five decades marked the development of the theory of description and meaning, not the least because in that article you introduced and applied several important concepts and nuanced distinctions which were completely new and cast a different light on the entire topic of reference. I have no doubt that you were justified in criticising Russell on the grounds that his theory

ignores the way descriptions are used in natural language. Despite that, however, I cannot resist the impression that the controversy between you and Russell was *partly* due to a certain misunderstanding. Since the everyday notion of reference or denotation is neither unequivocal nor sufficiently sharp, it can be explicated in different ways. The result of the explication depends partly on our intuitions connected with the uses of the explicands, partly also on the aim we pursue in the explication.

It seems to me that Russell was not particularly interested or worried by the ordinary meaning and use of the expression 'reference' and 'denotation'. In his explication of the intuitive notion of reference he was aiming for a conception according to which the referent of the expression is the object which is already fully given by the meaning of the expression, so that its identification requires no empirical procedures, such as are needed, for example, when we wish to find out who or what is the referent of some empirical description. In his semantics he applied the principle of acquaintance with an affirmed proposition and with its subject matter, i.e. with what the proposition speaks of. In the case of descriptions we often lack this acquaintance with the referent and this might also have been one of the reasons why Russell denied them a referential character. His notion of reference has thus a purely logico-semantic, non-empirical, character. Had Russell not denied descriptions their referential character, the principle of acquaintance would have compelled him to declare sense or some such entities as referents of empirical descriptions (something he could not do both because of his disagreement with Frege's semantics and because of his known 'robust sense of reality').

Your approach, however, was very different. You were, it seems to me, primarily concerned that your concept of reference should correspond as much as possible to its ordinary understanding and use. The result of your approach was an empirically pragmatic concept of reference, which undoubtedly provided a more adequate rendering of the intuitive concept of reference than does Russell's. By 'empirical character' of your concept of reference I mean the fact that the referent of many expressions can be determined only after we carry out certain empirical procedures (sometimes it is sufficient to look at the object, sometimes a demanding and complicated experiment is needed). If I am not mistaken, Russell rejected this understanding of reference because in his semantics he leans on the principle of acquaintance with what we speak of or about. So it seems to me that there may have arisen a misunderstanding between you and Russell due to the fact that each of you understood by reference something different and that your explication of the concept of reference was pursuing a different goal. How do you see this, after nearly 50 years since the publication of your article "On Referring"? Does it not seem to you that Russell's, or a Russellean, understanding of reference has also its justification and that it, in a certain sense, complements your understanding? Or do these two concepts seem to you incompatible?

STRAWSON, P.F: I agree entirely that Russell and I had quite different interests and objectives, so that in a sense our views simply passed each other by. My own interest was akin to that of the theoretical linguist in that I was concerned with the issue of how the various types of expression in question (singular definite descriptions,

proper names etc.) were actually used and understood in the ordinary business of linguistic communication; and I held, and still hold, that if Russell's views are seen as an attempt to clarify this issue, then they are mistaken. But, as already conceded, Russell was not in the least concerned to give a realistic account of the actual use of the expressions in question. He had altogether other theoretical aims and purposes, in pursuit of which he produced a theory whose elegance prompted Ramsey to call it 'a paradigm of philosophy' and remains to command the admiration, if not the assent, of us all.

CMOREJ, P: In his *Speech Acts* J.R. Searle continues within the framework of your theory of reference (in the chapter on reference he writes that his theory 'is in the tradition that begins with Frege and continues in Strawson's *Individuals*'). Do you think that his theory is developed within your intentions or have you some fundamental objections to it? I am here concerned only with his theory of reference, not with his account of the theory of predication where - presumably owing to his leanings towards nominalism - he expresses his disagreement with your term theory of predication.

STRAWSON, P.F: Viz. the answer to the following question.

CMOREJ, P: My last question has perhaps a somewhat journalistic flavour, for which I would like to apologise in advance: What is your view of today's theory or theories of reference?

STRAWSON, P.F: I am delighted to observe that John Searle and may others continue to view the topic of reference as a subject for lively debate; but since I have said, in a variety of places, most of what I have to say, at least for the time being, on the subject, I shall forbear, with your permission from comment on more recent discussion.

CMOREJ, P: Professor Strawson, allow me to express my appreciation of your willingness to engage with me in this dialogue and, in the name of the readers of *Organon F*, to thank you sincerely for your answers.

STRAWSON, P.F: Finally, I should like both to thank you once more for your questions, and to add that I am only too aware that some at least of my answers are disputable, and all may raise yet further questions. But such is the nature of our discipline.

Slovenské repliky P. Cmoreja do angličtiny preložila *Marina Barabas*

Professor P.F. Strawson
University College
OXFORD
OX1 4BH
England

Pavel Cmorej
Filozofický ústav SAV
Klemensova 19
813 64 Bratislava
Slovenská republika