REJOINDER TO DEJNOŽKA'S REPLY

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It is common knowledge that Russell does not explicitly endorse modal logic in any of his major logical writings. Nor does my review of *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance*[1] suggest that Jan Dejnožka denies or is somehow unaware of this. On the contrary, I assume it to be obvious that any commitment Russell may have had to modal logic must be *implicit* in his writings, not explicit. The real issue is whether there is evidence of any such commitment. I will state, briefly, why I remain sceptical.

First, Dejnožka's book lacks any interpretive methodology. When the question arises, *In which contexts is it permissible to translate Russell's language (formal or informal) into a modal system?,* we get the following: attribute a modal logic to Russell if "it is more reasonable than not to paraphrase Russell's thinking into the modal logic." This condition, we are told, "is met to the extent that a certain modal logic is *logically implicit* in Russell's thinking." All of which goes without saying, but it simply delays the inevitable question: *when* is a modal logic *logically implicit* in a text? Dejnožka's current answer: a modal logic is logically implicit in a text when the text logically implies the paraphrase.[2] But the final suggestion is incoherent, since we cannot tell what a text logically implies until we have discerned its logical form—i.e. until we have already paraphrased it into some formal idiom or other.

A related problem is that Dejnožka consistently fails to distinguish two sorts of claims:

- Certain passages in Russell lend themselves to a modal interpretation—they can be captured in a given system of modal logic, e.g. S13.
- Such an interpretation reflects Russell's intentions.

That a modal system captures one or another of Russell's accounts of logical truth in itself entails nothing regarding Russell's intentions. The modal system G described by George Boolos in a number of publications provides an alterna-

[1] "Russell's Modal Logic?", *Russell*, n.s. 20 (2000): 165–72.
[2] "Reply to Ostertag", *Russell*, n.s. 21 (2001): 63–5 (at 65).

tive formalization of Peano Arithmetic, enabling the derivation of Gödel's incompleteness theorems. Yet the fact that this is possible does not in any way suggest that Gödel himself was implicitly committed to G. Unfortunately, Dejnožka often writes as if the mere possibility of a modal interpretation is genuinely revealing as to Russell's intentions. But it is just as implausible to maintain this as it is to claim that it was Gödel's intention to present Boolos's G.[3]

Second, as I maintain in my review, Dejnožka fails to take seriously the many contexts in which Russell is explicitly critical of modality. Dejnožka responds that he has quoted these very passages and that he "embraces them as half—but only half—of [his] basic message" ("Reply", p. 64). But citing contexts in which Russell appears to find modality congenial does nothing to mitigate the force of the contexts in which Russell explicitly repudiates modality. It is Dejnožka's responsibility to explain how the latter are to cohere with his interpretation. To avoid this issue is to skirt the real philosophical and interpretive challenge that the project entails.

Finally, we come to Dejnožka's confusions surrounding MDL—the triad of equivalences that underwrite the interpretation of *Principia* as a modal logic. In light of Dejnožka's steadfast refusal to formalize the various modal systems he attributes to Russell, it hardly makes a difference whether MDL is a modal logic or merely, to use his terminology, a "modal theory" (assuming that the latter ultimately amounts to something other than a modal logic).[4] What *is* important is whether MDL is trivial. If it is, then it is quite beside the point to pursue the various extensions of MDL. Since I maintain that Russell is not committed, implicitly or otherwise, to a substantive reading of MDL—one in which the modal operators have their conventional meanings—then he is not committed to these extensions, so there is no need for detailed discussion. What remains central is my argument for the claim that MDL is trivial. But this argument (unacknowledged by Dejnožka) is there for all to see ("Russell's Modal Logic?", p. 167).[5]

[3] As I state in my review (p. 171, n. 11), I do not mean to suggest that the project of formalizing Russell's conception of logical truth is not worthwhile.

[4] N.B. At one point, I refer to MDL, in passing, as a "logic" (meaning, of course, the logic that results when we interpret *Principia* according to MDL). But it is clear from the text of my review that I take MDL to be a recipe for reinterpreting *Principia*. So Dejnožka's repeated insistence that he has been misrepresented is just so much smoke: he has *not* been misrepresented; moreover, the slight liberty I do take is utterly inconsequential.

[5] Thanks to Russell Dale for helpful comments.