

Possible Worlds and Ideology

by

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Summary

The broad aim of this thesis is to explore fruitful connections between ideology theory and the philosophy of possible worlds (PW). Ideologies are full of modal concepts, such as possibility, potential, necessity, essence, contingency and accident. Typically, PWs are articulated for the analysis and illumination of modal concepts. That naturally suggests a method for theorising ideological modality, utilising PW theory.

The specific conclusions of the thesis proffer a number of original contributions to knowledge:

- 1) PWs should only be used for explication and not as (intrinsic)¹ evidence or criteria of assessment in ideology theory. The estimation of (e.g.) utopian possibilities, human essences and freedoms must be determined by extrinsic criteria. PWs can serve only as a window or means of expression but not as a set of evaluative premises.
- 2) For this purpose, a modified version of Lewisian genuine realism (GR), with its device of counterpart theory, is the best approach; the alternative theories risk constricting possibilities or smuggling in assumptions that ought to be objects of analysis in ideology theory. This is instructive, since ideology theorists are prone to pick and choose favoured aspects of modal philosophy without further argument.
- 3) Conclusions (1) and (2) suggest the adoption of GR or fictionalist GR. Overall, the actualist options are less adequate. Fictionalism, by contrast, is a worthwhile contender, but it too presents comparative weaknesses which reinforce GR's standing as a potent challenger to the modal metaphysician. Therefore, this thesis presents additional reasons (to Lewis's) to think GR true.

The conclusions are not knockdown, and I draw out incentives and consequences for adopting alternative stances. The various chapters also provide specific details for comprehending and debating ideological modals.

¹There is 'intrinsic' evidence when the means of evaluation are inherent to the PW theory. For example, an essentialist approach to PWs might take match of origins and material constitution as essences. Then the theory could provide evidence for or against some doctrine of human nature. A theory offers 'extrinsic' evidence if it merely illustrates independent evaluative criteria. For example, PWs can highlight contradictions. The principle of non-contradiction is of course an independent principle of logic, not peculiar to theories about PWs.

Declarations and Statements

DECLARATION

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

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Dedication

For Nia

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Glossary of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ACT	Actualist realist counterpart theory. A branch of AR. Not all ARs are ACTs
AR	Actualist realism
BR	Book realism. A species of AR
CPW	Canonical possible worlds. An ontologically non-committal application of possible worlds
CR	Combinatorial realism. A species of AR
C-relation(s)	Counterpart relation(s)
CT	Counterpart theory
EP	The ersatz pluriverse (as in Sider 2002). A species of AR and ACT
FCT	Fictionalist counterpart theory. FCT is a part of FGR
FGR	Fictionalist genuine realism. FGR contains FCT
GCT	Genuine realist counterpart theory. GCT is a part of GR
GR	Genuine realism. GR contains GCT
IM(s)	Ideological modality / ideological modal(s)
NR	Nature realism. A species of AR
PR	Plantingan realism. A species of AR
PW(s)	Possible world(s)
S	Introduced in Chapter V, 'S' abbreviates the sentence 'It is possible to have possibilities you don't currently have'
T	A proposed possible worlds analysis of ideological modality (the focus of the thesis)
(U)-possibility	Introduced in Chapter III, a (U)-possibility is a utopian possibility (defined more precisely in the text) Chapter III also refers to (U)-modals, (U)-conceptions, (U)-kinds, (U)-visions, (U)-ideas, a (U)-gap, a (U)-distinction (etc.). I expect the use of those abbreviations in the main body of work to make their meaning apparent

All abbreviations are introduced and defined in the text. Any abbreviation that refers to a theory can also refer to the proponent of that theory. For example, 'GR' can mean 'genuine realism' or 'genuine realist'. I rely on context to disambiguate.

Further abbreviations, e.g. for principles of modal logic, occur alongside their definitions in the text.

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Chapter I

Ideological Modality and Possible Worlds

§ I.I Preamble

Political and social debates often presuppose (and sometimes announce) some notion of a good society, of how things could and should be, socially speaking. Further, everybody, it seems, values (*some* version of) freedom and abhors un-freedom. Lastly, we often opine about human nature, about what people in essence are, what they are capable of, and the potentials they enjoy in virtue of their membership of the human species. This is commonplace and comes up frequently in conversation and theory.

The above identifies a family of political concepts with a number of interesting features. Centrally, they are *modal* and as such appear to bring metaphysics (or, at least, implicit metaphysical assumptions) into political discourse. The overall aim of this thesis is to explore how the modality of political concepts is to be understood using the resources of possible worlds, thereby handling those metaphysical assumptions. It also considers whether such an enquiry affords informative answers to controversies within possible worlds philosophy itself (and returns an affirmative response).

To expand on these points, it helps to elaborate some additional features apparent in the above. The family of modal concepts including the good society, freedom and human nature are *inter-related* and *normative*.

Political concepts are inter-related

Ideas of good societies often interact with conceptions of human nature. For example, if people are essentially selfish and capable of evil, then a good society ought to include strong laws and structures, or else channel human drives to beneficial ends via competitive free markets. Then freedom is either freedom from one's 'lower nature' or an absence of economic regulation. Alternatively, more sanguine projections of future societies reflect more positive assessments of human essence and potential, perhaps treating human agents as creative, productive and sociable beings, capable of perfection. Then freedom is freedom from coercion, exploitation and corruption. A good designation for these sets of ideas is 'political ideology'. Certainly, we can study the integrated nature of the above types of claims using the wealth of theory and research in ideology theory (e.g. in Karl Mannheim (1936), Michael Freeden (1996, 2003, 2006 and 2013), Andrew Vincent (1995), David Leopold (2007, 2012,

2013), Ruth Levitas (1990, 2007, 2013). See also Freeden *et al.* 2013 and Festenstein and Kenny 2010, etc.). Henceforth, I shall refer to 'ideology'.²

Political concepts are normative

If I stress some distance between society as it is and as it should be, then I am critical of existing institutions. If, on the other hand, things could turn out worse than they are, I might exalt law-enforcement powers and principles and judge the respectability of individuals against that standard. Thus, the ideologies we hold to can affect us, our judgements, our actions, and the judgements and actions directed towards us by others.

Political concepts are modal

How society *could* and *should* be, human *essence* and *potential* and *freedom* are modal concepts. They connote hypothetical or nonactual states of affairs. The idea of society as it could and should be invokes a difference from how things actually are. Human essence suggests how people would be regardless of how things turn out (in actual and nonactual states of affairs). Freedom depicts un-inhibited possibilities to act, that is, avenues open to you or me regardless of how we actually act. The nature of the modality within these concepts coalesces with their normativity. The distance between society as it is and as it should be relates to a gap between actual and nonactual states of affairs. One is motivated to judgement or action by seeking to close the gap (as in the Aristotelian practical syllogism).

The modal assumptions within ideological positions do not just relate to prescriptive political judgements but also to (implicit or explicit) *metaphysical* and *epistemological* ones: about the modal nature of reality and how we can know about it. After all, to propose how people in essence are, how society should be and what possibilities we should enjoy is, *prima facie*, to propose *that there are* essences and ways things could and should be. Furthermore, this can often lead to questions about how we can know such things (perhaps by common observation, by history, biology or philosophy). But it is worth asking: is this right? Are there human essences, potentials and social and individual possibilities and how can we know such things? Noting the inter-relationship between ideological concepts and their impact on critical judgement and action, an answer to those questions may have significant ramifications. But as it turns out modalities such as possibility, essence, potential, contingency and so forth are metaphysically controversial and mysterious. Given that the concepts have such potential ramifications, the question how we might achieve demystification and agreement on ideological modality is philosophically interesting and worthy of investigation.

² §I.III, below, discusses different uses of that term and justifies one such use

Political concepts are contested

Ideological concepts are also *contested* (cf. Gallie 1956; Freedman 1996). Our modal questions are exacerbated by the contested nature of ideologies. The nature of modality, of the reality behind our modal judgements, is a matter of longstanding and current philosophical controversy. However, there is significant consensus about many of our modal opinions. For example, it is possible to crash the car if I do not drive carefully; my house will still be here when I return this evening; my health will go best if I exercise and eat well, etc. At the very least, there is a shared standard of competence related to consensus on modal judgement.³ In any case, if modal judgement is uncontroversial, philosophical debate nonetheless rages over how modality is to be *interpreted* and *understood*. How should our modal locutions be taken? Does reality have a modal structure? What is the nature and extent of this structure? When we focus on ideology, however, it is clear that modal judgements are not uncontroversial. The conservative, socialist and liberal do not share the same views on human nature, or visions of the good society or human freedom. So, then we have controversy doubled. It is unclear which ideological modal concepts are correct and how they are to be interpreted and understood *if* correct. It is even possible that the latter uncertainty infects the former.

To sum up the above points: ideological concepts are inter-related, action-orienting and evaluative, highly contested and modal. An enhanced understanding of ideological modality therefore promises significant implications for our thinking, reasoning and acting with regard to social and political matters.

Possible worlds and the need for metatheory

The fact that possible worlds (PW) theory exists as a method for analysing modals already suggests the application of the former for theorising and obtaining insight and illumination about ideological modality. Indeed, as I will explain below, ideology theorists often draw on bits and pieces from modal philosophy in their work. However, controversy and debate is internal to PW theory itself. Disagreement looms in every direction. I said above that enhanced understanding of ideological modality promises significant implications for our thinking, reasoning and acting with regard to social and political matters. But this has to be handled carefully. A suggested application of PW runs a high risk of smuggling in assumptions across a number of areas. So, enquiry must be conducted at a metatheoretical or meta-methodological level. The motivation to establish a PW analysis to improve our thinking about ideological matters requires stepping back and engaging with preliminary questions. For

³Although, this consensus might be due to convention and tradition, as in Mannheim's 'total conception' of 'ideology'. (Mannheim 1936, pp. 69-74ff.) That question will be touched on in Chapter IV.

instance, a theory or method pursues certain goals and these goals should be decided and made explicit. Further, there are different approaches to PW, which carry different metaphysical, epistemological, conceptual and semantic implications. An illumination of ideological enquiry by way of PW first requires some preliminary investigation into what that would amount to and which approach to PWs is best suited to it. This thesis offers that preliminary investigation. Once the work is complete, it should offer the ideology theorist resources for analysing ideological modality. The investigation cannot itself promise conclusive answers for our thinking, reasoning and acting regarding social and political matters. But those questions are our motivation, and the following offers important guidance on how to approach them. At the least, it offers ideology theory some available prospects or directives for adopting this or that use of PW.

Lastly, by adopting PW theory for exploring ideologies, the subject matter of modal philosophy is then widened (to include ideologies). So, our questions for ideology theory also produces questions for metaphysics. Once we have answers for ideology theory, it is natural to ask whether and how this informs debate about the metaphysics of PWs.

Three Questions

The existence of the theory of PW suggests a method for analysing ideological modality. Henceforth, let us call this prospective method 'T'. Let 'T' abbreviate 'possible worlds analysis of ideological modality'. The purpose of this thesis is to establish grounds for formulating T and to draw implications from doing so. A method pursues certain goals, so we first have to ascertain the nature of those goals. Necessarily, T would analyse ideological modals. Call ideological modals 'IM'.⁴ But in what should the analysis consist? For example, should T heuristically assist the comprehension of IM, or should it propose evaluative criteria, favouring some IM and invalidating others? Second, which of the competing approaches to PW best accommodates these goals? Lastly, if the first two questions can be answered cogently and objectively, does this contribute anything to debates in modal metaphysics? Does establishing a PW approach for T provide reasons to accept the metaphysical conclusions of that approach?

Thus, the specific objectives of this thesis are Questions One to Three:

- Question One: What goals should T serve?
- Question Two: Which of the competing approaches to PW best accommodates T?

⁴It is not supposed that there is anything unique to 'ideological modality', only that it denotes operative modal concepts or judgements within ideologies.

- Question Three: Do answers to Questions One and Two inform debate within modal metaphysics?

The conclusions of the thesis are as follows. Answer One: T should merely illustrate differences between ideologies and only assist decision-making between them by allowing space for independent criteria of assessment. Answer Two: A modified version of Lewisian genuine realism (GR) best accommodates T. Answer Three: This provides additional reasons to defend GR against objections (although fictionalist GR appears possible too, so long as we are willing to accept various modifications and consequences of doing so).

§I.II Thesis outline

The structure of the thesis is as follows.

This chapter

To lay some ground for addressing the Three Questions, the following sections of this chapter are introductory. §I.III discusses competing conceptions of ideology and justifies the adoption of one of those conceptions. §I.IV briefly illustrates some areas in ideology and utopian theory in which modal philosophy is utilised, but in an underdeveloped manner - so, T is needed. §I.V introduces the philosophy of PWs, the different approaches and their implications, and suggests some ways in which illumination of ideological modals might be sought. §I.VI relates these pointers back to our three Questions and establishes a strategy for answering them in the subsequent chapters.

Chapters II to V

Chapters II to V address Questions One and Two by foregrounding the modal features of ideologies. The working assumption is that the elaboration of methodological goals is connected to an understanding of the object of analysis.

Chapter II draws out several characteristics of ideological modality by contrast with mundane cases, and offers some initial responses to Questions One and Two as well as some further methodological considerations.

Chapters III through V focus on the modals within particular political ideologies: conservatism, socialism and liberalism. The focus there is intra-ideological, examining specific ideologies, drawing out modal features, and addressing Questions One and Two. Collectively, Chapters III to V establish that T should be merely illustrative and that counterpart theory (under certain modifications) is the best approach for T.

Chapter VI

Chapter VI addresses Question Three. The components for answering that question are gradually accumulated in the preceding chapters and then subject to direct assessment in Chapter VI, which concludes that our answers to Questions One and Two also provide strong reasons to support Lewis in holding GR metaphysically stronger overall than competitors.

§ I.III The concept of ideology

Ideology is the subject of this thesis. But ideology is a contested notion, so it is important to offer clarification. In the present section, I sketch the contest then justify the usage adopted in this thesis. Modality occurs in all conceptions of ideology, but there are reasons to choose. I choose the 'descriptive' kind. Ideology theorists often cite everyday discourse in support of their favoured conceptions. I explain how this is a weak reason for our purposes then offer better reasons.

'Ideology' has traversed a range of conceptions since it was inaugurated as a proposed empirical 'science of ideas' by the French republican philosopher and educationalist, Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy. The concept transformed under antagonistic appropriation by Napoleon against de Tracy and his acolytes, the 'ideologues'. Since then, the semantics has continued to refract, through the work of Marx, Marxists, sociologists of knowledge, 'end of ideology' theorists, critical theorists and conceptual historians, down to the present day. It is sufficient to acknowledge the rich, interesting history of the concept (or conceptual family), which has been traced in a number of texts and needn't detain us here (See Stråth 2013; Freeden 1996, pp. 13-40; Thompson 1984, pp. 1-6; 1990, pp. 28-73; Eagleton 1991, pp. 1-31; Vincent 1995, pp. 1-21; Festenstein and Kenny 2005, pp. 1-49). In the following paragraphs, I merely indicate three popular conceptions in academic and quotidian use, to illustrate variation and justify a choice among variants.

The conception of ideology adopted in this thesis is the 'non-pejorative', 'descriptive' kind, commonly picked out by the expression 'political ideology'. Then anarchism, green theory and feminism are ideologies, alongside socialism, liberalism and conservatism (etc.). This *does not* automatically assume (by 'ideology' or even 'ideological') anything negative or irrational about any item in that list or anything about power interests or existing social arrangements. Ideologies are complexes of inter-defining concepts about the social and political world that seek to motivate action, evaluate social institutions and rule out (in most cases) competing ideologies. A prominent contemporary advocate of this conception is Michael Freeden, with his 'morphological approach' (1996, 2003, 2006, 2013). This thesis makes extensive use of Freeden's work on the subject. The choice, however, is not due to an assessment of the relative value of alternative conceptions, but rather an assessment of which approach may offer sufficient theoretical scope and focus for the analysis of IM. Ideology is a contested concept. All conceptions are shot through with modality. But one has to start somewhere, and the descriptive conception is theoretically the safest place to start.

Marxist pejoratives

There are at least two so-called ‘pejorative’ versions: the broadly Marxist and broadly ‘Cold War liberal’ kind. Traditionally, Marx and his followers have taken ‘ideology’ to connote a set of delusions about social and political facts that are held by members of class-divided society, to the detriment of the many and the benefit of the few (Marx, K. and Engels, F. 1932 [1846]; Leopold 2013, Stráth 2013, pp. 7-9; Freeden 1996, pp. 14-15; Thompson 1990, pp. 33-44). Ideology legitimates inequality and does so by promoting a powerful illusory consensus among the disadvantaged. This could be understood as a negation of ‘phenomenal conservatism’. By contrast with phenomenal conservatism, the intuitions and perceptions of people within capitalist society are automatically suspect for Marxists, rather than warranted by default in the absence of objections. Debate has followed within Marxism about the limits of ideology (can it be superseded?) (Althusser 1971; Žižek 2009), the role of self-conscious ‘ideologues’ (Gramsci, see Stráth 2013), and even if it can be willingly embraced (better and worse delusions). In any case, there is something of a Wizard of Oz or Puppet Master view afoot. Someone or something is pulling the strings, and the name ‘ideology’ catches the cognitive dimension of that phenomenon.

We can justify the above as an important theoretical tool. There are copious examples of belief systems and attitudes that oppress and harm, and it seems reasonable to assume many as-yet undiscovered cases. It can also be justified by agreement with everyday parlance. If I say the historical view of women as inferior to men is ideological, you know what I mean: it is morally, epistemically and metaphysically wrong, but also (often clandestinely) manipulative to one group and unfairly advantageous to another. Further, as Eagleton (1991, p. 2) and Thompson (1984, pp. 1-2, 12-15ff) note, one wouldn’t happily call oneself ‘ideological’; for that is to call oneself stupid or deluded. Alone, these are good justifications for adopting the usage, but they don’t privilege it over competitors for our purposes – as I explain below.

‘Cold War liberal’ pejoratives

The other common pejorative usage connotes fanatical, doctrinaire fundamentalism. ‘Ideology’, on *that* view, is an irrational, emotional attachment to an extreme, uncompromising political and social (and often religious) system of belief (Bell 1962; Stráth 2013 p. 12-3; Eagleton 1991, p. 4-5; Freeden 1996, pp. 15-19). This other conception has enjoyed wide currency in British and American academic circles, especially during the post-war period. Ideologies diverge from permissive, tolerant and pragmatic political creeds. In other words, ideologies are the ‘other’ of the liberal-cum-social democratic ‘post-war consensus’. Circulation of the concept was renewed, re-energised by a triumphant neoliberalism, after the collapse of Soviet Communism in the early 1990s. This ‘ideology’ has a similar pejorative tone

to 'utopia': the extreme, unrealistic and dangerous views of political dreamers. It has led some to commit the fallacy of the undistributed middle in equating socialism with fascism: socialism is ideology and fascism is ideology, so socialism is fascism (!) (cf. Levitas 2013 p. 7).

Again, this is important. There are citable examples of social word-views that attract powerful devotion, coupled, at times, with violent intolerance to alternatives. It is helpful to cognize such things. It also agrees with common parlance. We often encounter the use today in connection with religious fundamentalism. To label a view 'ideological' - like 'utopian' - is to reject it by implying unwisdom, immoderation and excessive political zeal, the folly of political enthusiasm. One wouldn't happily call oneself 'ideological'. Ideology is the barmy views of the other guy, not oneself. These too are good reasons to adopt the usage, but, again, not sufficient for our purposes, as I explain below.

The descriptive conception

Having described and acknowledged acceptable applications of pejorative alternatives, credible though they are, they will not constitute the prime focus of this thesis. By 'ideology' I mean the 'non-pejorative', 'descriptive' type. On this view, ideologies are just collections of ideas that connote socio-political reality, evaluate (by justification or critique) institutions and motivate action. Ideologies are political ideologies.⁵

This is also an important conception. There are numerous political idea-systems and talk of 'ideology' assists their analysis. Once again, it agrees with common talk. It is not uncommon to claim, e.g. that liberalism, conservatism and socialism are ideologies and feminism, anarchism and green theory are ideologies too. Those last three items couldn't be included in the list under the Marxist conception. For the Cold War liberal to construe the last three as such would look suspiciously rhetorical, since it would pass them as off fanatical and extremist. In any case, pejorative uses shade out meaningful continuities between these items, continuities that are acknowledged under *this* conception of 'ideology', which is used in everyday discussions. The 'non-pejorative' conception of ideology is insightful and important too - a point that has been put well by Clifford Geertz (1973b), Michael Freeden (1996, pp. 13-46) and Ian Adams (1989, pp. 1-23)

Thus, we might rightly justify our adopting one of the conceptions of ideology by appeal to common parlance, but we cannot universally privilege one over the other by these means. The most observations about common vernacular establish is that *all* conceptions of ideology

⁵ There is variety within this conception too. By contrast with Michael Freeden, Paul Thagard focuses on the emotional and attitudinal aspect of ideologies. For him, emotions are at the heart of ideologies, and this emphasis provides explanatory grasp, e.g., regarding the spread of ideologies among populations by way of 'emotional contagion', the rise of ideological formations and their traction amongst populations. (Thagard 2014; Leader Maynard 2013).

enjoy 'everyday' credentials, so appeals to folk discourse cannot favour one conception of ideology over another – as some theorists are wont to do (cf. Eagleton 1991, p. 2 and Thompson 1984, pp. 1-2, 12-15ff). Furthermore, all conceptions have theoretical value, but not one more obviously than another. We need different reasons.

To gain a grasp of the modal nature of ideologies, it is advisable to begin with the non-pejorative kind. First, the pejorative uses are more specialised and constrained. So then, a modal account of some specific pejorative kind might be uninformative for any other, pejorative or not. Second, the pejorative kinds are politically motivated, grounded in assumptions that require defending. By contrast, the non-pejorative kind is more inclusive and makes fewer political assumptions. (That last point can be debated, however. Perhaps the apparently tolerant examination of competing viewpoints implied by the descriptive conception already presupposes liberalism. This point is made by writers such as Patrick Corbett (1965, pp. 147ff) who uses this to his advantage in promoting liberal values, and Freeden, who identifies an unselfconscious presupposition to this effect in John Rawls (Freeden 1996, pp. 226-275.)) In any case, theorists from all sides use the descriptive conception, even if they are unhappy to call it 'ideology'. Furthermore, the central intensions in that version – collections of ideas about the socio-political world that generate prescriptions, motivate action and rule out opposing ideas – are shared between all versions. I will show that these central elements are inherently modal. So, an analysis of those modal elements should inform all conceptions. In fact, the extent to which conceptions differ is the extent to which those central elements can be modified or qualified. This permits the whole literature on ideology theory, across the divide, to be drawn upon in what follows.

Michael Freeden

By adopting the descriptive variety, I will make extensive use of Michael Freeden's influential and dominant 'morphological' treatment (1996, 2003, 2007, and 2013). For Freeden, ideologies are constellations of inter-defining political concepts. A political concept, taken on its own, is 'essentially contestable' (borrowing the idea of 'essentially contested concepts' from W. B. Gallie's well-known 1956 paper). There is liberal freedom and socialist freedom, for example. In their 'contested' forms, each political concept retains an 'ineliminable core' (Freeden 1996, pp. 47-90). Across all political 'freedoms', a central element persists, enabling talk of freedom *per se*. Freedom is an absence of constraint on action. In their 'decontested' forms, political concepts are filled out with meaning. Liberal freedom is largely tied to individuals, whereas socialist freedom is largely tied to communities (pp. 144-154, 440, 456-482). The concept is decontested by grouping with other political concepts. The group is ranked (pp. 47-90). There are concepts in the 'core', 'adjacent', 'margin' and 'periphery' of the ideology (*ibid.*). Freedom is at the core of liberalism, interacting with the core concepts of

individuality and development (pp. 144-154). By contrast, freedom occupies a secondary role in socialism, adjacent to community, activity, equality and welfare (pp. 440, 456-482). The position within an ideology, inter-relationship and relative ranking vis-à-vis other political concepts, provide each concept its 'decontested' ideological meaning. (Freeden dubs this internal semantic relationship 'logical adjacency', but acknowledges also the semantic frontiers of social, political and historical factors: 'cultural adjacency' (pp. 77-91).)

This is not a rehash of Saussurean structuralism, according to Freeden (pp. 88-95). The 'morphological analysis' does not stake claims about language *per se*, and the sign/signifier, langue/parole distinctions of structuralism do not deliver similar insights about contestation/decontestation, ineliminability, core, adjacency, marginality, etc. Freeden draws on a rich combination of theories, including that of Saussure, Geertz, Kossellek, Gadamer, Ricoeur, from debate within ideology discourse, and from a wealth of research into political ideology (Freeden 1996, pp. 47-95ff). (Clearly, there are many philosophical questions one can ask about the metaphysical status of Freeden's political concepts, but there is no space for that here.)

Thus concludes my rationale for adopting the descriptive usage. Ideological modality is our object of analysis. By 'ideological' is meant the descriptive, non-pejorative kind, and, in particular, the kind and manner of examining that kind presented in influential research by Freeden (1996, 2003, 2006, and 2013).

§I.IV The need for an analysis of ideological modality

Since ideologies are full of modals, there are two main points one could make to establish a need for analysis. First: modal philosophy is already visible to ideology theorists. However - and as one would expect (due to the vast literature on PWs) - an understanding of the relationship and implications of PWs for ideology discourse is underdeveloped. More dedicated work is required to make the options clear and to propose reasons for choosing between the options. Second: IM may inform modal philosophy. There is a vast and growing body of research on the philosophy of modality. The inclusion of ideology as a subject may prove informative for the latter. I discuss these two points below.

Ideology theory requires more thorough and direct analysis of IM

Ideology theory is an interesting area of study. It draws on a range of theories and interests from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and concerns. However, it possesses no firm set of methods or disciplinary home (but is philosophy more properly housed?). As a part of this, it is intriguing that ideology theorists *do* recognise modal philosophy in places, although mostly in passing moments. One notable example is the work of John Elster (1978) who draws on PWs and game theory in discussing a number of socio-political issues. This thesis does not make use of Elster's theory, since it would be problematic to disentangle the political assumptions in Elster's work and address our Three Questions. Furthermore, Elster acknowledges that a 'meta-theory' is required to work out the proper relationship between PWs and ideology discourse (as I attempt here) (Elster 1978, pp. 190-1; cf. Goodwin and Taylor 2009, 229-247). Elsewhere in ideology theory, we find references to modal philosophy, but understanding appears incomplete.

Consider, e.g. Thompson (1984, p. 63):

The *legitimacy* of a social order may be conceived, not as a factual recognition conferred upon dominant values or norms or presupposed by social reproduction but as a counterfactual claim raised by those members of a society who wish to maintain the existing system of social relations. This claim is 'counterfactual' in the sense that it implies a normative ideal; it asserts that existing institutional arrangements are 'just', which implies that they *could be justified*, although the efficacy of this claim as a means of maintaining existing arrangements may require this counterfactual implication to be suppressed. To study the ways in which legitimacy is claimed for institutional arrangements which embody systematically asymmetrical relations of power – that is, which embody relations of domination – is one of the tasks of a theory of *ideology*.

[Thompson's italics.]

Here, Thompson tacks modality onto the pejorative conception of ideology, associating counterfactual thinking with oppression. However, there are questions one can ask about the role of counterfactual thinking and the opposite of oppression: emancipation. Since modals and counterfactuals are analysed in PW theory, it seems that the latter should be utilised in pursuit of this question. But the connections between PWs and ideological modals would have to be established in advance.

Indeed, counterfactuality and possible worlds have been linked to utopian theory. Compare Goodwin and Taylor (2009, p. 229-230):

[T]he creation of a possible world via counterfactual assumptions enables the theorist to gauge the importance of certain factors [...]. The utopian may follow either the philosopher's approach or the historian's in his conjectures about how society might differ from the given world, and how it might improve.

There has been much debate over the proper distance from our own world which counterfactuals may assume without becoming absurd. [...] It has [also] been argued that a world could not differ from ours in *only one respect* since the parts of the world are so strongly interlinked that a single difference could not exist in isolation. [...] But [the] view that everything is indissolubly interconnected has the unacceptably fatalistic consequence that nothing can ever be changed without changing the whole universe, and therefore has been rejected, by and large, by advocates of possible world analysis. Kripke's suggestion that a possible world is a *skeleton* world, with certain fixed points ('rigid designators') and some differing elements suggests itself as the most useful approach in considering utopias as possible worlds.

This passage makes no reference to counterfactual theories developed by Lewis (1973) and Stalnaker (1968). However, Lewis has addressed the point about single-respect differences (e.g. Lewis *op cit*, p. 9) and also has a response regarding the view 'that nothing can ever be changed without changing the whole universe'. Certainly, we can provide reasons to reject this view (as I do in Chapter IV), but it is inaccurate to suggest that it has by and large been rejected by PW theorists. Furthermore, there are important questions regarding the proposal of Kripke's views as most useful. Indeed, Kripke's arguments rely on an epistemology that I provide reasons to reject in Chapter IV. In any case, a more thorough analysis of the relationship between PWs and IMs ought to be executed to make the options clearer.

Levitas (1990, p. 203) discusses the above points in Goodwin and Taylor:

Goodwin sees utopias as exercises in speculative theory whose counterfactual nature enables us to criticise and ultimately perhaps to change society. They must therefore be *possible* worlds.... However, the degree of possibility assumed by the builders of these worlds varies and is not always clear: they may be intended as intellectual experiments, explorations of possibilities or realisable objectives.

This suggests that the analysis of IM is required to make the degree of possibility clear.

Levitas (1990) also argues that PW is an insufficient device for the analysis of utopias. (I argue in Chapter III that all ideologies have their utopian elements, so this is directly related to our discussion.) First, not all utopias are intentionally achievable, so some are not 'possible'. Second, they are not all coherent systems, so cannot form a world. However, this does not succeed as an objection to PW analysis. To begin, 'possible' needn't imply 'physically possible' or 'actualisable', as Levitas appears to suggest. PWs can cover the whole range of logical possibilities, with all 'cases' of possibility therein. Third (explained in Chapter III), an analysis may accommodate conceivability-possibility distinction. In particular, Lewisian PW permits this by talk of accessibility and counterpart relations and Lewis's recognition of 'doublethink'.⁶ There are similar devices available in competing approaches. Once again, it is clear that the field of ideology and utopian theory would benefit from an analysis of IM.

In the cases of Thompson and Levitas, modality connects with evaluation. But it may also serve an analytic function. Compare Freeden 1996, p. 59:

...contestability may be culturally rather than logically essential in the human worlds as we know them. For example, for a complete set of positive legal rights to be identical to that of moral human rights, we would have to postulate a counterfactual world where the law is perfect, where everyone's understanding of fundamental human needs is in total accord, where there is an agreed morality that generates no new ethical thinking. This logically conceivable philosopher's paradise falls short of the possibilities incumbent on socially embedded practices. But then, the notion of essential contestability is not an observation about the real or external worlds, but about the epistemological, psychological, and logical restrictions in making sense of those worlds.

Here, Freeden uses a comparison with 'counterfactual worlds' ('the logically conceivable philosopher's paradise') to illuminate the semantic influences of empirical circumstances and

⁶ I repeat some of this paragraph in the Appendix, where I address some relevant issues related to utopianism.

social restrictions.⁷ Since there are various approaches to PWs - with different views about kinds of possibility, accessibility, reducibility (or not) of worlds, epistemology, semantics, conceptual resources and metaphysics - a more thorough elaboration of the options could inform Freeden's comments, and, in turn, our understanding of ideologies.

From these brief observations, it is clear that modal philosophy is on the radar for ideology theorists, but only as scattered blips on the scope, since the literature on PWs has not been fully incorporated, or the options sufficiently explored. It would therefore serve the field of ideology discourse to offer a more detailed philosophical investigation of IM. The fact that PW exists as a theory suggests the adoption of PW as an analytic framework for that field.

Ideology theory may inform modal philosophy

Modal philosophy is a flourishing area of study, with an extensive literature. The principal focus is on modal concepts within everyday thought and language, and in philosophical and scientific locutions. Since ideology is teeming with modal concepts, it should broaden and inform debate within modal philosophy to include ideology theory as an object of analysis.

There is wide disagreement within modal philosophy itself. One contributing factor is modal epistemology, which is rather under-developed - at least in context of possible worlds theory.⁸ PW philosophers rely heavily on notions such as linguistic intuition (Kripke 1981, p. 42), 'obviousness' (Plantinga 1976, pp. 257ff), deep-rooted belief (R.M Adams 1974, pp. 194) or 'common-sense' (Lewis 1983, p. x; 1986a, pp. 99-100ff). It appears that, in redirecting focus to IM, the epistemology should have to change. The theory-laden manner of everyday intuitions, 'obviousness', or 'common-sense' is a matter of analysis in ideology, so cannot obviously be taken as a grounding epistemology. Thus, to pull modal philosophy away from familiar areas to the realm of ideology theory is also to raise questions about modal epistemology, which should be of interest to modal philosophers.

Another factor is metaphysics. If we adopt one approach to PW over another, we adopt its metaphysics. If we do this for ideology analysis, can this tell us anything about metaphysics generally, about the modal structure (or not) of mind-independent reality? Presumably not, since metaphysics concerns the nature of reality, and must obey strict constraints. The modal philosophers' postulates ought to serve that purpose. Ideology, by contrast, obeys different, apparently looser constraints, since it involves human socio-political imagination. The ideology

⁷Incidentally, Lewis uses the identical term 'philosophers' paradise' to analogise possible worlds for philosophers with set theory for mathematicians, David Hilbert having described the latter as 'a mathematicians' paradise' (1986a, pp. 1-96). It would be interesting to discover the origin of Freeden's use of this expression.

⁸Notwithstanding some important contemporary contributions to modal epistemology (and the epistemology of *essence* - where essence is purported to be distinct from modality by some writers, e.g. Fine 1994). See Chapter IV, n. 27, below

theorists' postulates serve a different purpose. But can this difference be coherently sustained? Again, this at least raises questions about modal metaphysics, which should be of interest to modal philosophers.

Furthermore, Divers (2004) raises the issue of a need for *de re* modal attribution, this facilitating his question for a coherent anti-realist PW alternative. I explain below (Chapters IV, V and VI) that *de re* modals are ineradicable features of ideologies.

So, a focus on IM promises to inform modal philosophy by proffering details about the epistemology, metaphysics and semantics of modality.

§I.V The philosophy of possible worlds

PW exists as a method for analysing and illuminating modal concepts. The present section explains what this consists in and how might it be instructive for our purposes.

This takes us to the story of the history of PWs since its revival in the 1950s and 60s. The story is often repeated in the literature and it does not serve our purposes to go into excess detail.

Modal Logic

The concept of PWs owes much to Leibniz's theodicy (1709). The existence of God can be reconciled with the existence of evil via PW. Human creatures endowed with free will can achieve atonement by overcoming evil. The actual world must have *some* evil in it, and is in fact the best of all PWs since God has ensured it is the *right* amount. Other worlds contain too little or too much evil. Leibniz also introduced the idea that necessity is truth in all PWs. Henceforth PWs were generally associated with Leibniz's philosophy.

Until, that is, the first half of the twentieth century and some lively work on the application of modal concepts – possibility and necessity – to modern logic, beginning with the work of C. I. Lewis (1932). On the face of it, modality offers a promising logical resource. It makes good sense, for example, to maintain relations of entailment from necessary truths to actual truths. If necessarily A, then A. Furthermore, it makes good sense to maintain entailments of necessary truths from other necessary truths. If an entailment from A to B is a necessary one, then necessarily A implies that necessarily B (Loux 1979b, pp. 15-17). It seems that the 'good sense' of these entailments is in some way grounded in our intuitions, therefore establishing some modal logical axioms. And lo! These axioms formed the basis of a weak modal logical system: *M* (sometimes *T*).

Before PW was adopted, the strengthening of the logic faced complications. What happens with iterations of modality? For example, if it is the case that A, is it necessarily possibly the case that A? Some logicians thought so. Combined with *M* this formed the Brouwer system (*ibid.*, p. 17). Furthermore, if it is necessarily the case that A, is it necessarily necessarily the case that A? Some logicians thought so. Combined with *M* these formed the system S4. If we stipulate *those* entailments as basic axioms, it follows that any iterated repetition of the same modal operator is equivalent to one instance. So then, if it is possible that A, it is possibly possibly possibly possibly possible that A (*ibid.*).

But what of other iterations of modals? If it is possible that A, is it necessarily possible that A? Some logicians thought so. Combined with *M*, this formed the system S5. If we stipulate *those* entailments as basic axioms, this generates theorems that compete with the previous axiom set. Then, if it is possible that A, it is necessarily possibly necessarily possible that A (*ibid.*).

How do we decide between systems? Intuition appears to run out. Consider:

1. If necessarily A, then A

Intuitively, the assertion of 1 is true and its denial false. Now consider:

2. If it is possible that A, it is necessarily possibly necessarily possible that A

Intuition seems no stronger with the assertion or denial of 2. This is problematic, since it presents challenges to a proposed complete system of modal logic which validates some modal claims and invalidates others. Since so many areas of discourse utilise modal concepts, the logic is wanting. This is especially so in philosophy, which makes liberal use of modality. Consider, for example, the following observations by White (1975, p. 2):

Thus, scepticism is based on the feeling that nothing can be known unless the possibility of its being otherwise has been ruled out; while determinism usually enshrines the belief that it is not possible for anything to be otherwise than it is. The problem of free will is the problem whether anyone could have done something other than what he did do; a problem which many recent philosophers have assumed or argued to be the problem whether he would have done otherwise, if he had wanted or chosen to. Certainty is often confused with necessity because of failure to notice that the possibility expressed by 'may' differs from that expressed by 'can'. Many theories of probability are based on the subjective interpretation of the idea of possibility. The nature of morality is misunderstood because the notion expressed by 'ought' is assimilated to the notion of obligation.

A difficulty in constructing rigorous and strong logics for handling arguments containing modal propositions might entail significant limits to our ability to logically tackle philosophical problems.

One further way to portray the problem is via the extensional/intensional distinction about meaning. An expression has 'extensional' content if it refers to objects and is distinguishable along the same lines as those objects. For example, the expression 'All the chairs in this room are green' picks out objects that are chairs in this room and predicates green of them. I can distinguish what is and what isn't a chair. In this context, the meaning of 'chair' is determined by any of number of chairs in this room. The meaning of 'chair' can be determined by way of extension, i.e. distinct objects. We can point to the meaning. The meaning of 'green', by contrast is different. If there are different kinds of green objects in the

room, then 'green' gains its meaning from various different objects in the room. Furthermore, if all the green things in the room are also all the artificial things in the room, then 'green' and 'artificial' are co-extensional, i.e. non-distinguishable by their applying to distinct objects. If meaning is determined by way of extension in this case, then 'green' means the same thing as 'artificial', and this simply won't do. 'Green' has another meaning, distinguishable along different lines. Then the meaning of 'green' is intensional. Of course, beyond the room, all green things are not all artificial things. There is a distinction. But there are still problem cases of properties. 'Having a heart' and 'having a kidney' are co-extensional, since they predicate the same set of objects in the world (or at least they were prior to the medical development of dialysis!). The meaning is different, however. So, properties are intensional.

Nonetheless, putative 'intensional entities' such as the property green are locatable in the actual world. We can have meaningful discussions about them. Things are worse with regard to modals. It seems right to say there are many contingencies. It is contingently the case that I typed this sentence at 16:24 on the 16th October 2016, rather than at 16:25, or that I typed it at all, etc. It is also contingently the case that, e.g., Saul Kripke wrote *Naming and Necessity*. But in what does the contingency lie? Can we 'pick' contingency 'out'? The common response here is that if it can be denied without contradiction it is contingent. But what about the concepts of possibility and necessity? Again, we might say that it is possible that I could have become a lawyer or that the Brexiters could have lost. We might also say that I am necessarily a human being and Brexiters are necessarily opposed to UK membership of the EU.⁹ But again, in what does the possibility and necessity lie? Granted, we can make reference to contradiction here too. If some statement is possible, it can be asserted without contradiction, and if some statement is necessary, it cannot be denied without contradiction. But contingency, possibility and necessity are in no way directly locatable in the world, and this becomes apparent when it comes to modal iterations, of necessary possibilities versus contingent possibilities, and with attributions of modal properties. At this level, there is a clear absence of reference to anything meaningfully determinable, and that makes the matter intuitively intractable. Modals then are intensional, but of an even more troublesome kind, it seems, than properties, like 'green' and 'artificial'.

Possible worlds semantics

A solution was developed around the 50s and 60s by a number of logicians, largely working independently of each other. It proposed the Leibnizian concept of PW as an extensional

⁹Although we would commit a 'modal scope fallacy' if we infer 'Brexiters are essentially anti-EU' from 'Necessarily, Brexiters are anti-EU'.

framework for modals. Henceforth, the concept of PW gained renewed interest and respectability within analytic philosophy.

A common point of reference in the telling of this story is Kripke, who adds colour to it, since he was very young at the time of his contributions to the subject (cf. Kripke 1959, 1963; and the papers collected in Linksy 1971) (also Loux 1979b, pp. 20-28; Divers 2002, pp. 36-39). Kripke (and others) proposed the concept of PWs, possible individuals and accessibility relations between worlds as a semantic framework for modals. Motivated by the Leibnizian submission that necessity is truth in every PW, it proposed the translation of modal operators into quantifiers ranging across PWs and the stipulation of truth-functional connectives and sentential components in terms of that framework (cf. Kripke 1959, 1963; Divers 2002, pp. 36-39; Loux 1979b pp. 20-28).¹⁰

Thus, we are afforded the following *conceptual* analyses:

(Negation) (Not A in a world w) is true iff A is false in w, else (Not A in a world w) is false

(Conjunction) (A & B in a world w) is true iff A is true in w and B is true in w, else (A & B in a world w) is false

(Disjunction) (A or B in a world w) is true iff either A is true in w or B is true in w, else (A or B in a world w) is false

(Possibility) (Possible that A in a world w) is true iff there exists a world v such that v is accessible to w and (A in v) is true, else (possible that A in a world w) is false

(Necessity) (Necessary that A in a world w) is true iff for all such worlds v such that v is accessible to w and (A in v) is true, else (Necessary that A in a world w) is false

So, in brief, the translation scheme holds that: possibility is truth in some PWs, necessity is truth in all PWs, contingency is falsehood in some PWs and truth in others, and impossibility is falsehood in all PWs.

¹⁰ My discussion offers a brief illustration that omits elements and ignores the distinction between (in Plantinga's terms (1976)) the 'pure' and 'applied' semantics. The pure semantics uses a model sequence of set-theoretic entities that, of itself, requires no reference to PWs. The applied semantics construes the set-theoretic entities as the set of all possible worlds, the actual world, relations of accessibility between possible worlds, the set of all individuals, functions from worlds to individuals, valuation functions from predicates to extensions at possible worlds and closed sentences to truth-values at possible worlds (cf. Divers 2002, pp. 36-39).

With regard to the competing axioms, the great innovation was the introduction of relations of accessibility. A relation can be reflexive, symmetrical, transitive, and/or Euclidean. If we stipulate that there are many PWs, populated by many possible individuals and that the different PWs have relations of accessibility between them, we can then ask what type of relations they are. The question of the different axioms is resolved into a question about the nature of accessibility relations between PWs. Hence the following *semantics*:

- (M) (If, necessarily, A implies B, then necessarily A implies necessarily B.) This requires no restrictions on the accessibility relation
(If necessarily A then A.) This is true for any world *w* if *w* is possible relative to itself. So, it is true when accessibility relations are reflexive.
- (Brouwer) (If A then necessarily possible that A.) This is true for any world *w* if *w* is possible relative to itself *and* for any worlds *w* and *v*, if *v* is possible relative to *w* then *w* is possible relative to *v*. So, it is true when accessibility relations are reflexive and symmetrical.
- (S4) (If necessarily A then necessarily necessary that A.) Is true for any world *w* if *w* is possible relative to itself *and* for any worlds *w*, *v* and *z*, if *v* is possible relative to *w* and *z* is possible relative to *v*, then *z* is possible relative to *w*. So, is true when accessibility relations are reflexive and transitive.
- (S5) (If it is possible that A then necessarily possible that A.) This is true for any world *w*, if, for any worlds *w*, *v* and *z*, they are all possible relative to each other. So, it is true when accessibility relations are equivalent (thus reflexive, symmetrical transitive and Euclidean).

Since that provides more meaningful content for logicians, PW illuminates the logic of modality.

But the illuminating potential of PW does not stop there. It was further recognised that different *kinds* of modality can be generated by different characterisations of PW (Divers 2002, pp. 3-9). Thus, nomological modals are quantifiers that range across PWs with the same physical laws as ours; deontic modals quantify over morally perfect PWs;¹¹ conative modals

¹¹The idea of 'morally perfect' possible worlds might seem odd. Lewis mentions it in connection with deontic modals in 1973, p. 8. The thought is that an act is obligatory if true in all morally perfect worlds, permissible if true in some morally perfect worlds, prohibited if false in all morally perfect worlds and omissible if false in some morally perfect worlds. It is not important that we have not specified moral perfection, since we need only refer

quantify over worlds in which an agent's desires are realised; epistemic modals quantify over worlds in which whatever an agent knows to be the case is the case; doxastic modals quantify over worlds in which whatever an agent believes to be the case is the case. And this way of generating modals appears to have near-endless application. As Divers points out,

the picture seems naturally extendable so that we can recognize a kind of modality arising from any reasonably circumscribing set of considerations, no matter how trivial or parochial. (*ibid.*, p. 4)

Crucially, however, the different types of modals may be 'alethic' or 'non-alethic', which have significantly different semantics and PW models.

Alethic and non-alethic modality

Alethic modals include logical, metaphysical, conceptual and physical necessities and possibilities. They all validate the following inferences:

3. P
4. Therefore, P

and

5. P
 6. Therefore, $\Diamond P$
- (*ibid.*, pp. 6-7)

Here, ' \Box ' represents either logical, metaphysical, conceptual or physical *necessity* and ' \Diamond ' represents either logical, metaphysical, conceptual or physical *possibility*. Some of these – e.g. physical possibility – are *relative* possibilities (i.e. only true at *some* worlds). Others – e.g. logical possibility – are *absolute* possibilities (true at all worlds). It is controversial whether conceptual and metaphysical possibilities are also absolute (cf. Divers *ibid.*).

If we model the above modals with PWs, the actual world is always included as a member. Then the accessibility relation is reflexive (thus M holds). Thus, if something is physically necessary, it is true in every nomologically accessible PW, i.e. every PW with the same physical laws as our own. Then, it is true in our world too. If something is true in the

to 'whatever moral perfection would amount to', or some such. However, a morally perfect world may be so distant from the actual world as to be inaccessible and irrelevant. Then, we need some idea or good, better or best, but perhaps not perfect. (The concept of utopia seems apt for this purpose.)

actual world, it is physically possible. Likewise (*mutatis mutandis*) with logical, necessary and conceptual cases too.

However, for 'non-alethic' types of modality, '□' represents moral, doxastic or conative necessity (i.e. obligation, 'x is certain that P', 'x intends that P') and '◇' represents moral, doxastic or conative possibility (i.e. permission, 'x believes that P', 'x allows that P'). All non-alethic modals are relative and not absolute. Crucially, the above inferences are invalidated. For moral obligations, e.g., do not guarantee facts. Say it is a moral obligation to cultivate the young.¹² Cultivation of the young then does not logically follow as a fact. Further, none but the most doe-eyed, naive Panglossian would hold that all actual facts are morally permissible. Thus, murder and violent assault (e.g.) occur in the actual world. It does not logically follow that they are morally permissible.

So there is a large and important difference between alethic and non-alethic modals. If we model non-alethic modals with PWs, the actual world is not always a member. Then the accessibility relation is non-reflexive (and *M*, Brouwer, S4 and S5 do not hold). Thus, if P is morally obligatory, it is true in every morally perfect (or ideal or best or better) PW (or every accessible world in which things go as they ought). Since the actual world is not one of these worlds, it does not follow that P occurs (although P might occur). Whence the non-reflexive nature of non-alethic modals. The modals apply to acts and intentions in our world, but the facts governed by the modals do not follow. Likewise (*mutatis mutandis*) with doxastic, conative and similar cases (e.g. legal, conventional and so forth).

It is crucial to note that at this point we have discussed *conceptual* and *semantic* (i.e. logical) applications of PWs, and not the *ontological* issues. The latter are discussed later on, and it is on that issue that the philosophy of PW ramifies into competing positions. Furthermore, those competing ontological positions, in turn, produce competing semantics. Importantly, the distinction between these three elements, and the order of their appearance, will influence the dialectic of the following chapters.

Possible worlds philosophy

The philosophical use of PW has also proven to be vast, providing applications in the regions of philosophy of mind, ethics, epistemology, philosophy of religion; and on the topics of counterfactuals, propositions, events, etc.; along with the analysis of modality, which is philosophically significant in itself. Two brief examples are that of properties and propositions. If we take properties to be sets of individuals that exemplify those properties, we face the

¹²I do not have space to give full justice to the debates and complications within deontic logic. Hilpinen and McNamara (2013) provide a useful historical overview of the subject. Further research would be required to explore fruitful interrelationships between ideological deontics and the insights provided by this debate.

problem of co-extensionality, as discussed above. However, if we take reality to consist of a multitude of PWs, and sets to range over these worlds, the membership introduces the wanted distinctions. ‘Having a heart’ and ‘having a kidney’ may pick out the same set of objects in this world (prior to dialysis machines), but not across all the possible worlds, since there are (plausibly) worlds in which some things have hearts that do not have kidneys. Things might have turned out that way. Traditionally, propositions are also intensional, since standardly they are taken to refer to truth-values. ‘The Capital of England is Cardiff’ and ‘Triangles have seven sides’ have the same truth-value: i.e.: false. However, if the extension of the proposition is its truth-value, this is not sufficient to distinguish meaning, since then all the false propositions mean the same thing and all the true propositions mean the same thing. We can tackle this problem by introducing the notion of truth at a possible world. Then we have a wanted difference. ‘The Capital of England is Cardiff’ is true at some possible worlds and false at others. ‘Triangles have seven sides’ is false at all possible worlds. (However, the problem of ‘coarse-graining’ persists for analytic and logical truths and falsehoods, which are true and false (respectively) at all possible worlds (e.g. Lewis 1986a, pp. 48-50.)

Now, some philosophers, such as David Lewis, have taken the strength of PW to illuminate so many areas of discourse as to suggest a far-ranging metaphysics (Lewis 1968, 1973, 1983, 1986a, 1986b; Lewis and Lewis 1970). I shall return to this below. Others have taken PW to tell us something substantial about metaphysics (Kripke 1981) or at least to have advanced discussion in various areas in helpful ways. However, as Plantinga (1976) observes, the illumination is double-edged, since it leads to controversy (p. 253). On the face of it, PW locutions imply the existence of non-actual things. Let’s say properties are sets, ranging across possible worlds (actual and non-actual) of individuals that instantiate those properties. If there are individuals in non-actual possible worlds, then there are non-actual individuals. So, we seem to claim the existence of non-actual things. Since, for most people, ‘existing’ and ‘actual’ are synonymous, we are committing the ‘Meinongian howler’ (Lewis’s expression) of asserting that there *are* things that do not exist (Plantinga *ibid.* p. 256; Lewis 1986a, pp. 97-99; Loux 1979b, pp. 44-62; Lycan 1979).¹³

The illumination and theoretical benefits, as Lewis memorably puts it, come at a price. For many philosophers, the price is too high, and much of that illumination has to be sacrificed to reduce the costs (Lewis and Lewis p. 8-9; Lewis 1983, p. x; 1986a, pp. 4-5ff). For Lewis, the price is right (1986a). For him, we can keep all the beneficial accounts, say, of properties as sets of individuals, actual and nonactual, that exemplify those properties (*ibid.* pp. 50-68), maintain a distinction between ‘existing’ and ‘actual’ (pp. 97-101), and the existence of non-

¹³ A Meinongian would doubtless be unhappy with this imputed assertion, however. Cf. Tahko 2015, pp. 20-27.

actual things. 'Possible worlds' mean (real) worlds that are a possible way. They are concrete things, like our own world. Lewis:

[A]bsolutely every way that a world could possibly be is a way that some world *is*. And as with worlds, so it is with parts of worlds. [...] [E]very way that a part of a world could possibly be, is a way that some part of some world is. (p. 2; cf. 86-92)

Many of these worlds are populated by individuals like you and I and the furniture around us. Lewis dubs this position 'genuine' 'modal realism' (henceforth 'GR', following Divers 2002, pp. 43ff). This is also sometimes referred to as 'possibilism' (Adams 1974, pp. 202-208). Many other philosophers wish to maintain PW talk and analysis (and many of its illuminating benefits) while denying the existence of non-actual things. For them, 'existing' and 'actual' are synonymous and the actual world is all that exists. A common take on that view is that 'possible worlds are possible *states* of the world, or ways that a world might be' (Stalnaker 2003, p. 7) (cf. Kripke 1981, p. 15). Often such 'ways' are construed as abstract things, like very long stories. Then we have to lose some of the theoretical benefits. For example, since there are no non-actual individuals, it does not help to reduce properties to the set of all individuals that instantiate them. The problem of co-extensionality reappears since the possibilist solution is debarred (see Plantinga 1976, pp. 259-262). Commonly, this position is referred to as 'actualist' 'modal realism' (henceforth 'AR', following Divers 2002, pp. 169ff). It is also sometimes referred to as 'actualism' (Adams *op cit.*).¹⁴ I will return to these points of metaphysical disagreement in time.

The main point is made explicit by Divers (2002 pp. xi-xii). It will not do simply to claim the benefits of a 'possible worlds framework' for this or that without being explicit about the metaphysics. The conceptual resources and semantics (i.e. modal logic) interact with the ontology, i.e. what 'possible worlds' means and whether non-actuals exist. The promise of illumination in this area, then, leads to the question of metaphysical commitment, and to possible confusion. Since, as I have said, modal philosophy appears on the horizon of ideology theory and since, as I will demonstrate, ideologies are full of modals, it is important to make these interactions clear and decide amongst them.

¹⁴Lewis uses the expression 'ersatz realism' for these positions (e.g. 1986a, pp. 136-191ff), and the term has been adopted by some actualists, but it is so rhetorical that I would prefer to forego it where possible. The distinction between '*modal* realism' and '*ersatz modal* realism' is even worse, in my view, since Lewis's theory is meant to entirely reduce modals to sets of qualities and to reject essentialism. For the '*ersatz*'er, there really are modals, whereas for the full-blown realist there *really* are none at all! Instead, the '*real*' and '*ersatz*' commitments are to concrete and abstract PWs respectively, not modals. Hence Divers' (*op cit.*) GR/AR distinction is far better.

Application to ideology theory

How then might PW theory illuminate ideologies? The following chapters outline the centrality and contestability of modality to ideology. Modal and counterfactual concepts, as explained above, are putatively intensional and therefore difficult to distinguish. PW promises to resolve that issue by offering extensional analysis of those concepts. PW thus promises analytical illumination of IMs, by bringing them into clearer relief and highlighting their contours.

In the previous section, I alluded to some areas in ideology theory where modal philosophy has been acknowledged as an analytic resource. If this is to be used correctly and systematically, then one question to ask is what that is for. Since approaches to PW settle questions about the definitions, semantics and metaphysics of modals in different ways, uncaredful or un-self-critical sets of methodological goals could send us down the wrong path. Instead, we face meta-theoretical questions about the goals of T and meta-meta-theoretical questions about how to establish such goals!

Clues are to be found in the historical overview, provided above. It is possible to use (after Plantinga 1976) 'Canonical Possible Worlds' (henceforth 'CPW'). This is the approach to PWs as it first appears in the literature on modal logic, such as in Kripke's celebrated early work (1959, 1963). Here, PWs are used to establish some definitions and logic for modality. The metaphysical disputes appear later on. For our purposes, we want to establish methodological goals for a PW analysis of IM ('T'). We want these goals to be well-motivated. A good motivation is to avoid unwanted assumptions. One way to achieve that is to draw goals from the object of analysis, ideologies. Thus, we can use a CPW analysis to outline the modal profiles of ideologies and then foreground candidate goals about methodology. We can then decide whether to incorporate those goals into T. To anticipate: a CPW analysis of conservatism raises the implicit methodological goal of ruling out radical possibilities. A CPW analysis of socialism raises questions relating to the essentialism debate. Liberalism, in turn, highlights the prospect of nested possibilities – of freedoms I lack but could obtain. The first layer of enquiry (Question One) therefore involves bringing these issues to the fore using CPW and deciding whether to incorporate them as goals for T.

Divers' (2002) helpfully emphasises the distinction between the conceptual, semantic and ontological dimensions of approaches to PW. These elements interact, such that (e.g.) a sparser ontology exacts tighter limits on the available conceptual and inferential resources. At the second layer of enquiry (Question Two), then, we are pressed to consider which approach to PW best accommodates the goals established in the first stage. Note that, since the direction of argument is to start with goals for T, then ascertaining which approach to PW best accommodates those goals, the ontological questions are left to the end. The metaphysics of PW is hotly debated. For our purposes, we risk undermining an adequate analysis of IM if we allow metaphysical questions to encroach on T. Only after the goals are established should

we observe how they act on the metaphysical options, then decide which metaphysics to incorporate.

It was also noted above that there are different (alethic and non-alethic) types of modality and corresponding PW models, which generate different semantics. Despite these significant logical differences, importantly, ideologies appear to mix the two (cf. Adams 1989, pp. 89-115). An ideology might, for example, tell us that human nature is essentially selfish. This appears to be a form of alethic modality. But prescriptions flow from that idea. If people are essentially selfish then society should not be organised on the basis of false assumptions about human altruism and fraternity. Thus, an interaction between ideology theory and PW could bring out how these differing logics are integrated in human socio-political discourse.¹⁵

I noted that non-alethic modals, such as moral obligation, do not logically guarantee fact. But they may of course influence behaviour. If appalling things like murder and violent assault are morally and legally prohibited (and are *recognised* as such), then, plausibly, the occurrence of such things is reduced (if not logically precluded). So, non-alethics of this kind have a motivational, action-orienting component. That suggests the relevance to our topic of the meta-ethical debate on the relationship between motivation and fact-stating propositions (Sayre-McCord 2014). Unfortunately, there is insufficient space to pursue that connection in great detail. Nonetheless, since IMs relate descriptions of the human and social world to prescriptions for action, there is a criss-crossing network of mind-to-world and world-to-mind directions of fit within ideological complexes. A PW analysis ought to make that clear. What the analysis then does with those observations depends on our answer to Question One.

As I explain below, the prospect of modal fictionalism offers a strategy for bracketing off metaphysical questions until the final stages of the thesis, and focusing on conceptual and semantic issues in the interim. Hence our Three Questions. Questions One and Two are focused on methodological goals and questions of conceptual and logical resources. The metaphysical question is held in abeyance until Question Three. The following section elaborates on those points.

¹⁵For some Hume- and Moore-inspired critical analyses of these interactions in ideologies, see Adams *ibid.* and Corbett 1965.

§ I.VI - Questions One, Two and Three

Question One

In Chapter II, I focus on IM in general by comparing it with everyday perception. In Chapter III, I focus on conservative ideology. A CPW elucidation of the 'core concepts' of conservatism yields questions about a link between utopian conceivability and possibility. In Chapter IV, I focus on socialist ideology. A CPW elucidation of the core concepts of socialism yields questions about the notion of essentialism, specifically with regard to the concept of human nature. Chapter V focuses on liberal ideology. A CPW elucidation of the core concepts of liberalism yields questions about the semantics of iterated possibilities and desirable social worlds, i.e. is a better possibility, accessible from an accessible world, accessible to us? The questions are tackled by considering opposing positions with the aid of PW theory. If the argument concludes that utopian possibilities should be ruled out, that there are mind-independent human essences, and that possible possibilities are always possibilities, this exacts a tight set of constraints upon IM. Then, the goal of a PW analysis of ideology is to rule out some cases and permit others. By contrast, if the argument concludes otherwise, then the goal of a PW analysis of ideology is to elucidate as meaningfully as possible the modal differences between ideologies. Any decision-making between ideologies must be conducted by way of separate criteria. The argument concludes otherwise.

Ideological modality

In addressing these questions, the following chapters indirectly proffer details about IMs. Then, the oblique manner of that response mirrors the oblique manner in which the semantics of modal logic illuminates philosophical discussion. Chapter II draws some informative general outlines of IM and sketches out some observations about ideological intuition. Chapter III establishes scepticism but anti-eliminativism about utopian ideas. Chapter IV rejects essentialism and promotes anti-essentialism, which has consequences for ideological debates about human nature. Chapter IV also suggests the radical (and, for me, uncomfortable) conclusion that ideology goes all the way down. Chapter V illustrates the nested nature of kinds of IM and suggests the possibility of 'higher-order' freedoms. Chapter VI, in turn, shows how the metaphysics of ideology leaks into metaphysics simpliciter.

Question Two

To repeat, interpretations of PW are debated. These relate to questions such as: What is the nature and extent of PWs? Are PWs real entities? If so, are they physical entities, or some kind of abstract entity? What would that amount to? Are they part of the actual world? Do

individuals exist in more worlds than one? And, how can we know any of these things? Answers to these questions (and many others like them) will determine the nature of the interpretative framework we bring to ideology analysis (Divers 2002, pp. xi, 15-40). Lewisian GR, for example, is more permissive and contains a much weaker logic (1968, p. 36; Divers 2002, pp. 142-144). AR, by contrast, is more restrictive, validating more modal logical principles. But these questions cannot be settled before deciding upon goals for the method, the first question. After then, we can test which theory best accommodates those goals. I conclude that (a modified version of) GR best accommodates these goals.

Question Three

As Divers explains (2002, p. 19), metaphysically one can abstain from PW talk altogether, to avoid the difficult ontological questions such talk invites. If we abstain from talk of PWs then of course there is no truth to be had from it. Such a position is not adopted in this thesis, since the questions of method for IMs is raised by the fact of PW theory. This presents apparent metaphysical implications, but can it be metaphysically informative more generally?

For our purposes, we wish to explore a method for analysing IMs, by converting them into quantifiers over PWs, and relations between possible individuals. For those who accept PW talk, the question is what such talk amounts to (*op cit*, pp. 19-25). As intimated, there is a wide range of ontological positions (some more fully explored than others). At one end, there is an anti-realist fictionalism that takes talk of PWs as truth-evaluable but nonetheless immune to ontological commitments. As 'Hobbits have furry feet' can be true without committing us to the existence of hobbits, 'There is a possible world in which sheep are turquoise' can be true without committing us to the existence of PWs or turquoise sheep (Rosen 1990; cf. Hale 1995, Divers 1995 and Rosen 1995; Kalderon 2005). This supports the view that all that exists actually exists. At the opposite end is David Lewis's full-blown GR, where PWs talk is truth-evaluable due to an ontological commitment to an infinity of mind-independent concrete PWs other than our own, populated by concrete 'other-worldly individuals' (1986a). In between, we find AR, asserting the existence of plural mind-independent PWs, but only one concrete world, the actual world (Divers 2002, pp. 169-292; Adams 1974; Plantinga 1976; Kripke 1981; Lewis 1986a, pp. 136-191; Stalnaker 2003).

Divers 2002 finds that GR is both the most fully elaborated and satisfactory of the existing theories. From the outset, it might well suit us to articulate a form of fictionalism, since our principal interest is the analysis of IM. However, this presents two problems. First, existing attempts to articulate fictionalism have encountered serious troubles (Hale 1995; Divers 1995; Rosen 1995; Divers 1999; Kim 2005; Nolan 2016). Second, granted fictionalism, we would still have to decide what to be fictionalist *about*. We could be GR or AR fictionalists. So, to explore the options for analysing modals and satisfying the criteria elaborated above, we

would have to decide between GR and AR, remaining agnostic whether our locutions are realist or fictionalist (agnostic between 'There exists a concrete possible world at which' and 'According to GR, there exists a concrete possible world at which'), then decide *afterwards* whether the context of ideology analysis compels the acceptance of fictionalism over the real deal. Perhaps the environs of IM provide a stronger grounding for fictionalism. That last stage will have to be postponed until later. First, we have to decide whether our subject matter and criteria recommend a GR or AR treatment (and remain agnostic and postpone the fictionalist question).

The dialectic for answering Question Three, then, is to answer Questions One and Two, decide between GR and AR and only thereafter consider whether the context of ideology theory compels a fictionalism about that decision, or indeed some other response. An answer to Three is thereby predicated on answers to the other questions and postponed for direct consideration until Chapter VI. I conclude that there is scope for adopting fictionalism, but provide reasons to favour GR overall.

Conclusion

This wide-ranging but introductory chapter has settled on the descriptive conception of ideology, proposed some motivations for examining IM using PW, introduced the philosophy of PWs and established a strategy for exploring fruitful connections between PWs and ideologies. Answers to Question One must result from a commitment to avoid assumptions and derive the methodological goals from the subject matter itself. This produces the following procedure for addressing the question: examine individual ideologies using CPW with a view to assessing internal methodological assumptions. From that point on, Question Two can be addressed. Chapters II through V pursue this pattern of argument as a means to decide Questions One and Two. Chapter VI then addresses Question Three.

Chapter II

Mundane versus Ideological Modality

The initial task, then, in addressing Question One, is identifying the modal shape of ideological space. This chapter begins that task by comparing ideology to mundane perception. A central feature brought about by this comparison is the negotiability of IMs. It is then reasonable that T should assist decision-making between ideologies. But this raises the additional question exactly how such decision-making is to be executed. That question will be pursued in Chapters III, IV and V, by examining conservatism, socialism and liberalism respectively. The present chapter also elaborates on Question Two, but proves inconclusive on that score. From the perspective of this chapter, all existing approaches to PW could assist decision-making between ideologies. Question Three is postponed until Chapter VI. Some further suggestions are made about the epistemology to be adopted in this project, by moving between putatively ideological and cross-ideological intuitions. Intuition is not an infallible source of evidence and can only be utilised tentatively. However, within this rubric, we might test the strength of our intuitions about IMs by checking them against the more pervasive modal intuitions and opinions.

§§ II.I - II.III, below, seek to establish some methodological goals for T by drawing out the specific features of IM by comparison with everyday cases of modality. As mentioned, it concludes that T should assist decision-making between ideologies. § II.IV discusses the implications of these findings for our three Questions.

§ II.I Mundane perception and modality

The present section illustrates modality within ‘mundane’ perception using the following first-person reflection. I seem to perceive a perception-independent world. It is a feature of my experience that the things I perceive do not depend for their existence on my perceiving them. That is a philosophically intriguing phenomenon (cf. Locke 1689 and Berkeley 1710). Arguably, it connects with my imagination¹⁶ and possession of modal and counterfactual concepts, such as possibility, contingency and necessity, expressed in common words like ‘would, could, must, should’, and so forth. And these concepts concern how the world actually is *not*. Certainly, ‘imagination’ is used in a non-standard way here. Sufficient to note, however, that the ideas supplied above are apparently supplied by the mind, not direct perception. In any case, it is not vital to establish the following points beyond doubt. We require a set of helpful working assumptions, not (after Descartes 1641, *Meditation II*) indubitable Archimedean points

In perceiving an everyday object, say, a cup, I hold numerous implicit modal and counterfactual assumptions about it: it *can* be moved; it *could* survive a number of changes; it *cannot* survive a number of other changes and in such a case *would* be destroyed; it *would* look such and such a way from so and so direction; if I leave the room it *would* remain where it is; if I move, my vision *would* undergo this or that range of variations; it *would* remain identical if I undergo visual variations, etc. (Strawson 1982, pp. 89ff; Campbell 2002, pp. 137-141; Siegel 2010, pp. 184-205; Gregory 2015, pp. 113ff). Without these assumptions, I lose many other mundane opinions about the things I ordinarily perceive (Siegel 2010 *ibid.*; Gregory 2015 *ibid.*). For example, if, having stood up and moved across the room, the image remains fixed and unchanged, or if I look left and then right, or close my eyes, and the image remains secure and motionless, I cease to think of the cup as external to me, but instead take it as an hallucination, the result of some perceptual malfunction on my part. (Then the image is caused by how I am, not how the world is.) (cf. Siegel’s examination of ‘Good’ and ‘Odd’ cases of perception in her 2010 *ibid.* and Gregory 2015 *ibid.*). So, my implicitly assuming the counterfactual that, ‘If I move, the image of the cup would undergo such and such range of phenomenal variations’ is tightly bound up with my grasp of the cup as external to me, a singular thing, independent of and persistent throughout a diversity of perceptual experiences (Strawson 1982). Now, the woulds, coulds, cans, musts, must nots, etc, that infuse my perception of the world as an independent container of external objects *seemingly* cannot derive from my actual sensory perceptions (cf. Strawson 1982 pp. 89ff. and Campbell 2002 *ibid.*) (although this point has been debated, e.g. in Gregory 2015 and Campbell 2002). The crucial point here is that: *prima facie*, I perceive what *is*, but the woulds and coulds (etc.) relate

¹⁶In a rather Kantian sense of ‘imagination’. Cf. Strawson 1982.

to what *is not*. I relate *possibilities*, *potentials* and *necessities*, which exceed what actually *is*. Picking on the cup again, if I leave the room it *would* remain where it is; if I move, my vision *would* undergo this or that range of variations. But I have *not* left the room; I have *not* even moved. And I do not have to in order to possess such opinions, opinions which apparently underpin an intuitive grasp of mundane objects as independent, self-identical and individuated things - the perception of a perception-independent world (cf. Paul 2006, p. 334, 357).¹⁷

So, to summarise this brief overview of domestic modality:

1. 'Mundane' modals

- a. To the everyday objects of ordinary perceptions, I impute modals, such as possibilities, necessities, impossibilities, contingencies and counterfactuals
- b. Modals are involved in my conceiving perceived things as perception-independent and consistent
- c. Modals concern how the world actually is *not*

§ II.II Ideology and modality

The present section illustrates modality within ideology using the following reflection. Political ideology operates, I surmise, at a level continuous with the level of perception and reality articulated above. We stake claims about how society should be in virtue of opinions about human and social *possibility*, *potential* and *necessity*. For example, a liberal might promote equality of worth and regard because individuals *would*, under the right social conditions, act rationally, ethically and contribute to their own development and the flourishing of society (Freedman 1996, pp. 144-149, 159-60). So, again, how things actually are – in this case how things are *valued* – is determined by how things are not. It is manifestly not the case that people always act rationally or ethically or contribute to the development of themselves or others. Actual social conditions do not fully permit such things. But, with the right social conditions in place, people *would* act rationally and sociably. Social conditions *could* enable political *freedom*, an inherently modal concept, connoting the absence of social obstacles to individual *possibilities* to act. And, again, freedom relies on assumptions about how the world is not. My freedom to visit the library does not entail that I actually have to visit the library. If I do visit the library, I was free to do so only if I could have not done so. And typically, it is in the nature of the liberal concept of 'freedom' that it should attach to individuals (rather than groups or communities). So, all these points hold on a plausible account of the liberal view (see

¹⁷Arguably, these considerations are somewhat 'unscientific' and psychologistic, apprehending reality at the level of appearances only, the 'manifest image', not the 'scientific image'. However, if the physicist wishes to assume possibilities, potentials, necessities, counterfactuals, etc. she too relates modal concepts in drawing up contents of the external physical world with intuitions and opinions about how the world is not.

Chapter V, below, and Freeden 1996, pp. 141-153). There exists a rational capacity that, though it may not be actualised, nobody could be without. There is in some sense an essential or necessary human potential. So, we should value all people in virtue of their rational *capacities* as human beings, a capacity actualised or not. Actualisation occurs where social conditions permit. And such conditions would maximise individual freedom, enabling the individual development of rationality.

Note that this limited illustration derives from one example, liberalism, but, we will expand on examples in the following section. Sufficient to note the interaction of fact and value and alethic and non-alethic modals here. From an implied gap between society as it is and as it should be follow value-judgements and prescriptions for reforming existing institutional arrangements. This set of laws is right and should be protected; that practice is wrong and must be reformed or abandoned. And from the gap, springs motivation and action.

We can now add 'ideological modality' to the above summary:

2. 'Ideological' modals

- a. To claims about human beings and society, ideologies impute modals, such as possibilities, necessities, impossibilities, contingencies and counterfactuals
- b. Modals are involved in valuations of existing social arrangements
- c. Modals concern how the world actually is *not*
- d. Modals about how society should be are action-orienting

So, there are significant continuities between the two. Mundane perception and ideologies both impute modals to their relative fields (1a and 2a). Both concern how the world actually is not (1c and 2c).

There are also contrasts in the above list.

First, IMs do not *clearly* relate to perception-independence (1b.), but to how things *ought to be* (2b). We might argue that they concern how things are only in a normative sense.

Second, mundane modals ostensibly originate in me, whereas IMs ostensibly originate in ideologies. In characterising instances of 2, we stipulate the associated ideology. This is made more explicit with the addition of 1d and 2e: '1d. Modals ostensibly originate in me.' '2e. Modals ostensibly originate in ideologies.'

On reflection, we could draw out additional principles by considering further comparisons and contrasts.

§II.III Mundane vs. ideological modality

The present section compares mundane with IM. Obviously, with ideology things are not so mundane, but that is a trivial difference, begged by the original set up. Some additional points

of contrast are as follows. First, it appears there is more negotiability among IM than mundane modality. However, there is flexibility among mundane judgements too. I learn that this plastic cup is *incapable* of containing tea after it melts. Everyday modal opinions can change. They play a significant role in competence. In learning about the constitution of the cup, and others of its kind (cf. Strawson 1982), my interactions are likely to be more successful, consonant with my desires and beliefs.

More general advances in human knowledge can contribute. As Lewis explains:

If we knew only the physics of 1871, we would fail to cover some of the possibilities that we recognise today. Perhaps we fail today to cover possibilities that will be recognised in 2071. (...) (1973, p. 99)

There is an interesting comparison to be found in Marx:

Every useful thing is a whole composed of many properties; it can therefore be useful in various ways. The discovery of these ways and hence of the manifold uses of things is the work of history. (1867, p. 125)

However, it does *seem* right that, at some foundational level, a set range of modalities are required for everyday perception, perhaps in the very grasping of the things perceived as distinct from perception, as discussed before (although, again, this is debated – Gregory 2015; Campbell 2002). In a Kantian sense, perhaps experience without a certain modal bedrock is no experience like ours. This is reinforced by psychological research into counterfactual judgement. Byrne (2007) observes a tendency for people to entertain alternatives to reality based on their prior knowledge and also continuities in the way actual facts are ‘muted’ and non-actual possibilities entertained. Therefore, there are continuities in our modal judgements.

By contrast, IM is more negotiable. Briefly, liberal *freedom* - attached to the individual and construed as the absence of obstacles to individual *possibilities* to act - contrasts with socialist *freedom* - attached more to the community (and including individuals) and construed in terms of self-realization and emancipation (Freedman 1996, pp. 144-168, 440, 456-80). In turn, liberal freedom connects with a view of human nature as *essentially* capable of rationality, whereas, for the socialist, human nature is *essentially* communal and creative, advanced through reduced social inequalities and improved association (*ibid.*). Both views combine with concepts of human *potential*, for the liberal as rational behaviour understood both as internal harmony (self-betterment) and external harmony (social-betterment), and for the socialist as greater human welfare and realization of a range of powers, rational, productive, artistic, and so forth (Marx 1844; Lukacs 1923; Vincent 1995, pp. 98-9; Corbett 1965, pp. 17-31). On both

accounts, we find some (implicit or explicit) reliance on the idea of better futures. And, again, this provides a range of modals that generate value-judgements about existing social arrangements. But, as we can see, the modals are in competition between ideologies and we can debate and choose between them. By contrast, the conservative (notwithstanding variations) offers some resistance to kinds of modal judgements more generally. As discussed in Chapter III, conservatism is modally conservative, resistant to visions of better futures as physically possible and realizable (Freeden 1996, pp. 317-378; Vincent 1995, pp. 55-83). The conservative utilises competing modals in cautioning against 'upward' (i.e. progressive or radical) possibilities. This adds to the range on offer by advocating, as an option, abstinence or restraint about IM more generally. From these considerations derive further propositions, to be added below: IMs are negotiable and in competition. IMs can involve upward modalities (better futures) or downward modalities (worse futures) (cf. Goodwin and Talyor 2009, pp. 10-29). Arguably, then, there is a lot more competition and variety with IM. We may argue how things would go if we change the voting process (say), but we are less inclined to argue how things would go with unperceived items, and, outside philosophy (and neighbouring subjects), there are fewer competing available positions.

Third, IM operates on a wider scale than mundane modality, regarding social and political matters, rather than (more clearly) the things of direct perceptual acquaintance. This is perhaps similar to the consideration of statements about things we are not directly familiar with, like a fact about some event in history or the physics of some object at a galactic distance from here. So, there is wider scale at which IM operates, applied to social and political matters at a higher level of generality and abstraction than mundane modality. Of course, ideology is also more clearly theory- and doctrine-related than direct perceptual experience

IM operates at a higher level than perceptual modality. But is IM absent from direct experience? Apparently not. Ideology influences perception and intuition too. Consider the following imaginary example from Freeden 2003 (p. 2). Freeden's intention here is introductory and illustrative, although it is sufficiently recognisable and plausible for our present purposes. He sets up the example thus:

Imagine yourself walking in a city. Upon turning the corner, you confront a large group of people acting excitedly, waving banners and shouting slogans, surrounded by uniformed men trying to contain the movement of the group. Someone talks through a microphone and the crowd cheers. Should you flee or join or should you perhaps ignore it?

The example appeals to direct experience, although of course this is not a mundane, ordinary example, and it relates to an experience of a social, rather than a domestic event. Freeden continues,

The problem lies in the decoding. Fortunately, most of us consciously or not, possess a map that locates the event we are observing and interprets it for us. If you are an anarchist, the map might say: 'Here is a spontaneous expression of popular *will*, an example of the direct action we *need* to take in order to wrest the control of the political away from elites that oppress and dictate. Power *must* be located in the people; governments act in their own interests that are contrary to the people's will.' If you are a conservative, the map may say: 'Here is a *potentially* dangerous event. A collection of individuals *are about to* engage in violence in order to attain aims that they have failed, or *would* fail, to achieve through the political process. This illegitimate and illegal conduct *must* be contained by a strong police grip on the situation. They *need* to be dispersed and, if aggressive, arrested and brought to account.' And if you are a liberal, it may say: 'Well-done! We *should* be proud of ourselves. This is a perfect illustration of the pluralist and open nature of society. We appreciate the importance of dissent; in fact, we encourage it through instances of *free* speech and *free* association such as the demonstration we are witnessing.' (p. 2 *italics added*)¹⁸

I have added italics to emphasise the modal concepts above. Note the central and operative function those concepts play.

This draws out another point of comparison: mundane and ideological modality both relate to *action*. As lighted on above in discussion of competence, the modal opinions I hold about domestic items largely combine with my desires in my interactions with them. I wouldn't place tea in the cup if I held the counterfactual that 'If I pour tea in the cup then it would melt' and I didn't wish for it to melt. Likewise, I would oppose demonstrations if I held the counterfactual that 'If people demonstrate it could lead to disorder and/or destruction' (plus the relevant desire).

¹⁸As glossed in Chapter I, there is a strong tradition among advocates of 'pejorative' conceptions of ideology of treating mundane intuition and opinion as profoundly (and misleadingly) influenced by power interests. These ideas are both important and contentious and have stimulated a number of informative projects. E.g. some contemporary empirical research on 'System-Justification Theory' (see Leader Maynard 2013, pp. 309-312, for an overview). However, the above citation from Freeden is highly significant because it also plausibly highlights the influence of ideology in the 'non-pejorative' sense on common intuition and opinion. A similar conception of ideology as a cognitive socio-political map is also discussed in Geertz 1973b and Žižek 1994. Cf. Freeden 1996, pp. 85-6, 128.

With regard to the claim about the relative negotiability of IMs compared with mundane perception, one might respond that there is a level of unconscious determination that compromises that claim. Few would debate that we have ideological views to choose amongst. But one might cite deeper emotional, psychological or unconscious causes that constrain the available imagined alternatives. In turn, the awareness we currently have of competing viewpoints is a more recent phenomenon. This, one can note, brings the non-pejorative and pejorative conceptions of ideology closer together.

Mannheim (1936) observes that:

One can point out with relative precision the factors which are inevitably forcing more and more persons to reflect not merely about the things of the world, but about thinking itself and even here not so much about truth in itself, as about the alarming fact that the same world can appear differently to different observers.

...

One turns from the direct observation of things to the consideration of ways of thinking only when the possibility of the direct and continuous elaboration of concepts concerning things and situations has collapsed in the face of a multiplicity of fundamentally divergent definitions. (p. 5)

Of course, many people may be unwilling to actually entertain competing political viewpoints, but there is perhaps an *awareness* of alternatives. The phenomenon, according to Mannheim, is a recent one:

From a sociological point of view, the decisive change takes place when that stage of historical development is reached in which the previously isolated strata begin to communicate with one another and a certain social circulation sets in. The most significant stage of this communication is reached when the forms of thought and experience, which had hitherto developed independently, enter into one and the same consciousness impelling the mind to discover the irreconcilability of the conflicting conceptions of the world. (p. 7)

One can note that this modern marketplace of ideas is more the case with our socio-political modals than with the modals of everyday perception. If Mannheim is right here, it also suggests additional ranges of imagined alternatives that are currently beyond sight.

This delivers:

2. 'Ideological' modals

- a. To claims about human beings and society, ideologies impute modals, such as possibilities, necessities, impossibilities, contingencies and counterfactuals
- b. Modals are involved in valuations of existing social arrangements
- c. Modals concern how the world actually is *not*
- d. Modals about how society should be are action-orienting
- e. Modals ostensibly originate in ideologies
- f. Modals are negotiable and in competition
- g. Modals involve upward modalities (better futures, potentials or natures) or downward modalities (worse futures, potentials or natures).
- h. Competition involves debate whether imagined possibilities are real possibilities
- i. Modals can relate to perception
- j. Modals can relate to self-perception
- k. Modals might relate to mundane perception
- l. Modals might be transmitted by culture
- m. Modals might be transmitted unconsciously

The above principles are not intended to be final or exhaustive. But they are intended to have a sufficient degree of *prima facie* plausibility, brought out by comparison with a reasonable account of mundane perception and by reference to the literature. Granted those points, the principles sketch outlines of ideological imagination.

Principles 2j-m are clearly very important and, it should be noted, relate to pejorative approaches to ideology to be found in the literature. Inclusion of 2j-m in this list, suggests a bridge between pejorative and non-pejorative approaches. However, there will be no space to explore those principles in greater depth. As argued in § I.III, it is preferable to explore the modals apparent in the non-pejorative approach first.

§ II.IV Questions One, Two and Three

As explained in Chapter I, it is well established that PWs offer powerful means for elucidating modal concepts (and intensions and counterfactuals) (Loux 1979b, Divers 2002, Lewis 1968, 1983, 1986a, 1986b; Plantinga 1976; Stalnaker 2003). A fact is possible if true in some PW, necessary if true in all PWs, impossible if false in all PWs, contingent if false in some PWs. Identification of modal facts about individuals can be usefully construed in terms of connections between possible, non-actual(ised) individuals. Different 'kinds' (Lewis 1973, p. 8, 1983a, pp. 27-50; Divers 2002, pp. 4-9) of modality can be adduced by specifying constraints on PWs. Something is physically possible if true in some PWs with the same physical laws as ours, metaphysically possible if true in some PW whatever, morally impossible (i.e. prohibited) if false in all 'morally perfect PWs',¹⁹ etc. So - as discussed above - this suggests a method for analysing IMs. But that produces our Questions One and Two: What goals should such a method serve? What interpretation of possible worlds should be used?

T could serve a number of goals, depending on which questions are deemed most salient, and these can relate to numerous matters and purposes. Needless to say, this thesis cannot consider them all. However, some questions are internal to the subject matter, and so require no additional assumptions. Our list above suggests the first: 2f. 'Modals are negotiable and in competition'. This raises the question 'which modals should we choose?' T could start by offering assistance by aiding decisions about contested modals. However, this leads to the further question what 'assistance' would amount to. Should T provide principled criteria for sorting good from bad cases? Or should it offer neutral illustrative assistance by clarifying differences and facilitating decision by way of separate concerns and criteria? We would need to decide whether a proposed method returns true or false values to propositions with IMs or merely illustrates what all such propositions would look like *if* true, to be adjudicated by independent means.

If we have resolved to extract goals from the subject matter itself, the decision whether and how decision-making should be critical or illustrative would come from the subject matter too. In what follows, I seek to achieve this by examining modals within different ideological positions. There are of course numerous positions one might cite, so for brevity I focus on conservatism, socialism and liberalism. It is important to note that ideologies also contain their own implicit or explicit methodological claims, and these can relate to modals. Some of these may be justifiable by general criteria of rationality, or compatibility with other ideologies, and might therefore be carried forward into the overall methodology. Some might be justifiable by way of agreement with pervasive opinions. To draw these modal features out requires

¹⁹Cf. Chapter I, n.7, above

highlighting them using PW. This is problematic however, since there are different approaches to PW, and which approach to adopt ought to suit the goals of our methodology. So, we need to break into a circle. However, as I have said, it is possible to initially utilise a ‘non-committal’ or ‘canonical’ PW (CPW) framework to derive the relevant aspects before moving forward to the question which ontologically committed – or partially committed or non-committed - approach to PW is best. The fact of disagreement between approaches to PW also illuminates the different methodological goals we might adopt. For example, AR is less permissive and more logically-constrained than GR. Hence GR is on the side of an illustrative, non-critical methodology. Some proponents of AR are also essentialist, whereas GR is anti-essentialist. Further, AR typically contains a stricter logic about iterated modality than GR. All these questions relate to the methodological goals one might adopt. If we have as methodological goals that radical, utopian possibilities ought to be eliminated, some claims of human essence supported and others invalidated, and that all possible possibilities are mere possibilities, then the method should contain a critical epistemology. I argue against that option.

Intuition

It will also be noted below (especially in Chapter IV) that intuition plays a controversial role in modal epistemology and metaphysics. This is of particular note when it comes to questions of essence and potential (cf. Kripke 1981). Since we are discussing IM, there is some apparent danger in using intuition as a source of evidence: intuitions may themselves be ideologically constrained. This well-known point is made forcefully, e.g. in Marx and Engels 1846, Althusser 1971 and others. It is not irrelevant to the descriptive notion of ideology, since, as Freedom observes (2003, p.1, cited above), our ideological commitments can influence cognitive ‘maps’ used to ‘decode’ situations (cf. Geertz 1973b). If, for example, we rely on our intuitions as evidence and our intuitions support the idea the human beings have essences, that hold mind-independently, and these essences relate (e.g.) to match of origins and material constitution, then a methodological goal for T would involve ruling out conflicting ideological views. *However*, if intuitions about human nature differ between ideological positions, this would, without further argument, unjustifiably prejudice certain ideological positions over others. We are in choppy water when deciding goals for T. A tentative corrective is as follows: respect intuitions as preliminary clues about IMs *but* test those intuitions by comparing them with putatively pre- and cross-ideological intuition. If we can safely conclude that intuitions about essence would persist irrespective of our ideological positions, there is less chance of smuggling in unjustified ideological prejudices, and grounding, instead, our judgements at the level of mundane perception, glossed above.

Question One

To summarise, we have broadly outlined the modal shape of ideologies and noted that the question of decision-making between competing modals is a reasonable goal, because that is inherent to the nature of ideological modals, as mentioned above (2f.). Crucial decisions, of course, are often made at an early stage in even the most rigorously formalised systems, and modal logic is no different. But this can impact our conceptual, semantic and metaphysical resources. This leads to the additional question exactly what decision-making for T would amount to. An answer to that question will be reached through a CPW analysis of conservatism, socialism and liberalism in the following chapters.

Question Two

After a CPW analysis of each ideology is complete, we then have to face up to the challenge of interpretations of PW, since what concepts and logic are available to us depend on the interpretation and attendant ontology. We have resolved that, for our purposes, the interpretation should accommodate the methodological goals. This is a vast area to cover, but for our purposes we can summarise the main differences. (The reason we are considering GR versus AR and not yet entertaining the fictionalist variant is summarised below, re. Question Three.)

First: the issue what a PW *is*. GR and AR both assert the existence of PWs (of a kind) and maintain that modalities consist of accessibility relations between them. So, it is possible that it will rain if it rains in some world accessible to this one. Or, it is physically possible for me to snap this pencil because there is a world that is nomologically accessible from this one where I snap this pencil. Etc. But for GR, a 'PW' is a real concrete spatiotemporal whole, like this world, whereas, for species of AR, 'PW' is either a way this world could be or a construct out of how this world is. It is an abstract thing of some form, like a 'maximally consistent' set of sentences, a recombination of existing elements, a story or picture of some kind, etc. The different accounts also compete over how a 'PW' represents a possibility. For GR, something is possible iff it is true in some PW. For AR, something is possible iff it exists according to a PW which represents the actual world, either correctly or incorrectly. On AR, PWs are more like newspapers, relating different stories about the same reality. One of those stories, PWs, is true. That is the actual world. All others are false. On that account, then, there is one privileged PW, the actual world, which accurately represents our world. Here, the actual world is not our world, but *the* accurate 'way' or maximal representation of it. There is something special and unique about it. By contrast, as mentioned, for GR, what we call the 'actual' world is the concrete spatiotemporal reality, closed under causal relations, that we reside within. Other PWs are worlds like this one, just causally isolated from ours, and where different things go on. Here, there is nothing particularly special about our world. 'Actual' is merely an indexical term, like 'here' or 'now' (see especially Lewis 1970). 'This-worldly individuals' call this world

‘actual’, but ‘otherworldly individuals’ call their world ‘actual’ – just as our contemporaries and close neighbours call this time and place ‘here’ and ‘now’ whereas our antecedents and antipodeans call their time and place ‘here’ and ‘now’.

Given these two accounts and the conclusions so far reached, there is nothing particularly that would recommend one over the other for our purposes. Both are capable of expressing possibilities in terms of PWs and accessibility relations and both are capable of handling and explicating different *kinds* of modality by stipulating ranges of PWs. A brief look back at the modal characteristics of ideologies and our methodological goal would suggest that both approaches, elaborated so far (2a-m), would fit.

Regarding the account of the differences so far provided, the fact that there is an ontological difference between concrete and abstract PWs needn’t detain us. Nor, at present, should the differences of representation (i.e. that for AR all but one world misrepresents this one, whereas for GR, possibilities are just facts in other worlds). The concern of Question Two is the accommodation of the methodological goals, established in this and the next few chapters, in light of the characteristics of ideological modals, sketched provisionally in 2a-i.

As a recap, the dialectic must run as follows. We first need to consider which approach fits the methodological goals (Question One). Granted, different approaches carry competing ontological commitments. However, modal fictionalism is an option, and we can choose between GR or AR modal fictionalisms (“According to GR...”, “According to AR...”). Thus, an exploration of methodological fit would provisionally treat the language of GR and AR as *agnostic* between factualist and fictionalist varieties (so then we are not currently detained by the ontological differences). Once we have decided between GR and AR on purely methodological grounds (Question Two), we can then discuss whether to accept the realist or anti-realist (fictionalist) variant (Question Three). If the choice presents difficult questions regarding ontological commitments, it would be an additional task, *from that point only*, to discuss whether the method can be brought into equilibrium with our preferred ontology. To take an alternative route and foreclose components of analysis for IMs due to ontological commitments about modals is to stack the deck in advance and fail to give our chosen subject matter – *ideology* – due consideration.

Question Three

Certainly, we may have independent metaphysical reasons to choose one approach over another. And these might constitute independent criteria. But the task would then be to bring the desired ontology into line with the methodological goals. This would be an interesting undertaking: give free rein to ontology to permit the comparison of ideological positions, decide between ideological positions via separate considerations, observe the ontology that remains, then pursue options for bringing the ideology into line with the most acceptable ontology by

presenting appropriate adjudicative criteria. It would also be a very interesting question to ask at what point politics ends and apolitical fact begins.

As explained above, the dialectic that terminates with an answer to Question Three in Chapter VI relies first on establishing the subject and criteria that recommend either a GR or AR treatment. Then in Chapter VI, the question of factualism or fictionalism will be addressed.

However, there is an implicit challenge to this coalescence of powers in Stalnaker (2003; 1984). For Stalnaker, PWs are semantic, offering means for articulating metaphysical positions. The semantics for representing metaphysical commitments should not be confused with the metaphysics themselves. Analogously, our definitions of truth or existence do not establish what is true or what exists (2003 p. 8). Stalnaker:

I see the apparatus of possible worlds, not as a metaphysics, but as a framework for representing one's commitments, and for clarifying disagreements between people with conflicting commitments. The basic assumption that informs all of my attempts to come to terms with metaphysical questions is that what it is to represent the world – to say how things are – is to locate the world in a space of possibilities. One understands what someone else is saying by understanding how that person is distinguishing between the possibilities, as one takes those possibilities to be. The concept of a possibility – a way a world might be – is to be explained functionally – as what one is distinguishing when one says how things are. (ibid.)

On first appearance, this looks like an excellent way to pursue our methodological goals of assisting decision-making between IMs. However we conclude, Stalnaker appears to offer a way out of our metaphysical concerns. But, oddly given these claims, he also proceeds to articulate an actualist account of PWs, according to which PWs are ways a world might be, rather than (as in GR) worlds that are that way. Such ways amount to complex structural properties of some kind (all of which, bar one, are uninstantiated) (1984; 1996). Stalnaker's optimistic assertions about a metaphysic-free semantics appears suitable for restricted contexts only – say, in philosophy of mind or moral philosophy. '[I]n particular contexts of inquiry, deliberation, and conversation, participants distinguish between alternative possibilities... [T]hat they should do so is definitive of those activities' (1984, p. 39). However, the motivation for this thesis is that ideologies are both full of modals and that modals are in dispute. Furthermore, ideologies contain implicit methodological, epistemological and metaphysical assumptions of their own. We want a way to illuminate and analyse the differences. So, it seems we have to side with Divers against Stalnaker in acknowledging that the conceptual and semantic resources we decide upon carry metaphysical implications, implications that will have to be addressed before the discussion is over.

Conclusion

The current chapter establishes that T ought to assist decision-making between ideologies. That initial response raises the additional question whether T ought to assist decision-making by evaluation or mere explication. To avoid smuggling in assumptions, we will examine individual ideologies using CPW and assess whether evaluative or explicative goals should be incorporated into T. Having addressed these questions, we can decide which PW approach best accommodates those goals. The current chapter also establishes a putative and plausible distinction between mundane and ideological modality. In fact, the depth and extent of that distinction will be brought into question in Chapter IV. However, it does bring to light valuable epistemological considerations. Since IM is a very negotiable and variable affair, intuition cannot be treated as a source of modal knowledge, as it is by some philosophers. Instead, epistemological norms should derive from general criteria of reasoning. Any epistemic appeal to intuition must be convincingly pre-ideological, or better cross-ideological (since that former notion will be questioned). This affords standards for which to address Question One and decide the goals to incorporate into T.

Chapter III

Conservatism and Conceivability

Introduction

This chapter addresses Question One and Two by focusing on conservatism. §III.I provides a CPW rendering of Freeden's analysis of conservatism (Freeden 1996, pp. 317-416). As promised, I tease out the modal elements of the ideology and then attempt an elaboration of them using CPW. The point of the above approach is to provide a lens through which to view the modal assumptions within the ideology, and to draw out the implications of those assumptions as a means to address Question One. Chapter II produced the tentative conclusion that PWs ought to assist decision-making between competing ideologies. This led to the question whether the method ought to be evaluative or illustrative. On a CPW interpretation, conservatism produces the evaluative claim that utopian possibilities (defined below) ought to be ruled out. §III.II then takes up this 'conservative challenge' and considers whether that evaluative claim ought to be a methodological goal for T. In conclusion, I agree with the conservative that there is an unbridgeable gap between utopian conceivability and possibility, but disagree that utopian ideas should be ruled out by T. This tells us that the methodology for T (within this partial context) should be explicatory and not evaluative, although it ought to represent a distinction between conceivable possibilities and real possibilities. §III.III then addresses Question Two and discusses which approach to PWs best accommodates these results. The contest proves inconclusive. However, since later chapters provide stronger support overall for GR, significant space is dedicated to elaborating GR's capacity to accommodate the above goals for T.

§III.I CPW analysis of conservatism

The analyses in Chapters IV and V reveal that the modal structures of socialism and liberalism are complex, involving a number of sophisticated and stratified modal assumptions about possible and necessary possibilities. As we shall see below, conservatism, by contrast, is relatively simple and restricted modally. It is, in a sense, modally conservative or restrictive, if analysis permits such an expression.

Below, we can see that conservatism provides an anti-radical critical strategy that places strong restrictions on the human powers of conceivability and social possibility. Using CPW, this translates into a restriction of accessibility relations to (first) stable PWs that are socially like our own (and a determination of such worlds as desirable) and (two) unstable PWs that are socially unlike our own (and a determination of such worlds as undesirable). The conservative insists that social stability depends on the existence of unconscious, extra-human forces. The conservative rules out - blocks access to – PWs that are physically like our own and socially stable but socially unlike our own (when our own is stable).

We are looking to Michael Freeden's work as a source of research (especially 1996, and more recently in 2013) on political ideologies. Freeden analyses political ideologies in terms of their conceptual and structural features, his 'morphological approach', as explained in Chapter I, above. Conservatism, for Freeden (1996, pp. 317-416), presents a morphology quite different from the 'progressive' ideologies. In essence, conservatism has a basic but firm conceptual core and an adaptable conceptual margin. At its core, for Freeden, conservatism contains stable concepts. These are held in place by highly adaptable and contingent concepts on the margin and periphery. The function of these outlying concepts is to repel cultural or ideological challenges to the core. To unpack this analysis of conservatism, we shall start with the exterior and travel toward the core and outline the manner in which the conservative exterior reacts to opposing ideologies.

Adjacent concepts

As a temporary adjacent concept, conservatism has portrayed *individuality* and *liberty* in opposition to *liberalism* in terms of 'concrete social groups' (Freeden 1996, p. 342). On this view, individuality and liberty – and the liberal challenge to conservatism - are acknowledged but defused by locating the lasting value of those ideas not within the reflections of political visionaries and 'idealists' but in the gradual, collective and largely unconscious processes of concrete social traditions (*ibid.*), calling us back to the physical world and pressing the importance of nomological over metaphysical possibility – restricting (in CPW terms) access to nomologically accessible PWs (and those worlds that answer the conservative's

descriptions). So, individuals and liberties emerge from and are embedded within communities and traditions.

This is consistent with the well-known criticism of the French Revolution by Edmund Burke:

Thanks to our sullen resistance to innovation, thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character, we still bear the stamp of our forefathers. We have not (as I conceive) lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century nor as yet have we subtilized ourselves into savages. We are not the converts of Rousseau; we are not the disciples of Voltaire; Helvetius has made no progress amongst us... We know that we have made no discoveries, and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality, nor many in the great principles of government.

(Burke, E., cited in Vincent 1993, p. 71. The ellipses are Vincent's. Cf. Freeden 1993 p. 363.)

On the above view, conservatism has a strong social focus. However, it has deflected *socialist* and *welfarist* ideas by affirming the importance of *private property, rights, traditions* and *institutions* as constitutive of social stability (Freeden 1996, p. 342). So, there are some apparent *fascist* aspects to it. However, conservatism has parried the fascist concept of *violence* with the concept of *order*. But it has at times resembled some fascist ideas in upholding the concept of *natural inequality* as a response to *communism* (p. 342).

Together, these conceptual reconfigurations and designations needn't be, nor have they been, consistent, at a point in time or through time. They are produced, according to Freeden, as defensive responses to enemy forces on the ideological frontier (pp. 351-369).

So, there is great flexibility here in terms of the conceptual paths conservatism treads to protect its core from ideological challenges. Freeden characterises this feature a 'swivel-mirror technique' (p. 336-347). The metaphor is intended to convey wide manoeuvrability, deflection (rather than mere reflection) and a fixed base, upon which the mirror is hinged. The base is conservatism's conceptual core. Conservatism is highly flexible at deflecting opposing concepts, with its own conceptual reconfigurations and innovations around its core, although these are rigidly fastened in place once established. The fixed position housing the hinges is conservatism's two core concepts. According to Freeden, these are: (1) resistance to inorganic, unnatural, non-gradualist change and (p. 333) (2) the extra-human causes of human behaviour and society (p. 334).

Core Concept 1

In Freeden's view, conservatism does not constitute a mere disposition of concern to maintain the status quo, as some theorists have claimed (p. 329). At some level, conservatives accept the realities of change and of history (p. 331ff). However, conservatism refuses to *permit* change beyond a restricted minimum (p. 333). There is a value-judgement at work. That being so, conservatism *must* grant the physical possibility of the facts it disvalues (else, why bother?). Conservatism must grant the physical possibility of radical social change, of a range of more radical possible futures, but at the same time deny that such things are desirable or have positive consequences. The first core concept is a response then to a perceived 'threat of artificial, humanly devised, change, a threat that carries with it the prospect of potential entropy' (p. 333). It is 'a resistance to change, however unavoidable, unless it is perceived as organic and natural' (p. 344).

In CPW vernacular, we can construe things thus. At its core conservatism adheres strongly to perceptions of the actual social world and accesses ranges of possible social future worlds. Of these worlds, those which vary too greatly from the perceived actual world are also deemed unstable, disorderly and socially perilous. Future PWs which are too socially different from the actual world are worlds where upheaval and distress take place. Conservatism does not permit access to PWs that are socially unlike existing stable worlds but nonetheless socially stable. To speak of natural, organic and gradual change in this context is therefore to speak of change which is minimal, change which accompanies a high degree of non-change. Historical continuity and social stability are interlinked. For the conservative, the future possible social worlds that are too different from the actual social world are those of disorder and instability and these worlds are either the only (accessible) radical social worlds or they are a significant majority of them.

As we shall see, given this rendering in CPW, the conservative places strong blocks on acceptable human conceivability, at least regarding social or political matters. Our proneness to perceive ideal social possibilities, in being optimistic, radical, progressive, perhaps even utopian, is confused. Accessibility relations are mismatched at the core. They take us to worlds unlike our own, and block out salient features we ought to recognise, or they select various bits of various worlds and present them as parts of one world, when really they cannot be. So, as we shall explore, an evaluation of conservative ideology would reduce largely to an evaluation of the purity and fallibility of accessibility relations, within our attempted model. The conservative submission is that we should harshly evaluate ideologies that promote utopian possibilities.

Of the worlds that are too socially different from the actual world, the conservative is thereby given to deny either that they have little or no negative social facts, or that positive overall social facts are likely. We might say that positive social facts occur in less numerous

or less proximate worlds. Proximity, in this sense, can be understood as likeness to our world (as Lewis would say, e.g. 1973, pp. 91-96).

Notice that there is a high degree of vagueness in this account. It is not clear yet which changes would count as acceptable and exactly where and what amount of change would breach the minimum safe limit. To some degree, this level of vagueness is to be expected, for ideologies are themselves vague. The technical rendering of ideologies using PWs ought to bring the ideology into sharper relief, not make it better defined than it is. A magnifying glass magnifies images; it doesn't improve them. So, our account should explicate vague aspects of ideologies, not paper them over. A faithful and adequate account ought to allow the vagueness of its subject matter to carry through into the schematics. However, as Lewis has pointed out, we should thereby be more precise *about* vagueness, about where and how vagueness is to be located (see, for e.g., *ibid*).

Whether the above-mentioned vagueness conceptually damages conservatism is not a concern of this thesis. Nonetheless, we can note that the notion of acceptable possibility is pressed into political service and that this is a point of conflict between conservatism and progressivism.

In debates between ideological positions, historical examples can be used to assert possibilities for us and for our future to establish certain conclusions. In discussions about trade union powers, the British conservative can reference Arthur Scargill and the miners' struggles in the 70s and 80s. By implication, these realities are undesirable. They *are* possible realities for us that could be realised by strengthening union rights, a return to closed shops, relaxing strike ballot regulations etc. But they are undesirable. Here we view an attempt to resist social change by proposing undesirable consequences, such as social unrest or economic decline, as a possibility that would be realised for us should we make the wrong choices and follow up our more wishful imaginings.

The British socialist, on the other hand, can evidence the benefits of unions and democratic movements, such as the Suffragettes, the welfare state, National Insurance, the National Health Service, health and safety regulations, working time limits, maternity pay and so forth. The implication is that these were better possible futures realised by way of action and significant social change. More radical worlds were conceived in the minds of visionaries and realised only as a result of this. So, better possibilities are a reality for us too; there are desirable and beneficial possibilities that can only be realised by way (on the one hand) of conceptual inventiveness and (on the other) of significant and widespread change.

Note that the above type of debate persists despite any apparent issues with vagueness or unclear boundaries. To adequately decide between opposing sides in such a debate (beyond rhetoric and grandstanding) requires an analysis of the realities behind these

examples and their application to contemporary contexts. Sufficient to point out that the historical examples are not *a/ways* relevant, even when they appear similar or more proximate in time.

From this point of view, we can notice that an understanding of social history plays a significant part in the social possibilities we entertain - that is, the PWs we access. The main point at issue concerns the clarity of our accessibility relations, whether they tell us the whole story. A debate on the topic should focus on whether one can provide a complete enough picture to join enough dots and connect enough parts. One way to do this is to apply tests, such as the test of contradiction. Another is to explore whether there are additional factors keeping the full picture from view. This leads us on to Core Concept 2.

Core Concept 2

Conservatism's Core Concept 2 is understood by Freeden as 'an attempt to subordinate change to the belief that the laws and forces guiding human behaviour have extra-human origins and therefore cannot and ought not to be subject to human wills and whims' (p. 344). These extra-human origins may be various. 'God, history, biology, and science, as understood by different generations, have served in turn as the extra-human anchor of the social order and have been harnessed to validate its practices' (*ibid.*). Humans, their activities and societies, are in large part determined by forces beyond their control. We are enslaved by the natural order of things. A deliberate attempt to move society along should not ignore or disturb this larger influence. The significance of the 'extra-human' characterisation Freeden emphasises is that it denies the ability of people to construct society in their own image. There is a fundamental flaw in human powers of imagination and conceivability when it comes to appreciating the conditions and consequences of direct action and/or of the human ability to adequately realise goals in virtue of the existence of these extra-human forces that exceed and perhaps frustrate our imaginings.

Drawing out the modal implications of this helps reduce the vagueness in Core Concept 1. Conceiving is a human operation, a product of free will. We are agents that identify varieties of possibility, conceptually accessing PWs very different from our own. If, when it comes to theorising about future states of our society, human perceptual powers are drastically flawed, the range of desirable future possibilities cannot be as wide as apparent human powers of imagination permit. The desirable future states of society must be constrained somewhat by the natural order of things, a greater source of influence extending back beyond human cognitive efforts. This influence is realised in the actual world, when it is stable and secure, and acts within it. Therefore, to minimise change invented by human whim to allow the safe passage of extra-human energies without harm, requires resistance to excessive change, and excessive change is constituted by deliberate change.

Consequently, the desirable PWs are more rigidly constrained by the realities of the actual social world, where that world is stable, and by those shadowy conditions that escape human powers of conception. The range of desirable possible futures is therefore greatly limited. Anything cooked up by the human imagination that takes us beyond existing conditions has disastrous consequences. The mistake of progressive ideologies, then, is to deny, ignore or misunderstand this point. We could say that the worlds in which there is widespread social change beyond existing conditions and consequent social upheaval are like our own in important respects. Such worlds that are stable and favourable are less alike our world than the latter, and are therefore physically or humanly impossible, highly unlikely or irrelevant. That is because, even though the social conditions are, *ex hypothesi*, radically different, the extra-human forces can never be, so to ignore that leads to disaster. These disastrous socially radical worlds are more like ours in that the extra-human forces present in our world are present there too. So, they are nomologically accessible. The *pleasant* socially radical worlds are unlike our world in that these forces are absent from them. They are nomologically inaccessible. Progressives, from this point of view, dangerously misunderstand this, so gain conceptual access only to nomologically inaccessible worlds, very unlike our own. The progressives get carried away. They are 'idealists' not realists. Their imaginations run away with them and become detached from the complex, vast, and superior state of affairs that governs them from behind the scenes. Progressives do this because they do not fully appreciate the limits of human powers in the face of greater forces. Across variations of the ideology, then, conservatives are wont to invoke the will of God, the human psychological propensity for competition, kinship bonds, the powers of history and tradition, the importance of institutions, nature or even 'science' as the superior, immovable and formidable force of a larger reality (Freedden 1996, p.334).

Core Concept 2 therefore adds some candidate limitations to the question about the limits and powers of accessibility, as identified above. This provides us with two methodological considerations. First, do we accept any of those limitations (as factors, as limitations or as both) and apply them to other ideologies? Further, it requires some work, some refining, informed by empirical knowledge and actual understanding.

Back to the margin

This leads us back to adjacent and marginal concepts. Conservatives doubt the power of the human imagination to apprehend and realise peaceful future states of affairs. However, as Freedden points out (*ibid.*), imagination has plenty of scope and operation when it is adjacent to and in service of the core concepts. Conservative imagination is restricted, set within limits, relegated to a position adjacent and secondary to actual, empirical reality, but from that position it is incredibly flexible, reactionary and cunning. We can elaborate this point by

summarising some of Freeden's discussion of the conservative 'swivel-mirror' of mobile adjacent concepts by construing them as re-envisaging competing political concepts in terms of worlds where these greater extra-human forces, the appreciation of which necessarily underpins social stability, are present.

Close to the conservative core, then is the notion of historical change. Conservatism has responded to socialist and liberal notions of history and progress. On many liberal accounts, history is Whiggish and progress melioristic. That is to say, human society improves with the years as a result of human intervention. People and societies are perfectible (or can improve) (Freeden 1996, p.151). On this view, people become more rational as they create their own lives and society consequently benefits, from genius, innovation and the overall happiness of its population. Future PWs are greatest when individuals are protected from interference by the state and majorities. For conservatives, history is an accumulation of past events, not interventions borne of inspiration, reflection and invention. So, conservative history is backward- not forward-looking. We can only look backward to previous states of our own *actual* history where we can witness the forces of reality in effect. We cannot read off a pattern for the future, for that would impute unwarranted credit to human imaginary and inferential powers and risk leaving too much of what is actually there in reality out of sight. Likewise, progress is slow and gradual if it occurs, and it can always be undone. When it occurs, it does so within rich contexts, but, again, only so far as they are continuous with stable historical circumstances. So, in terms of future planning, we must not break continuity with the stabilising stream of social history. People and societies are inherently flawed and imperfectible. This of course also conflicts with the socialist view of history and of progress as 'an horizon of ultimately beneficial change' (Freeden 1996, p. 425-6) and (in Marxism) an (at least quasi-) deterministic forward advance over time, respectively (*ibid.*).

The conservative here is often keen to emphasise the importance of individual rights against that of an overbearing state or the 'social good' by reference to rights. However, these rights differ from those presented by the liberal. For the conservative, rights cannot be conjured by human thought alone if they are to have any real value or application. Rights of *that* kind exist in rich, concrete and historical contexts. In those PWs in which people enjoy beneficial rights that protect them from interference by the state and majority rule, those rights are produced out of a gradual historical process in real concrete contexts. Thus, talk of global human rights is abstract and irrelevant. Talk of the rights of man, of liberty, fraternity and equality during the French revolution dangerously so, whereas the rights enjoyed in Britain grew as communities developed gradually over time. (See Vincent 1996, p. 71)

We could also compare the liberal and socialist notions of rationality. For the liberal, rationality has variously expressed means-ends reasoning, an appropriate appeal to reasons or evidence, or a state of intellectual harmony (see Freeden 1996 on Mill, p.149). For the

socialist, rationality is both a motor and product of progress (pp. 445-6). Pre-rational sentiment is not tied to society for socialists as it is for conservatives. For the latter, there is some similarity with fascist anti-intellectualism, a pre-rational connection with the blood of one's kin and soil of one's traditional home. Conservatives, however, emphasise social order above all else, so do not make the same connection between their own decontestation of rationality and society.

Implications for Question One

Implicit within conservative IM is the claim that radical upward possibilities should be abandoned because conceivability cannot guarantee (upward) possibility. If this is to be carried forward into T, then the latter would be evaluative. Should it? This translates Question One into the following two questions:

Q1.1: Can conceivability guarantee (upward) possibility?

If the answer to this is 'no', we have the follow-up question:

Q1.2: Should (upward) possibility be abandoned?

Responses to these questions will influence our methodological goals. There are three possible outcomes.

Outcome 1: 'No' to Q1.1 and 'yes' to Q1.2: the method becomes a critical one, centred on the elimination of imagined (at least upward) modalities.

Outcome 2: 'Yes' to Q1.1 (so 'no' to Q1.2): the method also takes on a critical form, this time dedicated to sorting good from bad forms of conceivability-possibility links. (We can assume that everyone agrees not all visions entail possibilities. So, this outcome tells us that some (types of) vision entail some (types of) possibility.)

Outcome 3: 'No' to Q1.1 but 'no' to Q1.2: in this case, our method for sorting good from bad cases will rely on separate reasons, outside the method. The goal of the method would be to issue clarification of the debate by accommodating all the features elaborated in 2a to 2m in Chapter II. It could also suggest where independent adjudication could be applied.

Note that Outcome 2 would constitute a path-breaking achievement, promising a radical and productive application of philosophy to social and political matters. This appears implausible. In the following discussion, I find in favour of Outcome 3.

§ III.II Question One: Utopianism and the conservative challenge

The above CPW elucidation established that the conservative typically challenges the strength of social and political imaginings. It is a commonplace that to conceive anything doesn't automatically make it possible. I can imagine skimming a stone across the Channel, for example. But in our more optimistic and progressive moods, we can be guilty of 'idealism' (in the pejorative sense), of entertaining 'pie in the sky' etc. Furthermore, acting upon visions of ideal worlds may be quite undesirable, since a misrecognition of the conditions that guarantee social stability could precipitate disaster.²⁰

The conservative wishes to deny a link between our imaginary powers and possibilities that are,

- (1) physically similar or compatible with reality (i.e. share the same physical laws and conditions as our world);
- (2) socially very different from actual reality (i.e. do not share the same *social* facts as our world); and
- (3) socially stable (and desirable).

Together, (1)-(3) characterise utopian possibilities (or a significant category thereof). We can imagine situations that satisfy (1)-(3). *But our imagining them does not make them possible.* The radical, on the conservative construal, is not alive to this confusion and needs to be brought back to earth. Admittedly, there are various conceptions of utopia and utopianism (see Mannheim 1936; Bloch 1986; Jameson 2005; Levitas 1990, 2007, 2013; Sargent 2010, 2013). Nonetheless, (1)-(3) appear recognisably utopian. In Sargent's words (2013) '[u]topia says that things do not have to be the way they are but can be different and better...' (p. 440). So for brevity, call (1)-(3) '(U)'.

Disaster

Worse still, utopianism can precipitate disaster. On this view, a well-functioning and ordered society derives not from the keen minds of political visionaries but deep, complex and extra-human forces that precede and exceed the powers of human imagination. Progressives dangerously ignore the yawning gap separating the easy pipe-and-slippers work of armchair enquiry from the vast shadowy realities directing actual social life. The conservative seeks to

²⁰ This interpretation, filtered through a CPW analysis, also finds agreement in the work of other writers. E.g. Sullivan 2013: "Linking [the] different elements in conservative ideology [...] is a critique of rationalism; of a voluntarist standpoint which exaggerates human plasticity and the power of will to reshape the social order; of the tendency to treat the power of the state as a phenomenon which can be transformed into a benign and effective instrument for promoting well-being." (p. 308.)

deflate our social visions and demotivate radical change, returning us to the actual world and closing up modal it's-not-but-it-should-be 'fault lines' in social reality, fault lines which in the hands of radicals constitute perilous chasms (Freeden 1996, pp. 317-416).²¹ Evidence the disastrous consequences of social engineering, of the French Revolution, Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany, Democratic Kampuchea, etc. In all such cases, society was manipulated to fit abstract and ambitious political ideals, a society much richer and more complex in arrangement than the high ideals could possibly allow. The gap separating actual from nonactual cases produced destruction, misery, disaster (cf. Berlin 1990).

On the above construal, the conservative presents a powerful challenge to the progressive and radical. How could this be met? How could one decide between positions? Answers to those questions relate to our Q1.1 and Q1.2.

One possible response would involve a negative response to Q1.1 and a negative response to Q1.2: the gap is unbridgeable but (U)-conceptions should be maintained. Imaginary scenarios, like thought experiments, hypotheses and suppositions, needn't be entirely consistent and coherent to derive informative conclusions. The principle of explosion, for example, derives inferences from a posited contradiction. Furthermore, very far-fetched and narrowly elaborated cases may also be permissible. For example, if we adhere to a non-naturalist branch of moral realism, then moral properties may be realised across a variety of scenarios, in realistic and unrealistic scenarios. (Cf. Suzuki 2012.) What's more, as Lewis notes, idealisations may yield informative conclusions, e.g. 'the massless test particle, the ideally rational belief system, and suchlike useful idealisations.' (...) 'One handy way to tell the truth about complicated phenomena is to say how they resemble simpler idealisations.' (1986a, p. 23).

This response should be left to one side, however. The issue we are addressing is whether it is acceptable to articulate radical social change, construed in terms of the human ability or inability to adequately conceive radical social possibilities. So, it is a more specific and somewhat different problem than the above responses address.

Conceivability-possibility

Note that the conceivability-possibility link is a tricky issue in philosophy. The literature suggests a link can be granted only under strict restrictions *if at all* (see Gendler and Hawthorne 2002). Some philosophers (historically Descartes 1641, but see also Yablo 1993, Bealer 2002, Chalmers 2002, Gendler 2010, Lowe 2013, Tahko 2015) have argued for a conceivability-possibility link, but only according to principled constraints on *conceivability*.

For the link to work, conceivability must:

²¹The metaphor of modal 'fault lines' is taken from Byrne 2007.

- Be non-contradictory (Descartes 1641; Bealer *op cit*; Chalmers *op cit*; Davis 2012; Gendler and Hawthorn *op cit*)
- Produce a thorough mental image (Chalmers *op cit*)
- Result from an adequate (ideal) degree of rational reflection (*ibid*; Descartes *op cit*)
- Or from some careful combination of the above²²

So, perhaps a conception of a (U)-kind *can* be accepted, if it meets these criteria. For some philosophers, these are sufficient conditions for possibility. Note that here we are not taking for granted the success of these claims, just considering whether they *could* be guaranteed for (U)-conceptions.

Conceivability-possibility

However, the above criteria must apply to a very restricted class of *possibility* (according to the above philosophers) (cf. Chalmers *op cit*, p. 146). The link, *if* it holds, satisfies (1) the above conditions, *and* (2) applies to metaphysical, conceptual or logical possibilities, *if at all*. The possibility of the (U)-kind is different and violates this restriction since it involves *physical* possibility and large groups of people. Then the above criteria could not constitute sufficient conditions for (U)-possibilities.

This suggests that Q1.1 should be answered in the negative. Perhaps, however, different criteria ought to be considered for this particular type of possibility. That would involve clamping *physical* possibility to the right side of the link and isolating conceivability criteria. It is possible to fulfil the above criteria and violate physical possibility (e.g. for nomologically different worlds), so sufficiency conditions must be different or additional to those elaborated above. There are at least two candidate responses. One is *cued tacit knowledge* (cf. Gendler 2010); the other is *imaginative sympathy*.

Conceivability-physical possibility: Cued tacit knowledge-physical possibility

It might be that certain forms of deep knowledge, such as the folk physics that accompanies our psychomotor competences, may be foregrounded or cued to support the conclusion of an argument, thereby establishing a physical possibility. Scientific thought experiments come to mind, such as Galileo's famous refutation of Aristotle's proposal that heavier bodies fall faster than lighter bodies and Einstein's argument for relativity based on an imagined observation of a light beam by the position of an observer when that position approaches the speed of light.

²²Chalmers and Jackson (2001) articulate additional criteria to their largely Kripke-inspired theory of 'two-dimensional semantics', but this extends beyond the scope of current considerations.

(Interestingly, these examples are of course idealisations, since they must omit certain physical facts.) Now, the exact validating or probative nature of these imaginary cases is debated (Davies 2013; Suzuki 2013; Gendler 2010; Fisher 2004, pp. 129-31; Tahko 2015, pp. 177-202). But it might be that the probative element - the part of the thought experiment that validates the conclusion - is a form of veridical perception enabled by the experiment's construction (Gendler 2010). If so, the perception is produced by foregrounding a tacit understanding of the physical world that is otherwise bound up with our psychomotor competences, and usually goes unnoticed. In Galileo's case, this relates to the behaviour of bodies in a state of fall, and in the Einstein case, to the experience of bodies in motion from relative points of observation (cf. *ibid*). So, a conceivability-possibility link might be said to apply in some cases of physical possibility. Could it apply with regard to *social* physical possibility? I hypothesise that if it works in similar fashion, it would require the cueing of *social* folk physics (if there is such a thing), a tacit understanding or knowledge that accompanies our social competences. (Note that here we are not assuming that the above explanations hold with certainty, only that *if* they hold, that could be instructive for our enquiry.)

Conceivability-social physical possibility: Imaginative sympathy-social physical possibility

This leads us to 'imaginative sympathy', a strategy for encouraging understanding for other people or groups. The work of psychologists, psychotherapists, anthropologists, film makers, sociologists, novelists, photographers, actors etc., might be used to create rich, descriptive accounts or representations of unfamiliar individuals, cultures or walks of life that engender in the audience a 'feel' for an otherwise unfamiliar social world. Such techniques can make another world appear for the first time (it seems) as if from 'the inside', enabling us to 'find our feet' within them and perhaps draw connections with our own experiences and background competences (cf. Geertz 1973a). Used appropriately, this might contribute to a philosophical anthropology, illuminating human essence and potential, informing an understanding of social possibility and constraining a range of achievable utopias.

Can such conceptual methods ever *guarantee* insight into real social physical possibilities? If so, that would return an affirmative, and highly promising, response to Q1.1. The PW account of ideologies would then be critical, by embedding criteria discussed above as a means to sort good from bad cases of (U)-conceptions. This would lead us to the next questions on which approach to PW best accommodates those goals and what are the metaphysical implications of doing so.

Mini-summary

To offer a brief summary at this point: we have provided a CPW elucidation of conservatism with a view to establishing a methodological goal for a PW analysis of ideology. We have decided that the T ought to assist decision-making between competing ideologies, but that has led to the question whether the method should be merely illustrative in this regard or ought to contain a tighter logic that rules out some cases and validates others. To minimise questionable assumptions, answers to those questions are being sought within ideologies themselves, since ideologies often carry (at least implicit) methodological assumptions of their own. The CPW elucidation of conservatism has brought to the fore a rejection of upward possibilities. If the conservative is right, we ought to deselect all (U)-worlds and focus on worlds that guarantee stability, worlds that are none too different from our own. This is a result of our own failings as epistemically fallible human agents. From here, we have asked whether the conservative is right, judging by general criteria of reasonability and independent debate within philosophy about the conceivability-possibility link. Initially, it seemed that the conceivability-possibility link, if it holds, does so (1) under extremely tight restrictions on conceivability and (2) on metaphysical kinds of possibility only. (U)-worlds, by contrast, are social, 'nomologically accessible' worlds that violate (2). However, we then moved to consider forms of conceivability that might hold on social nomological kinds of possibility, glossing the probative features of thought experiments in physics and linking that to the practice of imaginative sympathy. It might be that the former cue tacit knowledge related to psychomotor competence, and so it was hypothesised that the latter might cue tacit knowledge related to social competence (if there is such a thing). It seems, then, that an answer to Q1.1, hangs on the strength of this claim.

Imaginative sympathy

What would be required for imaginative sympathy to *guarantee* (U)-possibilities? It has already been noted that imaginative sympathy might produce an understanding of basic facts about human nature and potential. With these basic facts established, a hedge could be drawn around those conceivable scenarios that correspond with them. Can we say in advance that such scenarios would include (U)-worlds? No. That cannot be predicted before the activity is actually carried out. However, we can still ask whether imaginative sympathy could guarantee any form of social possibility in the first place.

This, it seems, is highly unlikely. To *guarantee* an imaginative sympathy-social possibility link, there would have to be forms of social possibility that *couldn't be false* when certain forms of imaginative sympathy are correctly entertained. Some form of imaginative sympathy must be *sufficient* to establish (U)-possibilities. I know of no such cases. Compare this with traditional questions in epistemology. Our forms of sense-perception are compatible with the possibility of illusion, error and deceit. Thus, we cannot guarantee knowledge of the

external world, since our perceptions of it are indiscernible between veridical and non-veridical cases (at least on an internalist conception of justification). With respect to our concern, examples of illusion, error and deceit are *legion*. One can cite propaganda, political rhetoric, ‘manufactured consent’, and other forms of mass political and ‘interested’ chicanery. Furthermore, the possibility of false consciousness and implicit bias suggests that our ‘social competences’ are far from perfect, so cannot be relied upon in similar fashion to our basic psychomotor competences. Possibly, there is equal chance that our background assumptions will *contaminate* rather than illuminate an understanding of other persons, cultures, human nature and potential. One can note that these very observations about propaganda and deception have been made from the other side of the political divide, by socialists and liberals (see Levitas 1990, pp. 41-67 and Goodwin and Taylor 2009 pp. 91-119). There is also much theory to support it. Paul Thagard (2014), for example, has argued that portrayals of social reality nurture or feed emotions – desires, fears, hatreds, etc. – that support rationally indefensible positions. People can be brought to fanatical and disastrous utopian beliefs. There is an analogue here with Dan Dennett’s (2013) warning about ‘intuition pumps’ re. philosophical thought experiments. Imaginary cases can be constructed so as to excite or ‘pump’ intuitions in support of conclusions, but in illusory or mischievous ways. Intuitively, for example, with respect to Searle’s Chinese Room thought experiment, the man in the room does not understand Chinese, and so understanding is more than just an algorithmic process. But this intuition might be bought at the expense of overlooking what must be involved for the whole process to work, the detail required in the translation book, the depth and sophistication of the algorithm, etc (similarly with what Mary didn’t know and philosophical zombies). Likewise, (e.g.) a cynical view of human nature as essentially selfish and irrational could be promoted by selecting examples, using rhetorical language, playing on existing fears and hatreds and using suggestive imagery and music.

The above observations, rather uncontroversially, merely illustrate the deceitful potential of political discourse. But does it relate to imaginative sympathy directly? One might respond that an account designed to encourage *sympathy* (rather than false/unjustified belief or control) might stand a better chance than alternative forms. Nonetheless, since we are concerned to *guarantee* insight, the chances seem bleak. An account of another individual or group will still depend in some degree on the attitudes of the writer and the reader. And accounts of other cultures may remain forever incomplete or poorly composed. Clifford Geertz attests to this point, in context of his ‘semiotic’ anthropology – i.e. an interpretative method for understanding cultures:

The whole point of a semiotic approach to culture is [...] to aid us in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense

of the term, converse with them. The tension between the pull of this need to penetrate an unfamiliar universe of symbolic action and the requirements of technical advance in the theory of culture, between the need to grasp and the need to analyse, is, as a result, both necessarily great and essentially removable. (1973a, p. 24)

Nor have I ever gotten anywhere near the bottom of anything I have ever written about [...]. Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is. It is a strange science whose most telling assertions are its most tremulously based, in which to get somewhere with the matter at hand is to intensify the suspicion, both your own and that of others, that you are not quite getting it right. But that, along with plaguing subtle people with obtuse questions, is what being an ethnographer is like. (*op cit.* p. 29)

Thus, in response to Q1.1, can conceivability guarantee (upward, physical) possibility?, the answer has to be 'no'. This is a (limited) concession to the conservative. The point has been considered in independent terms, without any particular preference for a political perspective, and by drawing on debate within philosophy about the conceivability-possibility link. Furthermore, it seems reasonable that other ideological positions would have to accept this point. The liberal, after all, lays claim to rationality. Within socialism, too, there are objections to utopianism (famously in Marx and Engels, but even within so-called 'utopian socialists' too) (Levitas *op cit.*; Marx and Engels 1848, pp. 255-256).

If the answer to this is 'no', we have the follow-up question:

Q1.2: Should (upward) possibility be abandoned?

The conservative, of course, responds affirmatively. This appears to be grounded on the assumption that the conceivability-possibility link always fails for (U)-possibilities. According to theorists on the subject (e.g. Freeden 1996, Vincent 1995 and Sullivan 2013), the conservative makes additional ideological assumptions here. First, the above link is bound to fail due to human limitations, weaknesses or internal tensions. Furthermore, an attempt to enact (U)-possibilities would invite calamity and social evil. For this reason, the conservative would assert an affirmative answer to Q1.2. For our purposes, however, it seems out of the question to bring this response into the methodology. To begin with, that conclusion would clearly not be accepted by alternative ideological positions, since they promote more wide-ranging social change. Furthermore, it would not satisfy general criteria of reasonableness. Claims about human nature, human psychology, morality, God, economics, etc. are themselves ideological positions that ought to be the object of analysis for ideology theory, not

methodological presuppositions. Likewise, for projections about the outcomes of radical social programmes. Furthermore, historical examples may be provided for competing assertions. By contrast, our conclusions about a utopian conceivability-possibility gap is amenable to independent philosophical and logical analysis, and ought to compel agreement on all sides of the ideological divide.

An answer to Q1.2, therefore, depends on whether a break in the utopian-conceivability-possibility link *alone* (whatever its explanation) requires us to reject (U)-conceptions altogether.

The conservative wants to say that stable radical social possibilities (physically like our world) are not entailed by our conceptions of them. To begin with, to conclude that all (U)-possibilities are therefore *false* is to commit the fallacy of denying the antecedent. If it is raining, the lawn is wet. It is not raining, so the lawn is not wet. Fallacy! The sprinkler might be on, or we might have flooding. Furthermore, it might be that utopian visions, ideal or more desirable societies, are *pervasive* features of social and political thought. They might, furthermore, be *indispensable*. Clearly some kind of (U)-vision is central to socialism and liberalism. This could be asserted for green theory, feminism and anarchism too. Let's call this candidate thesis 'act pervasiveness'.

We have here a possible rebuttal to the conservative and negative answer to Q1.2. The consequences for our methodological goals would suggest that the method ought to be purely illustrative, albeit capable of acknowledging or representing the (U)-conceivability-possibility gap somehow.

Now, for this to succeed as a rebuttal to the conservative, such thinking would have to be significantly pervasive for conservatives too. Else the conservative can just grant that such thinking is pervasive, but only in undesirable forms of thinking and action that should be reformed. If, however, the conservative also relies on such thinking (quite ironically), and that not to do so would produce something significantly different from conservatism, act pervasiveness succeeds as a rebuttal, effectively disarming the conservative's challenge. For, if we wish to embed an evaluative logic that rules out (U)-modals on the basis of a conservatism that actually presupposes them, then we are (first) presupposing what we set out to deny, which is rationally inadmissible and (second) prejudicially dissimulating an important feature of IM.

Indeed, so long as the conservative wishes to rely on the idea of fully lawful, maximally stable, orderly, peaceful societies, she too implicitly relies on the idea of a more desirable, but quite different society. She too wants to think that such things are possible and she too relies on assumptions about human potential and human necessity. These generate (U)-style propositions.

With respect to pragmatist and neo-conservative anti-utopianism, Levitas (2007) supports this idea:

What is produced in contemporary political discourse... is an anti-utopian utopianism, a self-hating or at least self-denying utopianism, in which the claim to pragmatism serves to repress its utopian character. The consequence of this is the continued possibility of rejecting challenges and alternatives as 'utopian', while placing the ideological/utopian claims of one's own position beyond scrutiny. This is precisely the process at work in [then] contemporary neo-conservatism.... It is anti-utopian in that utopianism (and ideology) are attributed to the 'enemy', as negative characteristics. It is utopian in that there plainly is a vision of a good society.... The 'new world order' after 1989 had aligned freedom and order with globalisation, an implicit utopia but with no explicit enemy. (p. 298)

Noel Sullivan (2013) attributes utopianism to traditional 'reactionary conservatism':

The main problem with the reactionary critique of democracy... is that it is inspired by an essentially utopian vision of a perfectly harmonious hierarchical society. When this vision proves to be unattainable, as it inevitably does, the immediate response of reactionary ideologists is to attribute its failure to conspirators, amongst whom the Jew has been a favourite target. (p. 295)

And Ian Adams (1989) makes a broader claim in summary:

Many ideological positions take pride in being 'realistic' and condemn any kind of utopian thinking. 'Utopia' has implications of individual and social perfection, which anti-utopians tends to regard as ridiculous. Nevertheless all ideologies, conservative as well as radical, have some notion of the ideal or best possible society.... [W]hether it be acknowledged or not, every ideological position has at least an implicit conception of the good or best possible society. (pp. 99-100)

Ernst Bloch (1986) takes this claim even further in arguing for a utopian human propensity. For Bloch, utopianism is a basic anthropological drive, the wellspring of dreams, creativity, art, literature, political projects and so forth. So then, rather than looking to human nature to constrain a range of acceptable utopias (as suggested above), utopianism *is* a deep feature of human nature itself. If so, then anti-utopianism could be viewed as a form of alienation. This is an intriguing, but not uncontroversial claim. Furthermore, we have strayed somewhat from

the (U)-cases, defined above. Bloch is sketching out a form of universal human longing – perennial hope and desire for better – that might not in all manifestations satisfy the conditions stipulated above (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, the above descriptions fit our (1)-(3) (U)-propositions, since even a state with full stability, peace and order, is significantly distant from actual reality. Furthermore, the accumulation of Bloch's suggestions *and* the above claims gives some weight to the idea that (U)-conceptions are a pervasive feature of ideological thought, conservative or not. Admittedly, these are merely a collection of quotes from established academics, but the *prima facie* plausibility and consensus is enough to shift the burden to the objector.

One way to take the burden is to cite Hobbes's *Leviathan*, which is notably anti-utopian all the way down (without some repressed utopianism). For Hobbes, a political arrangement merely arises for the self-preservation of individuals. As Adams (1989) admits:

Hobbes did not regard peace or security, or indeed anything else, as intrinsically moral goods; we are, so to speak, simply programmed to pursue them, and we are certainly under no obligation to work for the peace and security of others. (p. 92; cf. Plamenatz 1951, p. 9)

Then a (U)-conception is not a present and guiding feature of Hobbes's political thought. Since we are trying to establish a pervasiveness claim, the existence of this example significantly weakens the argument. *However*, note that Hobbes *is* asserting (according to Adams) that people are programmed to pursue peace and security. If, however, taking any large group of individuals (at a macro-sociological scale), full peace and security are not actual facts, or even proximate facts, since daily there is crime, unrest and some degree of instability, human beings are programmed with (U)-conceptions. This is not likely to convince the objector, however, who can merely point out that peace and security are *relative* (not absolute) human wants. 'Full' peace and security was never at issue, as Adams' comment suggests. Nonetheless, first of all, the above claims about implicit utopianism within conservatism suggests that Hobbesian thinking is not a prevalent feature even of right-wing ideology. Further, if all individuals are programmed for peace and security, there is at least something like a drive *towards* a (U)-conception in human beings taken in aggregate (even if it isn't a universal prescription). These observations weigh the argument heavily against the objector, since she is resting upon what is an apparently narrow exception at best. This is further bolstered by the observation that pragmatism, a bastion of modern conservatism, must also be guided by something like a (U)-conception, since it has to be directed toward *something*, even if it involves a curtailment of method or effort. To the extent that pragmatists seek full

stability, law, order and perpetual economic growth – as the above citations appear to support – they too operate under some (U)-conception.

We could furthermore note that counterfactuality is an inherent feature of everyday perception and thought, attested to by our discussion of ‘mundane modality’ in Chapter II. It appears to be intertwined with competence. If, for example, I do not (implicitly) accept the counterfactual that if I were to swerve into traffic I would crash, then the worse for me. Furthermore, ‘far-fetched’ counterfactuals (analogous to (U)), often involved in long-term future-planning, are also features of everyday thought.

Thus, I argue, we should conclude in favour of *act pervasiveness*. (U)-conceptions are pervasive features of ideologies. This returns us to our dialectic for answer Question One, which we focused into Q1.1 and Q1.2.

- Question One: What methodological aims should the PW analysis serve?
 - Answer One: It should assist decision-making between IMs.
 - Follow-up question: Should decision-making be illustrative or evaluative?

To answer the follow-up question, the CPW analysis of conservatism produced the following challenge:

The Conservative Challenge: (U)-modals should be eliminated (thus evaluative)

That led to the following test:

Q1.1: Can conceivability guarantee (upward, physical) possibility?

Q1.2: Should (upward) possibility be abandoned?

To which we concluded:

Conceivability cannot guarantee (U)-possibility but (U)-possibilities shouldn't be eliminated, only illustrated for independent assessment.

Granted, the conservative is on to something in denying a conceivability-possibility link (Q1.1). So Q1.1 ought to be denied by all ideologies, and thus should be built into a PW analysis for IM. *However*, since act pervasiveness holds, we should not conclude that the PW analysis should rule out (U)-possibilities (Q1.2). Since they are pervasive, the PW should illustrate (U)-modals within ideologies. Any additional criteria for deciding between (U)-conceptions will be independent to the PW analysis.

The answer to Question One, for this chapter is: A gap between (U)-conceivability-possibility should be acknowledged, but (U)-conceptions should not be ruled out. This provisionally supports the answer (pending responses from Chapters IV and V) that the PW method ought to be illustrative for the purpose of decision-making.

Thus concludes this chapter's response to Question One. Whether we should conclude in favour of an illustrative methodology will depend on responses delivered by Chapters IV and V. Note that we have nonetheless conceded that the PW method ought to represent a gap between (U)-conceivability and possibility.

§ III.III Feasibility criteria

Before proceeding to Question Two, the foregoing invites questions about independent criteria for evaluation. T cannot produce sufficiency conditions for (U)-possibilities, but it *might* provide (space for) necessity conditions, or (more likely) looser conditions of feasibility.

In the Appendix, I cover some feasibility criteria proposed in the field of utopian studies. The latter is a broad area of research and the details provided are suggestive only. I include them to propose connections with PWs. Since that digresses somewhat from the central line of argument, I have relegated those details to the Appendix.

Above, we also noted that some philosophers have asserted conceivability-possibility links under specific criteria: when the thought is non-contradictory (Descartes 1641, Yablo 1993, Gendler and Hawthorne 2002, Bealer 2002, Chalmers 2002, Davis 2012), when it produces a thorough mental image (Chalmers *op cit.*) or results from an adequate degree of rational reflection (Chalmers *ibid.*), or some adequate and careful combination of the above. We also considered imaginary cases that foreground otherwise tacit knowledge (judiciously ‘pumping intuitions’), such as the folk physics accompanying our psychomotor competences (Gender 2010), or by promoting imaginative sympathy (putting yourself in somebody else’s shoes, identifying your own concerns with that of others, etc.).

Now, all these cases supply a degree of plausibility to considered possibilities, and none should be ruled out as ‘reasons’ - ‘reasons’ that are less than deductively certain - for ideological conceivability-possibility – but not sufficient, and probably not necessary conditions either.

Chalmers

This returns us to Chalmers’ (2003) discussion of conceivability-possibility, which we have already ruled out as deductively strong for IMs. Nonetheless, it might supply weaker reasons.

Chalmers considers a number of distinctions: prima facie/ideal, negative/positive, primary/secondary, that together produce matrices of kinds, e.g. prima facie negative primary conceivability, positive ideal secondary conceivability, etc (*ibid.*). There is insufficient space (or need) to consider these in detail. However, of note are Chalmers’ prescriptions for rational reflection (ideal conceivability), broad mental imagery (positive conceivability), and non-contradiction (negative conceivability). Adding these considerations to previous cases of imaginative sympathy and (presumed) tacit knowledge may assist in sieving good from bad cases. To use Dennett’s (2013) proposal, we should ‘turn the knobs on intuition pumps’, which we can understand here as filling in the gaps, thinking things through (to a satisfactory degree) and ruling out inconsistencies (Chalmers’ positive, ideal and negative conceivability, respectively).

Now, as argued above, it is far from apparent that these criteria can assist with IMs, at least of the (U)-kind, which we have noted are operative and central to ideologies. (Here we are – at least usually – talking about physical possibilities involving large groups of people.) Nevertheless, they might provide significant purchase for ruling out or warning against bad cases. Either way, it is quite consistent with everyday assumptions. We all agree that not every imagined possibility is a real, physical possibility. I can imagine walking through walls, for example. We also (generally) agree that thoughts which are ill-considered, narrowly conceptualised or inconsistent are unreliable guides to reality. So, by extension, we ought not to ground IMs on ill-considered, narrowly conceptualised or inconsistent ideas. These are just platitudes, shared by all contemplative and reasonable people. But they reflect broad, global constraints on rationality and reasonableness that any method for analysing IMs must accommodate.

We have concluded in answer to Question One that the CPW analysis of conservatism yields the result that T should assist decision-making by way of independent criteria. This carries a number of implications to be addressed in answering Question Two. The conceivability-possibility link fails when applied to IMs, at least where those modals are of the (U)-kind, and those kinds are common features of ideologies to be assessed on their individual merits. So, to develop a decision-making method, we need to accommodate all (or reasonably most) of the features outlined in §III.I and provide a technique that will enable choice between IMs by clarifying the differences and accommodating separate reasons as bolt-on choice criteria. All such reasons will include those discussed above, but may also be compatible with others, according to additional concerns. Furthermore, since we cannot guarantee the conceivability-possibility link for IMs, there is a gap between imagination and reality that ought to be acknowledged by T.

§ III.IV Question Two: Approaches

This brings us to the application of PW frameworks. As noted in Chapter I, there is much disagreement between theories, mainly on the issue of the metaphysical status of PWs and possible individuals, but this also interacts with the available logic and conceptual resources. Our task is to decide which approach to PW – Lewisian GR or one of the species of AR – best accommodates our methodological goals. Our CPW analysis, above, produced an additional set of concerns that will enable Question Two to be addressed:

1. The method must represent a (U)-gap
2. The method must represent a broad range of conceivable possibilities
3. The method must permit the incorporation of external evaluative criteria

Criteria 1 to 3 clearly present illustrative and epistemological concerns. Since there are differing epistemologies also present within the competing PW methods, we ought to investigate whether they accommodate our methodological interests. In the following section, I argue that all approaches can accommodate (1)-(3) above. However, in later chapters I argue that GR is on balance preferable, so I focus most attention below on the GR response.

Representing the (U)-gap: AR

In Chapter I, it was observed that there is nothing so far to recommend one theory over another. Here I also argue that GR and species of AR equally offer plausible resources for representing the (U)-gap. ARs do raise additional complications, but that becomes more apparent in later chapters. Below, I briefly introduce AR counterpart theory, and Plantinga, Adams, Kripke and Chalmers' contributions and the strengths they pose.

There are different versions of AR. In Chapter V, I provide more specific details about the various species. To focus discussion here, I indicate a few relevant versions.²³ Generally, on one side is the actualism of philosophers such as Stalnaker (1984), Sider (2006) and Paul (2006), who assert a form of actualist 'counterpart theory' (ACT) (I expand on CT below). An actualist counterpart is an uninstantiated representation of a real-world entity. On this view, a possibility for an individual is grounded in a relationship of similarity between the individual and their counterparts in other PWs. A possible fact is grounded by facts in other PWs. With this theory, a (U)-gap might be represented by way of *inconsistency*. Uninstantiated counterparts could form an infinite set, thereby providing a large range of possibilities for people and things. Inconsistencies are never compossible. The fact of inconsistency, say, in

²³Since Chapter IV is concerned with the essentialism-antiessentialism debate, that chapter focuses on competing arguments about essentialism, specifically in Lewis and Kripke, rather than full coverage of the AR options.

our thinking about things can allow for any manner of inadequately constructed notions from the existing range of possibilities. To the extent that those notions portray or mistake inconsistent facts as consistent compossibilities, it engenders a gap, since the theory also entails sets of (U)-compossibilities out of PWs that exceed the capacity of cognitive grasp.

However, this leads to difficult questions about *what* would count as sufficient compossibilities for Stalnaker, Paul and Sider. For, as discussed in Chapter V, species of AR already face concerns about inconsistency. In brief, for actualists, PWs are bits of, or constructible from bits of, the actual world. Nothing in principle within AR theorists' proposals for achieving this excludes inconsistent worlds (see Divers 2002, pp. 181-195). The question is how to guarantee maximal compossibility. It seems that AR has to rely on unspecifiable primitive modals (discussed in Chapter V). But if the (U)-gap is represented by way of inconsistency, the foregoing creates complications. The inconsistency of the (U)-gap has to be distinctly constitutive of T, not due to an erroneous omission of primitive modality from T. But we could not check against erroneous omissions of primitive modality if primitive modality is unspecifiable. I explain how it is unspecifiable in Chapter V. These problems pervade all species of AR, but I will shelve them until that later discussion. However, it should be noted that one point in favour of the above account is that it apparently provides the means to accommodate a very broad range of possibilities.

Some other salient forms of actualism do not assert counterparts. Instead, a possibility for an individual is represented by facts and properties in PWs *for* that individual and a possible fact is a fact according to some PW. This is apparent in the work of Adams (1974), Plantinga (1974, 1976, 2003) and Kripke (1981). For Adams and Plantinga, a PW is a maximally consistent set of propositions (a 'world-story') or states of affairs. For Kripke, a PW is only a counterfactual situation of some kind. With Adams and Plantinga's contributions, we could also represent the (U)-gap as a grouping of inconsistent sentences misconstrued as compossibilities - bits of separate PWs misrecognised as parts of single worlds. Again, this leads to questions concerning what counts as compossibilities and how to represent (U)-inconsistency in the face of the above-mentioned problems. However, I shelve these worries for more direct discussion in Chapter V.

Kripke, by contrast, asserts the existence of PWs as counterfactual possibilities or *ways* a world could be (1981, pp. 15ff). He also acknowledges a difference between informative and misleading modal intuitions (e.g. pp. 109ff) (e.g. with respect to the intuition that water might not be H₂O – discussed in Chapter IV). Since this distinction motivates Chalmers' and Jacksons' 'two-dimensional semantics' (2001), we can take Chalmers' account of the conceivability-possibility link as continuous with Kripke.

In acknowledging a conceivability-possibility gap (for cases), Chalmers cites a need to avoid trivialising the conceivability-possibility link by *excluding* possibility in a definition of

'conceivability', thereby representing a distinction between the two (p. 149). That consideration is instructive for our purposes, since, having insisted on a logical gap between ideological conceivability and possibility, T can only be assistive heuristically, in illuminating the differences and clarifying debate. But it will fail to do this if the gap is inadequately represented by portraying conceivability as 'adequately imagined possibility', or something like that. Chalmers insists that, instead, conceivability can be 'defined in terms of what is ruled out a priori' (*ibid.*) and articulates the above-mentioned criteria of conceivability. Thus, we could adopt the underlying Kripkean AR and represent the (U)-gap by failing those criteria.

So, we can be confident that salient species of AR can represent the (U)-gap. However, again, there are issues to raise concerning inconsistency. That issue will be taken up in more detail in Chapter V. At this stage, AR is a promising theory.

Representing the (U)-gap: GR

As explained in Chapter V, Lewisian GR does not face the same problems with inconsistency. Furthermore, since I argue in favour of GR in later chapters, it will be important to offer greater elaboration of GR in this context. For GR, possibility for an individual is grounded in similarities with concrete counterparts in other PWs and a possible fact is grounded in facts in concrete PWs (Lewis 1968 and 1986a). Since these worlds are concrete and *sui generis*, it already just is the case that they are not inconsistent. Further, since, for Lewis, GR obeys a thesis of plenitude (1986a, pp. 86-92), there are PWs and individuals for every possible way or things or individuals may be. Can Lewis also offer the means to represent the (U)-gap?

Lewis, by contrast with Chalmers, in some sense *does* construe conceivability in terms of metaphysical possibility (e.g. 1986a, p. 86). Any logically coherent statement describes some bits of some PWs. Conceivability owes to 'accessibility relations' with PWs and counterpart relations (C-relations) within non-actual individuals. However, this does *not* trivialise the conceivability-possibility link. A conception may describe some bits of some PWs, but Lewis is clear that it does not follow that they are all parts of one world (pp. 30-34). We can add to this point that some conceptions might turn out to be inconceivable, since they fail to pick out anything.

In some sense, Lewis's submission builds on everyday parlance. Suppose we talk of 'physical possibility'. A physical possibility is a fact in some out of all the worlds with the same physical laws as our own. If we *just say* there are other physical possibilities, we can be sure that there are other physical possibilities (e.g. p. 251). In this sense, then, conceivability just does entail metaphysical possibility. However, note that this is stated at an abstract level and does not involve any details about *particular* physical possibilities. By contrast, a (U)-like statement provides greater detail. (U)-notions might individually portray possibilities, but they might not describe a conjunction that is true in one PW. When we say that 'p, q and r are

possible', we usually mean to say that p, q and r are compossible, i.e. conjoint or coexistent facts within one world. But we could get that wrong. The (U)-gap can then be represented by talk of getting that wrong in terms of the fallibility of accessibility and C-relations. The latter can be skewed. They might access conjointly incoherent facts from various PWs, or they might overlay inconsistent facts from bits of worlds. The question whether conceivability entails possibility can then be translated into the question whether, for any proposed accessibility relations (or C-relations), they coherently describe compossible facts.

With this device in place, we can accommodate the feasibility conditions lighted on above. Our conceptions will have to be non-contradictory, well-considered and sufficiently thorough. We might appear to imagine a married bachelor, but only by accessing a married person and a bachelor and mistakenly putting them together. On reflection, a married bachelor is a contradiction. Note that this can occur by accessing different parts of a single world and misattributing them to one thing. However, on reflection, there are no worlds in which something is married and a bachelor. So, a married bachelor is inconceivable.²⁴ And there would be no danger in distinguishing inconsistencies from theoretical oversights, since GR posits concrete possibilia as fundamental. There are no principles about generating them from actual stuff.

By comparison, we might appear to imagine a world with full social equality and full freedom, with equality and freedom understood in the sense of economic, social and legal equality and political and social freedom. Again, full social equality and full freedom might be singly conceivable and therefore facts of some parts of some PWs. Arguably, however, the two are not possible as a combination – which is to say that any world in which there is full equality *must* involve a reduction in freedom, and any world in which there is full freedom *must* involve a reduction in equality.

Regarding utopian epistemology, we will want to construct a list of statements that are jointly possible, that are all true of some PW. So, we will want our accessibility relations to be clear and distinct and link up in the right manner. We have already conceded, however, that with regard to the type of possibilities we are seeking, we could always get this wrong. Nonetheless, GR would accommodate the epistemology by breaking up the different

²⁴Likewise, as Michael Davis (2013) has argued, we might appear to imagine a flying pig, but it might fail these criteria and therefore be inconceivable and impossible. In PWs physically like ours, a pig with the ability to fly would have to be so unlike an actual pig that it would not share a common ancestor. In a PW that is physically unlike our world but where the physical laws and facts are such that a thing that seems like a flying pig (as it we imagine it to be) exists, such a world would be so different from ours that our concepts would likely not apply to it. If anybody exists in that world, it is not clear that the conception they use to refer to this creature would be the same as our 'flying pig'. This suggests an underlying contradiction in the notion of a flying pig, and so a flying pig is inconceivable. Lewis would almost certainly disagree with this claim of Davis' (cf. Lewis 1986a, pp. 88), although the important issue here is how we accommodate conceivability-possibility gaps, rather than what modal facts there are.

components of a political vision and questioning whether they are jointly possible. We can convert the different propositions within a political vision into accessibility and C-relations and ask whether they access coherent facts that coexist within individual PWs. GR therefore provides adequate means to do this.

A central issue with this approach, of course, is the seemingly outrageous metaphysical postulation of *sui generis* possibilities. Added to this is the postulation of accessibility relations, and the attendant epistemological question of how on earth we could know about something that is in principle spatiotemporally and causally isolated from us. We have resolved to treat the metaphysical issues separately, in Chapter VI. Regarding the epistemological issues, Lewis cites in his defence the Benacerraf dilemma (p. 108-115), and claims that the ontology underpinning mathematics as it is actually pursued is more respectable than a mathematics adapted to oblige philosophical worries. And so, by analogy, for GR. The strength of that argument has been challenged in Stalnaker (1996). In any case, whether Lewisian possibilities play an analogous role in our context and can only be decided towards the end of this thesis.

Representing a broad range of conceivable possibilities

T will have to represent the broad range of conceivable possibilities offered up by ideologies (regardless of the (U)-gap). One way in which PWs can do this is by distinguishing *types* and *kinds* of modality. At this point, there is nothing to recommend either GR or AR over the other on this issue.

All species of PWs allow this. A fact is possible if it is true in some PWs, necessary if it is true in all PWs, contingent if false in some PWs and impossible if true in no PWs. That this offers a number of benefits for elaborating political concepts becomes clear as the thesis proceeds. Accessibility relations enable us to distinguish kinds of possibility. Accessibility relations are determined by stipulating the worlds they range over. Thus, a fact is physically possible if it occurs in some of the physically accessible worlds and the physically accessible worlds are those with the same physical laws as ours ('nomologically accessible worlds'). We can use the concept of accessibility to analyse a whole range of kinds of possibility (cf. Divers 2002, pp. 4-9). Most usefully in our context, we can articulate 'social accessibility' by stipulating worlds that have the same social and political structures as our own. Given this designation, we can interpret forms of political freedom. For example, I am free to use the library if I (or counterparts of me) use the library in socially accessible worlds (worlds with the same social and political structures) (the concept of counterparts is elaborated below). Freedom is a deeply modal concept. I needn't actually visit the library to have the political freedom to do so. By contrast, I do not have the political freedom to contribute to parliamentary votes. This is not a fact in any socially accessible PW, although it is a fact in socially inaccessible worlds. To

create such a freedom would involve altering the social nature of our world to bring it into line with worlds where I do contribute to parliamentary votes. So, there are great benefits to this approach in covering physical possibility, social possibility, historical possibility, moral possibility. There is nothing in principle to rule out any (AR or GR) theory of PW in this regard. Certainly, controversy would be raised by a modal philosopher who wishes to deny a distinction between (say) physical and metaphysical possibility. But that is a metaphysical thesis in its own right, not necessitated by AR or GR.

We can generate moral and desirable possibilities in similar fashion. For moral possibility, necessity, impossibility and contingency, read: permission, obligation, prohibition, omission, respectively. Let moral modals range over morally ideal (or perfect or best or better) PWs and apply to acts, intentions and characteristics. Then an act, intention or characteristic is permissible if it occurs in some morally ideal PWs, obligatory if it occurs in all morally ideal PWs, prohibited if it occurs in no morally ideal PWs and omissible if it doesn't occur in some morally ideal PWs. When we judge the rightness or wrongness of an *actual* act (etc.), i.e. an act that occurs in *this world*, we appeal implicitly to how things *should* be, which can be meaningfully cashed out in terms of morally ideal PWs. Note, however, that in this case, the logic and models are significantly different, as discussed in Chapter I. 'Non-alethic' modals invalidate inferences from facts to permissibility and from obligations to facts and deny *M*, the reflexivity of accessibility relations to PWs.

Clearly, there will be some debate about what the above worlds are, and this will have to be decided in advance and would be some matter of debate. Nonetheless, we can point out that we already do judge the rightness or wrongness of acts (etc) and that rightness or wrongness does involve the notion of, again, how the world is not, not how the world actually is. Whenever a person states 'how things should be' with regard to some fact, they are at least implicitly indicating a more desirable, non-actual state of affairs.

Now, we may think that 'morally ideal worlds' equate to utopias, although there are some important considerations to make here, discussed in the Appendix. We can note, following some suggestions by David Leopold (2012), that a utopia could involve a more sophisticated combination of elements, including structures that licence morally permissible and obligatory acts, and some socially accessible elements. A serious utopian would probably not want to claim that nobody can do wrong in a more desirable social world, and likewise that the more desirable world is determined *by* moral considerations, as Leopold remarks. More on this in the Appendix.

The alethic-non-alethic distinction noted above is very important. A range of worlds has alethic accessibility when the actual world is always a member. Then, it follows that whatever is a fact of all worlds in the range is a fact for our world and whatever is a fact of our world is a fact for some worlds within the range. So, it follows that whatever is necessary is an

actual fact and whatever is an actual fact is possible (Divers *op cit*). For example, if it is necessarily true that all vixens are female foxes then whatever is a vixen is a female fox in every PW. Therefore, anything in our world that is a vixen is a female fox. Furthermore, if it is a fact that Theresa May is Prime Minister then it is true of some PWs that Theresa May is Prime Minister. These entailments hold in the alethic PWs. By contrast, a range of worlds has non-alethic accessibility when the actual world is not always a member. Then it does *not* follow that whatever is a fact of all worlds within the range is a fact of our world and whatever is a fact of our world is a fact of some worlds in the range. It does not follow that whatever is 'necessary' (on some non-alethic construal of 'necessary') is an actual fact and whatever is an actual fact is possible (on some non-alethic construal of 'possible'). For example, if it is morally necessary (read 'obligatory') to oppose bigotry it does not follow that the universal opposition to bigotry is an actual fact. It is not the case that everybody opposes bigotry in our world. Furthermore, if it is a fact that crime occurs in our world, it does not follow that crime is morally permissible.

Examples of alethic worlds are metaphysically, logically and physically accessible worlds. We might also include historically and socially accessible worlds to our list. Non-alethic worlds include morally, doxastically (i.e. according to our beliefs) and conatively (i.e. according to our desires) accessible worlds. It will be noted that, first, much of what goes on within ideology is clearly non-alethic, since ideologies involve value- and desire-judgements. It can be further claimed that *all* of what goes on in ideology is arguably non-alethic, since ideologies ultimately come down to our beliefs about what is the case. So, then there are multiply-nested ranges of PWs. However, we would want to distinguish between *prima facie* alethic and non-alethic worlds. A socially accessible world may well prove to be non-alethic, since we can only really assert what *we believe to be* socially accessible (this is the point we have granted to the conservative, after all). However, some claims are clearly non-alethic, such as moral and conative ones, whereas some are at least *prima facie* alethic, such as social and physical accessibility. Further, some are arguably clearly alethic, such as logical, mathematical and metaphysical worlds. However, it is instructive that ideological concepts do not appear to fall within this wider, more inclusive realm. Henceforth, I will refer to worlds such as socially, physically and historically accessible ones as 'alethic', with the proviso that they are in fact at least *prima facie* alethic, while they may in fact turn out to be embedded within a deeper, non-alethic frame, since they are doxastically accessible, and therefore non-alethically alethic!!

In any case, all approaches to PW can accommodate these distinctions, since all offer resources for stipulating characteristic worlds to be captured by 'accessibility relations'.

The incorporation of external evaluative criteria

Likewise, the adaptations suggested above can be used to incorporate external evaluative criteria. As explained, there are numerous sources for such criteria. In the Appendix, I discuss some possible sources and options for pursuing them with PWs. Since all approaches to PW offer resources for distinguishing types and kinds of possibility, they all plausibly allow for the incorporation of external evaluative criteria discussed here.

Unactual individuals

There are further relevant differences between GR and generic (non-counterpart) AR. In this chapter, I do not provide strong reasons to prefer GR over alternatives. However, since I do provide such reasons in Chapters IV, V and VI, I suggest some preferable aspects of GR. Now, many species of AR do not articulate counterparts, and in what follows I shall focus attention on those non-counterpart theoretic kinds. Although CT does not necessitate GR, GR does require CT. Later chapters argue that CT is more preferable for our purposes than non-CT AR. That requires ignoring CT versions of AR. However, Chapter V provides semantic reasons for rejecting all species of AR and Chapter VI provides metaphysical reasons for rejecting ACT.

AR rejects the existence of unactualised possible individuals. For AR,

(ARU) It is possible that there is a unicorn iff there is a PW according to which there is a unicorn.

However, whereas ‘there is a PW’ is factive, ‘according to which’ is non-factive (cf. Divers 2002, pp.169-180). So there exists a PW that represents this world as containing unicorns, but no such unicorns exist. For AR,

(AR1) There exist PWs

is true, whereas

(AR2) There exist unactual individuals

is false. There exist possible individuals *only according to* PWs. This is because ‘PW’ in AR1 is to be interpreted (usually) as an abstract entity of some kind that represents the actual world in a certain way, a bit like a newspaper (but an immaterial one). The newspaper exists and we can speak truthfully about its contents (qua contents) without committing ourselves to the independent existence of those contents.

By contrast, for GR,

It is possible that there is a unicorn iff there is a PW in which there is a unicorn.

Here, 'there exists a PW' and 'in which there is a unicorn' are both factive. There exist concrete PWs populated by concrete possible inhabitants. So,

(GR1) There exist PWs

and

(GR2) There exist possible individuals

are both true. A PW represents the existence of unicorns by *having unicorns* as members. For GR, unicorns exist, just somewhere else, not here.

De re versus de dicto modality

The differences become significant regarding the distinction between *de dicto* and *de re* modality and their treatment by the competing approaches to PW. I discuss in Chapters IV and V how the latter are indispensable for the analysis of ideology.

A *de dicto* modal is the modal of a proposition. 'Possibly, there exists a well-ordered, more equal society.': that is possibility *de dicto*. The modal applies to the sentence or proposition. In PW vernacular, *de dicto* possibilities are translated into sentences beginning, 'There exists a PW in which....'. So:

Possibly, there exists a well-ordered, more equal society iff there is a PW in which there is a well-ordered, more equal society.

So far so good. In discussing *de dicto* IMs, we could clarify the nature of such worlds, the manner in which they are preferred, by this or that ideology. Again, nothing here appears to recommend a GR or AR treatment more than the other for our purposes.

But we also say of living individuals that they have necessary and possible qualities. Consider: 'It is possible for all people to act rationally', a highly ideological sentence. But to construe this *de dicto* is to change the intended meaning. Then we are saying there are PWs in which the sentence 'All people act rationally' is true. That would come out true if there were worlds (just one), perhaps very different from ours, in which people very unlike people in this world act rationally. But our original sentence doesn't usually mean that sort of thing, not

ideologically. Instead, we want to assert a possibility that attaches to actual people, not to propositions. This is modality *de re*: modality that applies to people and things.

Instead, we want to say something like,

For all the people that exist, it is the case for each and all of those people that they could act rationally

We want to attribute the *property* of possibly acting rationally to all the people that do exist.²⁵

Now, this is a huge area of debate within philosophy, bearing on the question of essentialism. The debate about essentialism is discussed in Chapter IV, so I will not dwell on it here. We do want to attribute modal properties to people and societies with T. In fact, many AR approaches to PW do allow for *de re* modality, but they also treat *de re* and *de dicto* modals as homogenous (cf. Divers 2002, pp. 169-227). Instead, the distinction is established by other means. For example, Kripke makes the distinction along the lines of epistemological and metaphysical situations (1981, pp. 141-155). Plantinga, by contrast, distinguishes between unactualized essences and individuals (e.g. 1976, pp. 262-272). So far, then, the above provides no specific reasons to favour either GR or AR for Question Two. However, it should be noted that the *de re* / *de dicto* distinction is at least more clearly maintained by Lewisian counterpart theory (CT).

Counterpart theory

Lewis's approach to PWs also relies on his CT (see especially 1968, 1971, 1983b, 1986a, pp. 192-263) ('GCT' for genuine realist counterpart theory). This can be instructive for constructing a method to explore the plausibility conditions of ideologies/utopias. For Lewis, a counterpart is an individual. An individual can be an entire world or some part of some PW. But, in contrast with ACT, a counterpart is a concrete individual, as concrete as you or I, but occupying some other part of logical space. For something to be a counterpart of something else, it must exist in another PW and resemble that thing significantly closely and more than anything else in its world (1968, pp. 27ff). Often, C-relations hold between human individuals (but not always). In any PW, a human individual has *worldmates*, i.e., other compossible individuals that exist in the same world. The individuals inhabiting other PWs that are significantly like us and more like us than anything else in that world are our *counterparts*. For Lewis, nobody exists in more than one world at once (1986a, pp. 210-20). So, when you say it was possible for you to become a lawyer, that cannot mean there is a counterfactual situation or PW in which *you*

²⁵Note that this has a rhetorical nature, detected in its hyperbolic manner of generalisation. We don't *really* mean for *all* actual people *tout court*, since *all people* in that sentence is implicitly restricted to adults, and presumably a few other categories.

exist and are a lawyer (and where the conditions are such that you being a lawyer is a fact). Instead, there is an 'otherworldly' individual who is not you, but is enough like you (*ibid.*). In that world, perhaps the laws of nature are very similar, history is very similar, social conditions are very similar. This other individual may have the same name as you, the same characteristics, the same birthdate, and their parents may have the same (or very similar) characteristics as your parents. However, there is a point in the history of this other individual where things went differently to the actual world and they became a lawyer. But (as discussed in Chapter IV) the sort of similarity underpinning the GCT C-relation is determined by opaque contextual pressures, connotations, denotations and resolutions of vagueness, resulting in a form of anti-essentialism.

This approach is conducive to T in a number of ways. First, ideologies are mostly about people, so focusing attention on counterparts as possible individuals is reasonably continuous or complementary with much that is said about ideologies. Second, ideologies often express stratified levels of modality. For example, the liberal would hold that we are capable of rational behaviour, a capacity that would be realised if we were provided with the social and political freedoms to develop ourselves (see Chapter V, below). So, then, there are possibilities that are only realised given the existence of further possibilities, e.g. Mill's 'competent judges' (Mill 1863). GCT can very powerfully enunciate such concepts. Third, ideologies often state claims about human essence and potential, i.e. human nature. This will be discussed in Chapter V. Needless to say, we require a method for explicating such claims, unless we can provide independent reasons for rejecting them in advance, and GCT promises a fruitful means for doing so.

Reduction

One reason can be adduced here for accepting GR over the AR alternatives. ARs reduce PWs to other actual things, be it states of affairs, propositions, structural properties, simple individuals and simple properties, sentences and sets (cf. Divers 2002, pp. 167-180). All of those elements might well be informative for a theory of ideology. However, a benefit of GR is that it claims to *reduce* all such elements to the same *sui generis* postulates used to analyse modality: PWs. *Prima facie*, states of affairs, propositions, properties and so forth are significant elements within ideologies too, so a theory that promises to reduce those *alongside* IM promises greater theoretical purchase. This, on its own, however, is far from sufficient for deciding between the approaches for T.

The Principle of Recombination

It is important to acknowledge here that GR also suggests problems for our purposes. There are some additional modal epistemological considerations glossed in 1986a p. 86-101,

Lewis's 'Principle of Recombination'. At first sight, this principle risks sinking the desired (U)-distinction. However, the risk is only apparent.

Lewis adopts his 'Principle of Recombination' as a rule governing 'plenitude', i.e. what possibilities there are, 'according to which patching together parts of different possible worlds yields another possible world.' (pp. 87-88). This generates a vast range of possibilities. Lewis continues:

Roughly speaking, the principle is that anything can coexist with anything else, at least provided they occupy distinct spatiotemporal positions. Likewise, anything can fail to coexist with anything else. Thus if there could be a dragon, and there could be a unicorn, but there couldn't be a dragon and a unicorn side by side, that would be an unacceptable gap in logical space, a failure of plenitude. And if there could be a talking head separate from the rest of a human body, that too would be a failure of plenitude. (*ibid.*)

For any 'bits' in any PW, they are reconstituted or duplicated in some other PW. This, then, provides a principle for modal epistemology. Whatever bits there are in one PW, they exist recombined in other worlds.

The Principle appears to offer an advance over certain AR theories. Despite the above conclusions, I will later argue that AR *does* place greater restrictions on the range of possibilities. For example, writers such as Kripke restrict talk of possible entities to the theory of rigid designation. Kripke (1981) suggests that a unicorn is not in fact possible (despite intuitions to the contrary) (pp. 23-24, 156-158). 'Unicorn' behaves like a natural kind term. Natural kind terms are rigid designators. Rigid designators pick out actually existing things in every PW. Since actual things could have been qualitatively otherwise in other PWs, the designators pick out some underlying non-qualitative structure. Our notion of a unicorn, by contrast, is just a description of certain qualities (horse and horn), and we cannot be sure that the different descriptions in the mythological literature all aim to pick out the same underlying thing (Kripke 1981, pp. 156-164). So, there couldn't have been a unicorn. For Lewis, by contrast, local matters of fact are ultimately all there is (Lewis's doctrine of 'Humean supervenience' (1986a, pp. 1986b, pp. ix-xvii)). So, the Principle of Recombination allows that there could be a unicorn and respects the range of possibilities suggested by our modal beliefs.

However, does this not close the (U)-gap? Is it perhaps too permissive? We acknowledged above that an essential requirement for T is that it respects that our (U)-conceptions cannot guarantee (U)-possibilities. The Principle of Recombination appears to violate that. In our world (say), there are societies that are partially free and societies that have some degree of equality. I (U)-conceive a society that has both full freedom and full equality.

The Principle of Combination reinforces that, since full freedom can be formed out of partial freedom, full equality out of partial equality²⁶ and full equality and partial equality combined. Lewis's principle explicitly rules out *precluding* such a combination. However, this is not an accurate and full story, as explained below.

To begin, as Lewis acknowledges, duplicates are not automatically counterparts (pp. 88-89). A (U)-world with full equality and full freedom might recombine duplicated bits of the partial freedoms and equalities found in our world. But that doesn't mean they are counterparts of the partial freedom and equality in our world. A C-relation, for Lewis holds in virtue of similarity, which is vague. Further, the C-relation is inconstant (pp. 248ff). Under many reasonable resolutions of vagueness and inconstancy, extrinsic relations are important (p. 89). The property of full freedom might relate to a world (in which there is full equality) in a significantly different manner than does the partial freedom of this world to the rest of this world. So then, it doesn't follow that full freedom and equality are serious possibilities for any freedoms or equalities that actually obtain. As explained in Chapter IV, the C-relation can be resolved in a number of ways, thus generating the potential of full freedom and equality. However, as the conservative would insist, the resolution would have to include relevant extrinsic criteria (the world would have to be enough like our world to count), so the kind of resolution we want is not available.

The Principle of Recombination holds that any number of individuals and facts can be recombined together in another world. Then full freedom, full equality and the actual laws of nature are compossible too. This, again, would violate our (U)-gap rule. However, Lewis is insistent that no PWs admit of inconsistencies and contradictions. It might be that the *idea* of such a (U)-world is either inconsistent or at least the result of incomplete thinking. Lewis is clear: '[I]maginability is a poor criterion of possibility. We can imagine the impossible, provided we do not imagine it in perfect detail and all at once. We cannot imagine the possible in perfect detail and all at once, not if it is at all complicated' (p. 90). Certainly, the idea of such a (U)-world is complicated. Lewis acknowledges that imagination can operate as an informal guide to the Principle of Recombination (*ibid.*). But nonetheless, this does not establish that a (U)-world with full freedom, full equality and the actual laws of nature is relevant, since, for those things to come out as consistent might require a deeper structure that makes it so. The fact of that deeper structure might well rule out the extrinsic relations that make them the worlds we want. Such worlds, after all, might be too different from ours to count as relevant.

²⁶I take these descriptions as plausible and recognisable short-hands for whatever descriptions of the social world at a lower level are required to satisfy freedom and equality respectively.

Thus, Lewis's Principle of Recombination satisfies both the requirement for a broad range of possibilities and the representation of the (U)-gap.²⁷

Conclusion

Thus, we conclude, for Question One, that we should not rule out (U)-possibilities. So, on this score, T should not be evaluative. Nonetheless, the theory should represent a (U)-gap, should represent a broad range of possibilities and incorporate independent criteria for evaluation.

For Question Two, all of the available theories offer means to achieve the above, although later chapters will establish that GCT is more suitable for T. For GR, the (U)-gap can be meaningfully represented by discussion of inconsistent, incomplete and fallible accessibility and C-relations, whereas the AR options could refer to inconsistent sentences and so forth. The ontologies of AR and GR lay open an expanse of possibilities. Later, I will show that GR is significantly more permissive than the alternatives. Lastly, all positions can admit the incorporation of independent criteria, and we have provided details on how they can achieve this, especially in context of utopian theory.

Furthermore, CT puts emphasis on people by referring to 'counterparts'. In the following chapters, I will argue that, compared to the alternatives, it also presents a method for defining and analysing the modality that occurs in ideologies without implying commitment to any ideological position. That renders GR a more neutral method of analysis and adjudication. By contrast, species of AR foreclose on certain questions about essence, iterated modality, or unactual possibility, as discussed in the following Chapters. This is especially problematic for Kripke, for whom claims of accessibility ultimately come down to modal intuitions that are not pre- or cross-ideologically consistent – discussed in Chapter IV.

In GR, we also have a theory which analyses other relevant features of ideologies, states of affairs, propositions, properties and so forth. Thus, it proposes the analysis of a large range of possibilities, plus a raft of other elements relevant to ideology theory. In response to Question Two, I will argue that GR appears on balance stronger as a method or T.

²⁷The Principle does present issues, however, related to a maximum limit on space-time (Lewis 1986a pp. 90-92; pp. 101-108). Briefly, a world could not recombine duplicates of the same thing indefinitely, since space-time continuums have limits. Plus, this would lead to the paradox of a world that is bigger than itself (pp. 101-108). I discuss this issue and Lewis's proposed solution in Chapter VI.

Furthermore, Lewis addresses the existence of 'alien properties' and 'alien individuals' (pp. 91-92). There is insufficient need or space to explicate this in detail. Briefly, just as some worlds are more impoverished than ours, then, plausibly, our world is more impoverished than others. Then, there are some worlds with properties and individuals not duplicated from anything in our world or components of anything in our world. In that case, the Principle should not be taken (as it is in a similar principle governing 'combinatorial realism' (see Chapter V)) as determining the extent of logical space by recombining elements of the actual world. Instead, the Principle should be understood as follows. Just as there are worlds which recombine (all and any) parts of this world, then there are worlds which recombine (all and any) parts of (to us) 'alien' worlds (*ibid.*). But there are still worlds with qualitatively more and some with qualitatively less than our world.

Nonetheless, that much has yet to be demonstrated and it should be acknowledged here that there are many apparent virtues of AR in this context, which should provide adequate justification to utilise that approach for the analysis of a (U)-gap.

Chapter IV

Socialism and Human Nature

Introduction

In Chapter III, I focused on Freeden's analysis of conservative ideology to highlight the modal composition of that analysis, to raise some issues for the PW treatment of ideologies and decide upon competing approaches to PWs. I concluded, regarding Question One, that T should recognise an inherent gap between (U)-conceivability and possibility but abstain on intrinsic judgement about (U)-conceptions. Instead, it would illustrate the details and differences for means of decision-making by extrinsic criteria. Further, regarding Question Two, I concluded that there is little to decide between AR and GR, but have promised to show that Lewisian GR in fact illustrates more possibilities and leaves fewer components primitive. Plus, GR provides the resources to analyse elements that are both inherent to ideologies – propositions, properties, states of affairs, essences, counterfactuals, etc. (see Lewis 1986a, pp. 5-60) – but taken as primitive (singly or collectively), by competing theories. Generalised, these findings tell us (1) that appeals to PW within ideology discourse should use PW for illustrative purposes only and (2) that GR has greater conceptual and semantic application in that context and is therefore preferable. Chapter III also indicated some implications for adopting competing approaches.²⁸ Whether these findings can be so generalised will depend on the outcomes of the remaining chapters.

The present chapter focuses on socialist modality, utilising Freeden's analysis, as before. In §IV.I, I discuss socialist ideology using CPW. This raises questions about essentialism. In §§IV.II and III, below, I discuss the question of essentialism, relevant to Question One. Should T assume essentialism or anti-essentialism? If the former, T should be evaluative. If the latter, T should be explicative. I conclude that T should assume anti-essentialism and be explicative. The argument for Question Two runs closely alongside. I conclude that CT best accommodates this anti-essentialism and is thus best for T.

The remaining sections of the chapter return us to the discussion in Chapter II regarding the relationship between IM and mundane experience. As explained in that chapter, assumptions about essence pervade everyday perception. This conflicts with my responses, above, and presents two issues. On one hand, the treatment of *de re* modal predication by GR jars with normal intuitions about essence. I offer a modification of GR to account for this. On the other hand, it suggests a wholesale relativism: ideology goes all the way down. I

²⁸Since my answers to Questions One, Two and Three are unlikely to be knockdown, another proposed original contribution to knowledge of this thesis is the elaboration of the alternative options and the consequences that lead from them for IM.

confess a distaste for this conclusion and offer some reasons to restrict it – viz. that objectivity might be established by independent, non-modal norms.

§IV.I - CPW analysis of socialism

The discussion hereby leads me to socialist ideology. Again, for clarity and consistency, I will utilise the core concepts of the ideology as elaborated by Freeden (1996). The chapter will then focus in particular on the question of *essentialism* for ideology analysis, by highlighting it in the context of socialist ideology, then turn to the debate about essentialism in PWs theory to decide which approach best responds to our question.

In his 1996, Freeden isolates the following as core concepts within socialist ideology:

- 1) The constitutive nature of human relationships
 - 2) Human nature as active²⁹
 - 3) Human welfare as a desirable objective
 - 4) Equality
 - 5) History as the arena of (ultimately) beneficial change
- (pp. 425-438)

On the face of it, these propositions might be broader or looser than *concepts* as philosophers wish to understand them. The central point is clear, however. Recall that, for Freeden, ideologies are to be treated as complexes of political concepts (pp. 48-95). Complexes are arranged in order of centrality to the ideology. There are, for Freeden, core concepts, marginal concepts, and peripheral concepts. The above are Freeden's list of core concepts for socialist ideology. A more thorough treatment would elaborate the whole range Freeden covers, and their order of priority. Furthermore, political concepts are, for Freeden, 'essentially contestable'. Taken individually, each political concept could occur in a different ideological context, but mean something slightly different (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, for Freeden, there is a core to every political concept. Without this necessary component, seemingly, it would be another concept. But the concept is also filled out in a variety of ways. The concept is 'decontested', for Freeden, in an ideological context, and this is determined by its relative position within the ideology (core-to-peripheral) and its interrelationship with the other concepts within the ideology.

For the purpose of this discussion, (1) and (2), above, will be treated consecutively. I take both as saying something about human nature, which will be explained below. (3) and (4) will be treated as *values* expressed by the ideology and (5) will be treated as adding additional meaning and context to the other concepts. It should be noted that there are important concepts that Freeden discusses on the margin and periphery too, such as socialist

²⁹I have swapped the order of (2) and (3) from their appearance in Freeden (1996). This is because, in (2) human nature is mentioned explicitly, and I take (1) to present a conception of human nature too, the reasons for which are outlined below.

freedom, power, the socialist clause and so forth (pp. 438-484), but there is insufficient space to focus on them here.

1. The constitutive nature of the human relationship

Here Freeden focuses on the importance of sociability, community and group membership to socialist ideology (p. 437). There is some difference among socialisms.³⁰ There are differences in which human inter-relationships are emphasised, but in all cases 'the fundamental importance of human ties' is present (p. 426). As Freeden explains,

Often the community is both historically and scientifically elevated above the individual as focal unit of analysis. For other less holistic variants there is nevertheless a strong case for contending that sociability and altruism are human characteristics which were unnaturally made to give way to self-assertion and competitiveness. (*ibid.*)

There is disagreement among socialists about the relative position of individuality and community. In some cases, the individual is paired with, in others 'conditioned, shaped, even preconditioned' (*ibid.*) by, the community.

Freeden presents a quote from Marx as the strongest such statement:

Society does not consist of individuals, it expresses the sum of connections and relationship in which individuals find themselves (*Grundrisse*, cited in Freeden *ibid.*)

He continues:

Socialism thus allows for a unit of analysis – the group – which may in extreme cases replace, but more typically runs in tandem with the individual. (*ibid.*)

Admittedly, alethic modal concepts are not *explicitly* apparent. However, modality is arguably centrally implicit. If the group is to be treated as either the chief unit of analysis, or an important and close accompaniment, then community is (arguably) in some sense essential to individuality. This is apparent in Marx's quote, where individuals are described as emerging only out of human ties. In other versions, the relationship to others, exhibited by 'sociability' and 'altruism' is in some sense 'natural', since their weakening by 'self-assertion and competitiveness' is taken to be unnatural.

³⁰As there are with all ideologies. There are socialisms and socialisms, conservatisms and conservatisms, liberalisms and liberalisms, etc. That means the risk of caricature in this field is ever-present.

Note that 'individual' plays a normative function above. We can safely assume that Marx and other socialists do not mean 'individual' just to mean numerically distinct. The term 'individual' involves the possession of some quality that makes human beings what they are when they are what they naturally should be.

For all people, in all cases when they are what they should be, they are part of a group. For all human beings, in every PW where they are properly and naturally individuals, they are part of a group. So here, it makes sense to say we are dealing with a form of necessity. It couldn't be that people are as they naturally ought to be without being in (the right sense) tied to a community. On the face of it, this appears to be an instance of necessity *de re*, that is, where a property of belonging to a group is attached by necessity to individuals. But this must also be a kind of non-alethic *de re* necessity, since it is logically and in fact physically possible for people to be detached from groups. But the apparent deep undesirability and unnaturalness of this makes it a kind of detached or detachable necessity or essence.

Naturalness here is not to be understood as logically or even physically necessary. In this context, 'natural' appears to follow a concept of how things ought to be as they are in some sense supposed to be. We can notice that the concept of flourishing often carries a similar meaning. (Compare, for example, Aristotle (2009) on 'what things are good for', purpose, function, end, etc.) So here we have a sense of human nature, a sense of necessity, a sense of essence, and a sense of potential. In CPW, we can say that in every PW in which individuals are as they should be, they live together, in some kind of community, a group associated together with the right kind of ties. Note, that, so far, 'the right kind of ties' have not been delineated.

The CPW elucidation also highlights the focus on the unit of analysis. We said above that community attaches as a non-alethic *de re* necessary property to human beings. At the furthest end, community is emphasised to such a degree that it appears as the basic object. If this is so, features attributed by other core concepts would attach to *community* as a thing. Individuals would be an outgrowth or product of it. At the other end, individuals are basic objects of analysis, but community attaches as above described. However, note that community isn't a property in the standard sense, e.g. of colour, shape, age, etc. Community is a *relation*. Recall that Freeden also mentioned attitudes or attributes that support that relation: sociability, altruism (*ibid.*). These are properties of individuals. So, on this construal, individuals are fully realised, as only they could be, fully and properly, when related to one another in a particular sense, which would involve possessing properties which permit community: other-ness, hospitality, kindness, etc. This *relationship* between individuals, then, is a non-alethic *de re* necessary relationship – it exists in every PW in which individuals are as they should be. There are questions we might ask about the other construal that focuses on the group 'which may in extreme cases replace... the individual' (*ibid.*). Is the Marxist

confusing relationships as entities themselves? Perhaps she is guilty of the kind of fetishism Marx famously locates imputed to commodity exchange (as inherently valuable things) (Marx 1867, pp. 163-178). This, in fact, is often a criticism of holistic approaches to society, as one finds, for example, in Durkheim (Meighan and Harber 2007, pp. 286-298). Perhaps Marx is taking 'semantic ascent' and treating *community* as a count-noun or mereological sum, composed of human entities, to which second-order properties may be applied. Given the right constitution of community (which we can understand as a second-order property of a relation), individuals, as they should be, emerge.

In any case, there seems no apparent reason why CPW cannot enunciate these interpretations. However, given the debate between approaches to PW, there are questions one can ask about how such modal properties are meant to apply to individuals or communities. Are modals a feature of reality, of which PWs provide an understanding? Do people and communities exist in more than one PW at once? Can people and communities have non-actual counterparts, that generate the modals? Further, can there be non-actualised possible individuals or relations between them? How are these established? Plus, how can we know? These are all questions that T would have to address.

2. Human nature as active

A conception of human nature, I have said, involves attributions of essence and potential to human beings, as is acknowledged explicitly in many texts, (e.g. Berlin 2013, pp. 11-14; Vincent 1995, pp. 16-21ff; Leopold 2012, pp. 29-33; Levitas 1990 pp. 209-214; Adams 1989 pp. 89-113). In the current context, Freeden uses those terms too:

All socialisms conceive of human nature as essentially productive, usually in the further sense of creative, and work or labour is seen as a major component of that natural activity. (Freeden 1996, p. 427)

Freeden also speaks of an 'essentially creative function' and proceeds to observe that:

Through Marx, of course, the notion that 'work is a positive, creative activity', and the idea that human beings were actors engaged in praxis, became pre-eminent in the socialist tradition, expressing in particular the salience of living labour power in the productive process and as contributing to human sociability and control over nature. (p. 430.)

And further,

For socialists in general, the appeal to human creativity was an exhortation to tap into the depth and range of human potential. (p. 430)

Note that productivity, labour, creativity, are treated as *essential* to human beings. These things are also associated with *potential*, the ability to achieve further things.

Witness this idea at the centre of Marx's mature philosophy:

Labour, then, as the creator of use-values, as useful labour, is a condition of existence which is independent of all forms of society; it is an eternal natural necessity which mediates the metabolism between man and nature, and therefore human life itself. (Marx 1867, p. 133)

We can note that properties like productivity and creativity are themselves modal terms. They connote *capacities*. It makes sense to say that if one exhibits productivity or creativity, one does produce or create. Clearly Marx and others do not think this occurs for every person. Nonetheless it is definable for the species as a whole. Further, if I do produce or create, I am productive or creative because I demonstrate a capacity to do so, i.e. that I *would* and *can* create. And this recognition of such features as characteristic of the species transfers to individuals as potentials, even to those who do not actually create.

Thus, human beings possess the *potential* or *possibility* for creation and production necessarily. The essentialness of these characteristics, then, takes the form of a necessary possibility. Creativity and productivity are necessary human possibilities. In CPW, we can say that, for all humans, in every PW, there is a PW according to which they produce. This again raises questions about how that is done and how it relates to the competing versions of PW.

This runs together with the comments about human potential above and connects with Core Concept 1. In working and being creative, I realise an inherent potential. In realising this inherent potential I (presumably) become an individual, that is, what I would be if I were what I should be. And, once again, we have the notion of non-alethic *de re* necessity.

In PW talk, then, for any person, there are PWs in which they work and achieve something and in doing so they realise a version of themselves that is in some sense how things should be. Further, it is true according to every PW that there exist some PWs in which people do this.

3. Human welfare as a desirable objective

For Freedman, this core concept connotes the value of human welfare, in terms of basic well-being, but also flourishing and the realisation of potential to economic concerns, especially the maintenance of the 'material and moral conditions without which human self-respect was

impossible' (Freeden 1996, p. 428), as well as equality (to be discussed below). As an additional core concept, it inter-defines with the other concepts at the core, combining the value of human welfare, alleviation of poverty and inequality with community and activity.

Translated into CPW, this concept can be understood alongside the two elaborated above. If human nature is to be conceived as essentially communal and active, at least when it is adequately realised, then this constrains ranges of possible human individuals and worlds. For all those worlds where there is human welfare, there is human activity and healthy communities. On those versions that foreground community as the unit of analysis, activity and minimal poverty and inequality can be higher-order properties of communities, which in turn are relations between people. It seems feasible to suggest here that activity and building of community are pre-conditions for human welfare, since work and strong social relationships have apparent value in that they are good for people or groups. Thus, in all those worlds where there is welfare, which involves little or no poverty and inequality, humans are active and live together harmoniously. And, again, it is within such contexts that human individuals exist, understood in some normative sense as the realisation of some 'natural' or purposive potential.

4. Equality

Unsurprisingly, Freeden locates the concept of equality at the core of socialism:

All socialisms assert the equality of human beings. On one level this is an historical construct, a fundamental statement about their original condition. On another it is a desirable goal, in view of its observable material absence in modern industrial societies as well as in most other types of social association, to be reattained [sic] through political and economic reorganisation. (p. 430)

Note here that there is a focus on a non-actual state of affairs, an 'observable material absence'. The non-actual state of affairs is desirable, and its achievement is associated with political and economic action.

Freedden notes that socialist equality does not connote 'sameness or numerical equality' (p. 431). Instead, socialist equality has political, economic and ethical meanings. Politically, equality relates to power (*ibid.*); economically, 'the redistribution of wealth was one chief form through which the concept of equality was construed' (*ibid.*); ethically, '[b]ehind that, though not always explicitly, lay the ineliminable component of equal and commutable human status and worth, whether in religious or secular form' (*ibid.*).

Freedden further identifies some additional characteristics. In the twentieth century, as 'growing acceptance of democratic practices', 'relaxing of class distinctions', 'accessible of

mass consumerism' (*ibid.*). And further: '[e]quality before the law', '[c]ommunal ownership of the earth's resources'. He also notes that *The Manifesto of the Equals* (1796) argues for equality as 'the first principle of nature, as self-evident truth' (*ibid.*).

Socialist 'equality' thus differs from liberal equality, which places a greater emphasis on equality of opportunity, equality before the law, equality of worth and regard. Socialist equality contains all these ingredients, but also adds a high degree of political and economic equality. The difference, for Freeden, is expressed in Marx's oft-quoted maxim, itself borrowed from a French revolutionary slogan, 'from each according to his ability to each according to his needs' (Freeden 1996, p. 432). For Freeden, 'equality was construed as a differential catering to essential human requirements.' And the fulfilment of human needs leads to the realisation of human potential (*ibid.*).

As Freeden insists about all political concepts, socialist 'equality' gains its particular ideological complexion – or 'decontestation' – from its neighbouring core concepts. We have said that humans are as they should be only with community and activity. So then in all PWs in which people are as they are 'naturally', there is community and activity. Equality is a desirable feature of these worlds – or the most desirable feature of the most desirable worlds. It seems clear that equality and community are closely linked, since equality is construed politically, economically, ethically and legally. Further, equality is designated as non-actual *and* desirable, and therefore generates prescriptions. It also seems safe to assume that equality is desirable because it produces welfare. Of course, a socialist could disagree on this point, and designate equality (or any of the other core concepts) as inherently good or desirable. This would affect concept entails the other. On the face of it, it seems reasonable to suggest that, for the socialist, welfare entails equality and community, which in turn entails activity. But, since these are all 'core' concepts, socialists could well disagree on this order of dependence. Nonetheless, note that PWs provide an apt framework for illustration and debate here.

5. History as the arena of (ultimately) beneficial change

The fifth core concept posits history as the '[p]atterned advance of reason in society, culminating in the complete universalisation of reason and the realization of freedom as self-mastery and de-alienation' (p. 434). According to Freeden, this involves restricting alternative historical directions, 'excluding deviation, e.g. pluralism of the multiplicity of historical options and the possibility of the failure of social advancement' (*ibid.*). In some cases, such as in Marx, history has 'purpose and agency' (*ibid.*).

The above interacts with other core concepts. Thus, socialist history and activity qualify one another into the conception of change, revolution and emancipation (*ibid.*). Further, rationality, for Freeden, is an adjacent concept in socialism (which there is insufficient space

to discuss here). Along with the new science of evolutionism, socialists married history to rationality (p. 436).

In CPW, we can first note the reduction of futures to a restricted range and say that the possible future histories of actual social history are delimited. Socialists of course disagree over the extent of determinism and determining factors. But the disagreement can be helpfully illustrated using the CPW. Either there is only one (or very few) possible futures of the actual world (hard determinism), or more but held within a certain range (soft determinism). Either way, that range is established by a pattern detectable across the history of the actual world.

Within the range of possible futures lies greater human freedom and activity. This idea too can be controversial and contentious (see e.g. Thompson 1984, pp. 16-41). If the future is decided, then what space is there for human freedom? On one charitable PW construal, we could say that, within the restricted future range, there is a greater range of PWs that are accessible to individuals. This would rule out ranges of worlds in which individuals have more limited ranges of accessible worlds. Beyond that, one can debate the consistency of such views. As Castoriadis (in Thompson *ibid.*) notes, if the future is decided because human activity is entirely determined, then there is no space for human freedom, which apparently rules out the possibility of revolution, which of course Marxists advocate. However, it is not entirely clear that socialists, even Marx and the Marxists, would recognise themselves in these claims. Nor is it clear that to interpret them thus is charitable. However we decide the issue, it seems quite sensible to conduct the debate within a discussion of ranges of accessible future PWs and the relationship of those ranges to the other determinations of PWs established by the four other core concepts.

Implications for Questions One and Two

Note here that there are two central elements to the ideology: the concept of human essence and potential and the concept of ideal PWs. The latter generate prescriptions for actual social arrangements. If there are desirable PWs in which individuals live in harmony and community, in which there is great equality and activity, and there is incongruity with the actual world, this engenders a non-alethic modal context and valuations of existing circumstances and prescriptions for change. Again, there is space for socialists to disagree over details, in this case over means of change (revolutionary, reformist, persuasive, democratic, enforced etc.), but nonetheless, PWs provide a framework to do that.

The issue regarding desirable or morally better PWs will not detain us. Sufficient to point out the centrally important role of that idea and also that it is grounded in some sense of human nature, and human nature is understood in terms of human essence, accident and potential. Since moral modals are non-alethic, where many other IMs are apparently alethic (and involve different inferential rules), there is a criss-crossing of mind-to-world and world-to-

mind directions of fit. Since the inferential rules differ, the ideology analyst ought to make these points clear. Note that conceptions of human nature also stray into non-alethic territory too. The desirable PWs belong to that range of worlds in which people are as they must be, or are as they must be when they are as they should be (naturally, or whatever) - e.g. communal, active, equal, flourishing, self-realising and self-possessing, etc. Designations of human essence and potential are therefore crucial components of socialist ideology.

These concepts repeat in other ideologies. In Chapter V, we see that ('Millite') liberalism too utilises the notion of desirable possibilities (as prescriptive and action-orienting), grounded in a theory of human nature. As we identified in Chapter III, conservatism of course puts up resistance to the idea of radically different social worlds (U). In places, this too can relate to a view of human nature (conservatism's Core Concept 2: 'the extra-human sources of social stability'). There are non-cognisable causes of human behaviour that render non-viable radically different, socially stable PWs. So, the idea of radically different possibilities must be present in T (whether or not rejected), and human essence, even if dark, mysterious and principally inaccessible to us, remains as a concept in T. Designations of human essence and potential are therefore crucial components in ideologies generally. If T enables the elaboration and discussion of differences, it will have to represent these competing concepts.

Human essences, potentials and accidents are central to ideologies. However, usually, such things are taken as primitive. What exactly are they? Some philosophers, notably Quine, have rejected essences altogether (e.g. 1961). For other modal philosophers, there is debate (discussed below). Different approaches to PWs take a different view of essences. Once again, which approach we adopt will impact on the conceptual resources and epistemology available for T. For some philosophers, essences are a deep feature of reality, and PWs in some sense reflect that. For others, essences are entirely determined by contexts of reference, the meanings of words and our concepts. In the latter case, these points of departure select certain ranges of possibilities over others. If we take essences as features of reality, and bring that forward into T, then T would have to be evaluative, ruling on true and false essence claims. If, by contrast, we take essences as constructed but central to ideologies, T would be merely explicatory on this score.

The remainder of this chapter, then, is devoted to the question of essentialism. I will conclude in favour of anti-essentialism and CT, but with reservations. A PW analysis ought to elaborate ideological *de re* modal concepts, due to their abundance in ideologies. However, the analysis should not make the essentialist assumption that *de re* modal predications are mind-independently true or false, since arguments for the latter are self-defeating and unjustifiable from the point of view of ideology theory (because they rely epistemically on intuitions that ought to be a *focus* of analysis – as suggested in Chapter II). So, in response to Question One, T ought only to illustrate differences for the purpose of decision-making by

way of independent criteria. Regarding Question Two, CT appears the strongest candidate. However, it is not apparent whether ACT or GCT is to be preferred. The AR variant has the weakness that it assumes *de dicto* modal primitivism. This is unwelcome for an analysis of IM if it consequently forecloses on questions of IM without prior justification. However, at this point, it is not obvious what cases that might relate to. The GR variant has the weakness that, ontologically, it actually amounts to a form of hyper-essentialism that ties objects essentially to worlds and locates modality *outside* of individuals and things. This conflicts with the commonplace thought and argument (and by extension, presumably, ideology too) that forms the philosophical justification for *de re* modal predication in the first place. I argue that GR can be modified in the face of this objection. The debate between ACT and GCT variants of CT is postponed until Chapter VI.

§IV.II, below, defines the essentialism/anti-essentialism debate, relates this to ideological conceptions of human nature, and expands on the relevance of these issues regarding our over-arching questions. A subsection on ‘analytic tools’ also offers some discussion on meta-theory, i.e. the standard adopted in deciding specifications for T in this chapter.

§IV.III addresses Questions One and Two and discusses the essentialism/anti-essentialism debate in context of a quest for T. The section engages with some influential writing by Quine, Kripke and Lewis on this issue. It is concluded that T should assume anti-essentialism, but not reject *de re* modal predication. Then, T should be merely explicatory (Question One). Further, CT best accommodates this goal (Question Two).

§IV.IV then raises some issues with Lewis’s account. First, there are AR variants of CT (and essentialist and anti-essentialist variants of ACT. The above argument compels us to consider only the latter). However, it is not apparent at this stage whether the *de dicto* modal primitivism in ACT is tolerable for T. This question is postponed for later discussion. Second, as discussed in Paul (2006), GCT denies that modality is predicated *internally* to objects. Since this significantly conflicts with the very common-sense beliefs that CT is built to accommodate, it counts very heavily against GCT. There is no reason to assume such common-sense beliefs are not shared across ideologies. I show that GCT can be modified following some suggestions by Paul, but not so as to adopt Paul’s ‘deep essentialism’. Lastly, I consider the prospect that the foregoing suggests ideology goes all the way down and offer some ways to mitigate that conclusion.

§IV.II Question One: Essentialism and human nature

Take 'essentialism' to be the doctrine that objects or kinds possess non-trivial modal properties, independent of the way we refer to them and that the distinctions between modal properties, between an object's or kind's essences, accidents and potentials, is a context- or mind-independent feature of reality. Anti-essentialism is the denial of this thesis: the doctrine that the modal properties of objects or kinds are determined solely by context or reference. (We will make finer distinctions below.) The question is whether we should assert essentialism or anti-essentialism in context of a PW analysis of IM.

We noted above that some notion of human nature is grounding for socialism (whether that involves an assertion or denial of human nature). This translates into conceptions of human essence, accident and potential. For the socialist, human beings are essentially communal, cooperative, creative and active beings. (Some might say this amounts to *no* human nature, since then 'society is ontologically prior' (Vincent 1995, p. 100; cf. Levitas 1990, p. 210), but this really amounts to the same thing.)³¹ Conservatives, generally, will construe human beings as in some sense irrational, frail, emotional, flawed, sinful, wretched, but nonetheless capable of love, reasonable behaviour, commodious living, etc. (Vincent 1995, pp. 67-70; Maistre 1797, p. 23; Freeden 1996, p. 334 etc.) (although compare Oakeshott's view that 'man has no nature' 1975, p. 41). Liberals, by contrast, emphasise the individual and rational nature of human beings, and also a capacity for self-development and sociability (Freeden 1996, pp. 144-154; Mill 1859, pp. 119-140; Vincent 1995, pp. 32-37). But how do we decide between competing conceptions of human essence? PW theories offer competing views of essence and essentialism. We might use a PW theory to merely illustrate the differences, for the purpose of analysis by independent criteria. Or we might embed a tighter logic that invalidates some essence-claims and validates others. An answer to those questions will be sought in the question about essentialism.

Thus, we are brought to the debate over essentialism versus anti-essentialism. Intuitively, if essentialism is true, then there would be some true attributions of essences and some false ones. (It is logically possible that human nature could be essence-free but essentialism restrictedly true, but this is highly implausible, since essentialist theories tend to attribute essences and accidents to all objects and kinds (as such).) If essentialism is true, then T might offer a tighter logic for evaluating attributions of essence. *However*, this would not be simple, since it is not obvious from the outset how this might be achieved and *which* claims to essence are true and which false. If, on the other hand, essentialism is false, things

³¹'Human' is, of course, a general term, but for the purposes of simplicity I will speak hitherto of 'human' as an object and assume that whatever is true in general is true for every instance. We can extend this point to other ideologies, e.g. conservatism and liberalism. Note, that clearly there are differences of view about human essence across ideologies.

would be simpler, since then we can reasonably assume that T should exemplify the differences for means of evaluation by independent criteria. In that case, a preferable method would leave clear signs as to where and how the criteria can be plugged in.

To repeat, the above questions fit in with our overarching questions about T, the appropriate goals for that method and the best approach to PW to facilitate it. In this chapter, we have resolved Question One into the following question: Should T assume essentialism or anti-essentialism?

Recall that the question is posed in context of a need to analyse IM. There are two mutually-exclusive candidate responses:

Outcome 1: Assume essentialism. This suggests that T ought to validate some essentialist claims and invalidate others. So, the method ought to be evaluative. *However*, it is not clear from the outset how this is to be achieved. Some additional work will be required into the metaphysics and epistemology of modality, presented by the competing PW theories.

Outcome 2: Assume anti-essentialism. In this case, T ought to be merely illustrative but allow the means to adjudicate competing positions using independent criteria. The method should then leave clear signs exactly where and how criteria can be plugged in.

Our Questions One and Two will be run together, since the different arguments about essentialism are found *within* the competing PW positions. We can see that competing approaches to PW offer different answers to the questions about essentialism. It is our task to see which answer is best, understood in context of IM and the search for T. An answer to that question will suggest a preferred approach to PW.

Analytic Tools

To decide the issue, bear in mind that Questions One and Two compel us to choose among conceptual and semantic resources for the purpose of ideology analysis, while leaving metaphysical questions in abeyance for Question Three, to be answered in Chapter VI. Of course, the essentialism debate *is* about metaphysics. But the acceptance or denial of essentialism relates to the conceptual resources and logic available to us (Divers 2002, pp. 26-40ff; Quine 1960, p. 199; 1961, pp. 150-59; Kripke 1971, p. 519; 1981, pp. 1-21, 106-64; Lewis 1986a, pp. 5-68). If essentialism is true and objects have their modal properties absolutely, then there are tighter modal constraints on reality. There are fewer possibilities. If essences are mind-independent facts, then, for example, all identity statements are

necessary, since whenever two rigid designators are identical, they pick out the one same object in every PW (rigid designation will be explained below). This sets tighter logical constraints. For any x and y , if $x = y$ then necessarily $x = y$. In other words, if any two things are identical, it is impossible that they be distinct. (From which it also follows that, for any x and y , if $x \neq y$ then necessarily $x \neq y$.) If, on the other hand, modal properties are a matter of predication by specification and context, more is on offer. There are more possibilities and the logic is looser. Then some identity statements are contingent, since for some pairs of rigidly designating terms, they pick out the same pairs of things in every PW, which are identical in this world but distinct in other PWs. For some x and y , $x = y$ and possibly $x \neq y$. So, an important question is whether T should permit more or fewer conceptual possibilities and commend the necessity of identity or tolerate contingent identity.³² At first blush, this appears a tricky thing to accomplish. Our decision must be determined by some set of criteria. However, we are asking the above questions about essentialism so as to establish criteria, our methodological goals for T, in the first place! Circularity threatens.

However, there are avenues to tackling this problem: (A) the conclusions from other chapters and (B) the prospect of modal epistemology in context of ideology theory.

(A) Chapter III already argues that the analysis should permit the fullest range of possibilities, which *suggests* a rejection of the necessity of identity, support for contingent identity, a fuller range of conceptual resources and anti-essentialism. Then, T explicates a full range of ideological positions. *However*, this is a rather weak argument. We ought also to consider independent reasons to accept or reject essentialism, since otherwise our conclusions might depend entirely on the direction of argument, from Chapter III to Chapter IV, which demands non-question-begging reasons for starting with Chapter III. Therefore, this suggestion ought to be left to one side.

(B) Modal epistemology in context of ideology. A more promising point of adjudication is epistemology. One finds modal philosophers supporting arguments for or against essentialism by way of epistemological appeals. Admittedly the epistemology is not thoroughly or directly developed. But the epistemological claims are there nonetheless and carry the full

³²Note that I am using the expression 'contingent identity' loosely and for brevity. Philosophers, such as Lewis (see his 1968, 1971, 1983b and 1986a), who deny Kripke-style arguments for the necessity of identity do not deny the trivial metaphysical and semantic thesis that all objects are necessarily self-identical (for all x necessarily $(x = x)$). Nor do they assert the metaphysical thesis that two things might have been one thing. Lewis is reluctant to use the expression 'contingent identity' altogether. Instead, he denies the semantic thesis that every nontrivial identity statement is necessarily identical. Thus: 'for some x and y , $x = y$ but, possibly $(x \neq y)$ ' is asserted, but this is made true due to the *predication* of de re modality. For Lewis, it can be true that two terms actually (rigidly) denoting one thing might have denoted distinct things. From this it doesn't follow, for Lewis, that anything is not necessarily self-identical or that distinct things might have been one thing. (See 1986a, pp. 248-263.)

weight of their theories.³³ Thus, we find Kripke insist upon stipulation, intuition and intelligibility (1981, pp. 40-42, 47ff), Adams upon deep-rooted belief (1979, p. 194), Plantinga on 'obviousness' (1976, pp. 257ff), and Lewis upon common-sense (and where that gives out, a weighting of theoretical benefits against common-sense costs) (Lewis and Lewis 1970, pp. 8-9; Lewis 1986a, pp. 3-5ff). (They are also relying on the prestige of modal logic since the production of completeness theorems in the 1960s.) Admittedly, the object of reference for modal philosophers is different from ours. Modal philosophers typically refer to mundane modals, such as the necessities and contingencies of domestic objects or of people, or items of scientific interest, such as natural kinds - water, tigers, gold, heat etc. Putatively, such examples are pre-ideological (although, of course, that notion is debated within ideology theory (see, e.g., Leader Maynard 2013; Stråth 2013)). By contrast, we are focusing particularly in this chapter on conceptions of *human essence, potential and accident*. But the differences between these (mundane versus ideological) points of reference are revealing. IM intuitions and concepts can differ widely. We noted in Chapter II that the very context of IM may help to bring out the strengths or weaknesses of the intuitionist or common-sense appeals of modal philosophers. For example, where a philosopher claims to establish essentialism on intuitive grounds, where those intuitions are not shared cross-ideologically, the burden of proof rests with them. More reasons need to be offered since the intuitionist is then pleading a restriction of conceptual resources and a tightening of logic based on their own firmly-held, pre-philosophical beliefs.

For the above reasons, it already seems right to grant the default position in what follows to anti-essentialism, which supports contingent identity and broader possibility. Such a permissive framework would permit the illustration of the full range of differences between ideologies. Epistemic appeals that promote essentialism, then, will stand in need of justification. Such appeals can be assessed in two ways: (1) whether the epistemic appeals could be conceivably applied across ideologies and (2) whether or not the appeals stand up on their own terms. Regarding (1): *perhaps* there are relevant consistent intuitions or common-sense views held across ideologies *at some level*. If so, it would be instructive to explore to

³³Notwithstanding the current 'intense interest' (Lowe 2013, p. 920) and ongoing work in modal epistemology (or the epistemology of essence) (e.g. Anand 2017; Bealer 2002; Williamson 2007, pp. 134-178; Lowe *op cit*; Tahko 2015, pp. 151-197). Nonetheless, the relationship of these considerations to PWs is still in need of development (cf. e.g. Lewis 1986a, pp. 89-92; Divers 2002, pp. 149-165). Here, I do not address important developments by (e.g.) Fine 1994, Williamson 2007, and Lowe 2013. Partly, this is because the current thesis is concerned to explore the options of *PW* analyses of ideological modals, whereas the latter contributions do not focus on PWs. Furthermore, since Fine and Lowe argue for an epistemology of essences based on 'real definitions' and Williamson on evolutionarily bestowed counterfactual judgements, their contributions do not appear helpful for the analysis of ideological modals. Ideological modals are contestable and negotiable, whereas Fine, Lowe and Williamson all rely on judgments that are supposed to be patent.

what extent these could be brought out and used to ground some version of essentialism. If that proves unsuccessful, anti-essentialism wins. I conclude that anti-essentialism wins.

§ IV.III Questions One and Two: Essentialism vs. anti-essentialism

This section examines the dispute between essentialism and anti-essentialism and concludes in favour of anti-essentialism. To establish this, I address an ongoing debate in modal philosophy by focusing on Quine, Kripke, Lewis, and some recent contributions by L. A. Paul. A form of anti-essentialism for T is most desirable, but I also show that these theories all contribute something informative to ideology discourse and debate.

'Quine's Challenge', below dedicates significant space to a discussion of Quine's formidable rejection of *de re* modality and essentialism. It is concluded that Quine's argument is powerful, and of especial significance for IM. However, since it entails a wholesale rejection of so much that occurs in pre-philosophical thought and perception, the ultimate success of Quine's position is in doubt.

'Kripkean Essentialism', picks up on the those doubts in looking to the celebrated work of Saul Kripke. Kripke offers a compelling method for making sense of everyday *de re* modal judgement. However, if we press Kripke for an explanation of his essentialism, it appears to rests on a circular appeal to intuitions that are underpinned by theory-laden essentialist assumptions. This is so much the worse for ideology theory, I argue, since the theory-laden nature of our intuitions ought to be the object, not ground, of analysis. What remains, however, is Kripke's forceful recognition of the commonplace pervasiveness of *de re* modal predication.

'Lewisian Anti-essentialism', discusses David Lewis's counterexamples to the necessity of identity and proceeds to his acceptance of *de re* modal predication but rejection of essentialism. This approach accommodates the best elements of Quine and Kripke's positions and deflects their difficulties for an analysis of ideology. CT is then discussed as a persuasive method for explicating the differences between competing ideology theories for the purpose of decision-making. This also makes clear that T ought also to be explicatory only, allowing evaluation by independent criteria, since we have rejected essentialism.

Quine's Challenge

Discussions of the essentialism debate often (rightly) begin with an outline of a powerful challenge presented to essentialists by W.V.O Quine (Quine 1948, 1960, 1961; cf. Lewis 1968; Kripke 1981; Della Rocca 2002; Paul 2006; Beebe and MacBride 2015). An understanding of Quine's argument is crucial for broadly two reasons: it establishes some common ground in setting the context of debate and offers a formidable rejection of (1) 'Aristotelian essentialism', (2) *de re* modality and (3) quantified modal logic (cf. Lewis 1968, 1971, 1983a; Kripke, 1971, 1980; Divers 2002; Paul 2006).³⁴

³⁴By contrast, Lewis defends an anti-essentialism that shares many Quinean assumptions (in spite of his modal realism) (see Nolan 2015, Beebe and MacBride 2015). But though Lewis rejects (1), he defends (2). In 1968, we

Quine's argument rests on his (1948) employment of Russell's theory of descriptions as a method for 'testing the conformity' (p. 15) between one's adopted ontology and the *prima facie* ontological commitments of one's literal, honest, purportedly true assertions (cf. Van Inwagen and Zimmerman 2008, p. 3ff). Quine insists that this does not of itself *amount to* ontology (1948, p. 15) or to a form of nominalism (1980, p. viii) but provides a compelling *semantics* for paraphrasing away unwanted expressions that are apparently ontology-committing. Consider the nuisance examples presented by Alexius Meinong in his argument that statements of nonbeing are self-defeating. For Meinong, to argue that 'Pegasus does not exist', is to make a claim *about* something: Pegasus. Pegasus must exist to assert its non-existence. So there exist things that do not exist! For Quine, instead we can read 'Pegasus does not exist' using an artificial predicate in the description 'Nothing pegasizes' (1948, p. 8) then eliminate the description using Russell's theory. E.g. 'Pegasus does not exist' =

It is not the case that: there exists an (x) such that (x) is (A) [a winged horse] and (B) [was captured by Bellerophon] and for anything (y) that is (A) and (B), (y) iff (x). (*ibid.*)

Existence claims are to be construed as existential generalisations, where properties are 'quantified into' an object domain. Use of the quantifier in this way ('nothing is such and such') amounts to a denial that the properties in question are instantiated, and does not commit us to the existence of non-existent things.

In 'Reference and Modality' (1961), Quine uses the same theory to assess the capacity of statements to refer to objects, that is, in establishing truths and existence claims about objects. If some statements cannot do this, then one must conclude that the statements do not refer, or are not 'purely referential' (p. 140ff).

It is important to note, again, that Quine is not advancing a particular ontology at this point. Instead, he is setting up logical requirements for an object-referring language. If a class of statements fail to meet these requirements, they could not succeed at referring to traits of

also find Lewis defending QML (3). However, in 1986a Lewis rejects QML, due to its weaker expressive power. 'If this language of boxes and diamonds proves to be a clumsy instrument for talking about matters of essence and potentiality, let it go hang' (1986a, p.12-13) (cf. Hazen 1979). Stalnaker's (1987) anti-essentialism is similar to Lewis's. Proponents of essentialism, on the other hand, assert all three. Most essentialists, such as Plantinga (1976), Wiggins (2001) and Kripke (1971, 1981), assert a form of primitive essentialism, whereas Paul (2006) proposes a reductive form of essentialism. Lewis is a genuine realist, while Stalnaker (1984), Plantinga, Kripke and Paul are actualist realists. Lewis, Stalnaker, Hazen (1979), Paul and Sider (2006) adopt a form of counterpart theory, whereas the others reject it. Lewis, Paul and Sider propose a qualitative reduction of de re modals, whereas the others argue for some non-qualitative source.

Divers' sophisticated overview of the field (2002) concludes in favour of Lewis, although there have been developments in the field since, see Sider (2006), Paul (2006), Divers (2004) among others. Furthermore, Divers' support for Lewis is tentative, since it self-consciously results from an absence of adequately developed alternative theories, especially of the anti-realist variety. Divers continues to work in this field, and many articles by him are forthcoming.

objects. Semantically, then, whatever one's ontology, such a class of statements cannot contribute to it. Quine argues that modal statements are of this latter kind. They are not purely referential, but 'referentially opaque' and therefore cannot state facts about the world (p. 143ff).

The first of Quine's criteria (1)-(3), below, involve 'the principle of substitution' or Leibniz's celebrated law of the indiscernibility or identicals. The second set of criteria (4)-(5), below, extends the first into Russell's theory of descriptions to 'quantify in' to an object domain. (1961; cf. Lewis 1968 pp. 32-3; Linsky 1971, p. 2; Kripke 1980, p. 2-4.) Thus:

- 1) $a=b$
- 2) Fa
- 3) $\therefore Fb$

(Quine 1961, p. 139-142; cf. Linsky *op cit.*, Lewis *op cit.*)

And

- 4) Fa
- 5) \therefore There exists an (x) such that $F(x)$

(Quine 1961, p. 144-46)

Where (1)-(3) is valid, for any true identity between singular terms (1), the truth-value of a statement containing one of those terms (2) will be unchanged by substitution by the other term (3). In other words, any two things that are identical have the same properties. Quine considers cases where (1)-(3) comes out invalid. Since he does not challenge the truth of Leibniz's Law or the validity of (1)-(3), the problem resides in the class of statements used in those cases (1961, p. 139). Then the class of statements involve contexts that are *referentially opaque* (or 'irreferential') (p. 142). (1)-(3) is only valid for purely referential contexts that describe the traits of objects (p. 140). (4)-(5) is valid where a true statement entails the existence of something the statement is true of (pp. 144-46). (4)-(5) is only valid for purely referential classes of statements. So, in instances where (1)-(5) provides a valid chain of reasoning (and the inputted premises are true), the statements that result from plugging into the sockets refer to context-independent traits of objects. Thus, Quine effectively sets up necessary (but not sufficient) ontological conditions. They are necessary since a class of statements not satisfying them do not adequately describe a domain of objects. They are not sufficient, since ontological questions remain about the exact nature of the object domain referred to by the class of statements satisfying the condition. Furthermore, Quine's test sets

up *validity*, not *soundness* conditions. We can say whether or not the candidate statements are purely referential, but it is an independent matter whether those statements are true or false. (Quine considers only singular terms, but it is apparent that general terms would fit here too (cf. Quine 1951, p. 21).)

As an uncontroversial example: plug 'Ringo Starr' into (a), 'Richard Starkey' into (b) and 'musician' into (F). (Please ignore complications relating to the social-construction of occupations.) The argument goes through:

- 6) Ringo Starr = Richard Starkey
- 7) Ringo Starr is a musician
- 8) ∴ Richard Starkey is a musician

Clearly, (6)-(8) is valid. Where (6) and (7) are true, (8) is true. Since Ringo Starr *is* Richard Starkey, whatever is true of Ringo Starr is true of Richard Starkey. Likewise:

- 9) Ringo Starr is a musician
- 10) ∴ There exists something that is a musician

And clearly (9)-(10) is valid. Since we say truthfully that Ringo Starr is a musician, it follows that something exists that is a musician. So far, so good.

Now consider invalid cases. Using the same examples for (a) and (b), plug in the complex predicate 'Steve believes that (x) is a musician'. (Of course, this is more properly a uni-directional two-place predicate, but we can abbreviate here for simplicity's sake.) Thus:

- 11) Ringo Starr = Richard Starkey
- 12) Steve believes that Ringo Starr is a musician
- 13) ∴ Steve believes that Richard Starkey is a musician

The argument is invalid, since (11) does not establish that 'Steve believes that Ringo Starr = Richard Starkey'. Then (12) can be true and (13) false. Furthermore:

- 14) Steve believes that Ringo Starr is a musician
- 15) ∴ There exists something that Steve believes is a musician

In this case, the argument does not go through and (15) is meaningless, for Quine (1961, p. 145, although note: these are my examples!). Informally, we know that simply believing something does not make it exist. Formally, we can show that since (12)/(14) are true whereas

(13) can be false *and* that (11) holds, (15) is meaningless (p. 144-50). (15) would assert the existence of something that both has and does not have a property (F) at the same time and the same way: There exists something that Steve believes is a musician and that Steve does not believe is a musician.

It is likewise if we plug 'has ten letters' into (F):

- 16) Ringo Starr = Richard Starkey
- 17) Ringo Starr has ten letters
- 18) ∴ Richard Starkey has ten letters

And

- 19) Ringo Starr has ten letters
- 20) ∴ There exists something that has ten letters

(cf. pp. 139, 147)

(18) is clearly false, and (20) is meaningless, since then the thing which exists both has and does not have ten letters.

Thus, for Quine, the difference is that cases such as (6)-(10) are purely referential, whereas (11)-(15) and (16)-(20) involve referentially opaque contexts. The contexts in the latter examples relate to belief and the nature of words themselves. Other cases of referential opacity include: awareness/unawareness, expectation, preference, 'says that...', 'knows that...', 'is surprised that...' etc. (p. 142). In all such cases, we can see that opacity is associated with relationships between subjects and propositions, or the constitution of propositions or names (in the case of '(x) has *n* letters') *not* a pure relationship of reference between a proposition and the object domain. Thus, the latter cases cannot be ontologically committal.

Quine's argument is that statements in modal contexts are like the latter cases: *referentially opaque*. Further, modalised *statements* (where the modal governs the quantifier) are the only meaningful use of modality, and really amount to analyticity, which is itself just a matter of specification (pp. 143, 151). *De re* modal claims (which quantify past the modal) are for Quine, highly suspect, since they assume 'Aristotelian essentialism', the assumption that objects possess modal properties, *and* that what (for him) amounts to a manner of specifying an object is true of the object itself (p. 155; cf. 1948, p. 4; 1951 p. 22). This displays an 'invidious attitude', for Quine (1961, p. 155), since it pretends to *read off* a distinction between the essential and accidental properties of objects, when the distinction is in fact *read into* reality

using a set of criteria or ‘background groupings’ that are not objective. It amounts to the objectification of prejudices, as if one’s preferences determine the nature of objects, without offering up any objective grounding for those preferences. Since quantified modal logic permits us to quantify past modal operators, thereby assuming ‘Aristotelian essentialism’, it must be rejected, for Quine (*ibid.*).

Quine on the referential opacity of modal predication

Quine’s argument for the referential opacity of modal contexts can be rendered thus:

- 21) 9 = the number of planets³⁵
- 22) 9 is necessarily greater than 7
- 23) ∴ The number of planets is necessarily greater than 7

And

- 24) 9 is necessarily greater than 7
- 25) ∴ There exists something that is necessarily greater than 7

(Quine’s examples. 1961, pp. 143-50.)

(21)-(23) is invalid since, intuitively, it is possible for the number of planets to be fewer than 7, so (23) is false where (21) and (22) are true. Then (25) is meaningless, since it would assert that there is something about which it is both true and false to say that it is necessarily greater than 7 (given (21)). Modal contexts are referentially opaque too. Thus, modals cannot be treated as real, mind-independent traits of objects.

For Quine, we can make sense of modal claims by treating them as statements of analyticity, attaching to statements (i.e. modality *de dicto*). A statement is necessarily true iff ‘necessarily...’ governs a statement that is analytic, i.e. true in virtue of its meaning (p. 143). A statement is possibly false iff ‘possibly...’ governs a statement that is analytic when negated (*ibid.*). (In other words, a statement is possibly true iff it is not analytic that the statement that ‘possibly...’ governs is negated.) This means that modality relates to the meaning of our statements, and is therefore referentially opaque. Indeed:

- 26) 9 = the number of planets
- 27) “9 is greater than 7” is analytic

³⁵Currently, there is debate about the number of planets. But this doesn’t affect the crucial point. Just alter the argument *mutatis mutandis* to fit the accepted facts.

28) ∴ “the number of planets is greater than 7” is analytic

(*ibid.*)

is obviously fallacious, since (28) is false where the others are true.

It is fine to speak of modals as abbreviations for claims about analyticity, for Quine. But they are referentially opaque contexts and relate, ultimately, to the manner in which a statement is specified. Consider Quine’s case of the cycling mathematician. *Prima facie*, analytically, as a mathematician she is rational. Analytically, as a cyclist she is bipedal. But as a mathematician cyclist is she analytically (or ‘necessarily’ or ‘essentially’) rational and accidentally bipedal? Or is she analytically (or ‘necessarily’ or ‘essentially’) two-legged and accidentally rational? Or is she essentially or accidentally both rational and two-legged? It seems that we could argue a case for either answer, depending how we choose to specify the statement. (Quine 1960, p. 199; cf. Beebee and Macbride 2015, p. 215.)

To take the contrary view and treat modals as properties of objects (i.e. modality *de re*) is, as explained above, to presume ‘Aristotelian essentialism’ and ‘gild and stain’ (to use a Humean expression) our experiences with background prejudices, without objective justification. Instead, we can countenance talk of modality *de dicto*, since it amounts to analyticity, relating to meaning, not to objects. ‘Meaning is what essence becomes when it is divorced from the object of reference and wedded to the word’ (Quine 1951, p. 22). Thus, for Quine, we must reject *de re* modality, Aristotelian essentialism and quantified modal logic:

The upshot of these reflections is meant to be that the way to do quantified modal logic, if at all, is to accept Aristotelian essentialism. To defend Aristotelian essentialism, however, is not part of my plan. Such a philosophy is ... unreasonable.... And in conclusion I say.....: so much the worse for quantified modal logic. (1961, p. 156)

Instead, we ought to restrict modality to *de dicto* forms. And this would also amount to rejecting PWs to boot:

... we can limit modalities to whole statements. We may impose the adverb ‘possibly’ upon a statement as a whole, and we may well worry about the semantical analysis of such usage; but little real advance in such analysis is to be hoped for in expanding our universe to include so-called *possible entities*. I suspect that the main motive for this expansion is simply the old notion that Pegasus, for example, must be because otherwise it would be nonsense to say even that he is not. (1948, p. 4)

And Quine has already shown, via Russell, how to invalidate that inference.

Implications of Quine's argument for T

As established in Chapters II to V, ideologies are full of modal claims, but these are in competition. With respect to human nature in particular: the socialist tends to hold that humans are essentially communal, hospitable, active and creative, and capable of development, equality and welfare; for the liberal (on the analysis offered in Chapter V), humans are essentially rational and individual and capable of development, sociability, invention; for the conservative (generally) humans are essentially conflicted, emotional, intuitive, often wretched and sinful, but communal and capable of harm, evil or compassion, stability and peace (citations provided above).³⁶

It seems quite reasonable to claim that ideologies assert such things as true of human beings (of all instances in the extension of the general term 'human being'), *as if* they are purely referential, and entail real, mind-independent facts. But note: the fact of disagreement between ideological positions already suggests things are not straightforward, since the views are incompatible. Either some are false, or all are. Furthermore, the modal nature of these concepts appears both central and problematic. They are central because, the socialist, for e.g., doesn't merely say that people are communal, creative, etc. She wants to emphasise the characteristics as central, grounding or crucial, and the attribution of essence certainly does that. However, this is also problematic. In PW terms, an object has a property essentially if it has that property in every PW (or 'counterfactual situation') in which it exists. If we read 'essence' as alethic, then everybody has the property in the actual world too (cf. Divers 2002, pp. 6-10; Lewis 1973, p. 8). But, manifestly people are not all communal and creative. However, that presupposes a misinterpretation of the socialist. Instead, hospitality and creativity are essential *potentials* or *possibilities*, for them. (Analogous points can be made for other conceptions of human nature.) However, this again is problematic, since, intuitively, humans have many potentials. How can we establish which are the necessary potentials, if such things are to be true and purely referential? (The issue is further complicated by the fact that many modal philosophers accept the axiom S5 that holds that *all* possibilities are necessary possibilities.) In context of ideology theory, Quine's view that modal claims are context-dependent appears very persuasive, given the above difficulties.³⁷

³⁶There could well prove some informative overlap here with the pejorative use of 'essentialism' that appears in some contexts (especially in the social sciences) and its association with harmful, unjustifiable attributions. Cf. Dweck (1999) on self-theories of intelligence, Haslanger (2000) on gender and race, and perhaps even Parfit (1984) on personal identity.

³⁷As discussed above, ideologies can treat essences as non-alethic, since concepts such as 'essence' and 'nature' can be used normatively. This is particularly apparent in the concept of 'alienation'. Thus, for early Marx, of course, within capitalist society, one is alienated from one's nature as a productive and communal being by producing materials that sustain a system that is exploitative and isolates individuals from each other (eg. Marx 1844, p. 102). This suggests that, in all PWs where human nature is realised, people do such and such, but the

If Quine is right (and I am right that ideologies are full of modals, such as human essence, which play a central part) then ideologies are nothing more than rather sophisticated, mind-dependent socio-political preferences or attitudes. Note also, however, that if Quine is right, this also means that many mundane beliefs are nothing more than prejudices too, such as the belief that this laptop would survive a software upgrade but not a visit from the sledgehammer (cf. Paul 2006, p. 333-34). After all, essence and accident feature pervasively in our everyday perceptions and assignments of persistence and identity conditions to objects (as discussed in Chapter I) (cf. Paul *ibid*; Strawson 1982; Siegel 2010; Gregory 2015). This raises the question how they can be eliminated or, alternatively, accounted for and Quine's powerful objection rebutted.

We can conclude at this juncture that Quine launches a formidable attack on *de re* modality and essentialism. *Prima facie*, this is highly plausible for IMs, but radical for mundane modals. Regarding the former, it is quite commonplace to think of ideologies as reducible to individual preferences and attitudes. Quine's analysis allows that ideological imputations of essential and accidental properties to human beings and societies must be treated as *subjects*, and not *grounds* for debate. This in itself offers significant dialectical advantage for ideology discourse: we should exercise suspicion about and seek explanations for our conversational partner's ideological *de re* modal predications. The latter are downstream of some set of background groupings that feed them. Furthermore, the insistence that modality is determined by 'background groupings' can be strengthened in the context of ideology theory. For Freedman (1996, 2003, 2006, 2013), ideologies serve to motivate action, evaluate institutions and integrate individuals to existing conditions or promote change. An elaboration of details for each ideology might well explain the background groupings behind IMs.

That, by contrast, this is a radical claim for everyday perception and belief raises questions about a distinction between mundane and ideological modality. If Quine is right, it may be that there is a more direct continuity between ideology and everyday perception, challenging the distinction between the two that I proposed in Chapter II and suggesting an extreme relativism. I do not suggest that Quine champions extreme relativism, but that results from his argument *plus* an acknowledgement that essence and accident determine the identity and persistence conditions of objects (but note: this has been debated, see Gregory 2015). The Quinean response, of course, would be to recommend pragmatic solutions (cf. the recent debate on mereology, van Inwagen 1990; discussed in Dorr 2005, Paul 2006, pp. 358-366.). A second possibility is that Quine is wrong and essences apply to mundane and ideological 'objects'. On that view, it does not come down to preference. Some statements are true and

actual world is not one of those worlds. Similar observations can be made about the Stoic maxim to 'act according to nature'.

some false. That would make some ideological attributions true and others false. Again, there would be a more direct continuity between mundane and ideological modality, but our understanding of ideology would then be modified. A third possibility is that there is a discontinuity between mundane and ideological modality (as claimed in Chapter II); there are errors in Quine's analysis but it is instructive in the context of ideology. We speak correctly of *de re* modality in context of everyday perception but not so in the context of ideology. But then the discontinuity would have to be explained. The apparent difference in consensus between mundane intuitions and ideological intuitions could be adduced in support of this possibility. Much of that will depend on an assessment of the strength of objections to Quine.

A natural place to begin is with the objection that Quine's proposed restriction of modality to *de dicto* cases entails an implausibly extreme revision of quotidian thought and expression. A strong and influential advocate of this objection can be found in the celebrated work of Saul Kripke.

Kripkean essentialism

Since Quine, there has been a wealth of work in modal logic and modal philosophy that assumes the intelligibility of quantified modal logic and the *de re* modals it utilises (see overviews in Loux 1979b, pp. 9-64, Lewis 1986a pp. 17-20 and Divers 2002, pp. 36-39) (although this is far from uncontroversial). This received an enormous boon from the publication of completeness theorems for first-order quantified modal logic using PW analysis, by a variety of authors in the 1950s and 60s (as discussed in Chapter I). Further, the assumption of mind-independent essences and distinctions between modal properties has received enthusiastic support from philosophers such as Alvin Plantinga (1976), David Wiggins (2001) and Saul Kripke (1971, 1981), who all point to the perfectly commonplace and intuitive nature of such assumptions. Together, these arguments appear to give the lie to Quine's otherwise compelling objections.

The early pages of Kripke's celebrated *Naming and Necessity* (1981) summarise the Quinean position (pp. 39-41). But Kripke is in fundamental disagreement with that line of argument:

...[I]t is very far from being true that this idea [that a property can meaningfully be held to be essential or accidental to an object independently of its description] is a notion which has no intuitive content, which means nothing to the ordinary man. Suppose that someone said, pointing to Nixon, 'That's the guy who might have lost'. Someone else says 'Oh no, if you describe him as "Nixon", then he might have lost; but, of course, describing him as the winner, then it is not true that he might have lost'. Now which one

is being the philosopher here, the unintuitive man? It seems to me obviously to be the second. The second man has a philosophical theory. (p. 41)

When we attribute possibilities and capacities to people and things, we really do mean to point out true modal facts about them, not merely to specify features or emphasise our own preferences in this or that way. Thus, Quine's proposed reduction amounts to a poor explanation and fails to save the appearances of commonplace discourse. (We can perhaps say this at least for everyday thought, but whether that carries forward into ideology discourse is another matter.)

This objection presents problems for Quine on his own terms, since for Quine we are apparently ontologically committed to existential generalisations that are unavoidable and cannot be paraphrased away into more desirable locutions. Quine:

...[W]hen we say that some zoological species are cross-fertile [for example] we are committing ourselves to recognizing as entities the several species themselves, abstract though they are. We remain so committed at least until we devise some way of paraphrasing the statement as to show that the seeming reference to the species on the part of our bound variable was an avoidable manner of speaking. (1948, p. 13.)

But Kripke has provided examples whereby *de re* modal predication might also prove an unavoidable way of speaking.

L. A. Paul (2006) pushes the point further, effectively backing up the reflections on mundane modality offered in Chapter II, above. She points out that we obviously attribute individuation and persistence conditions to objects. These attributions are tightly bound up with judgements about how objects must, can and cannot be. In commonplace thought and perception, essence, potential and accident are absolute, mind-independent properties. Thus, for Paul,

... [b]ecause we think of the world as full of numerically distinct objects that have unique and absolute modal persistence conditions, [...] essentialism does the best job of capturing the way we want to make sense of the world and the ordinary objects it contains. (p. 333)

Kripke and Paul are rejecting Quine's semantic reduction of *de re* modals to 'background groupings' and specification priorities. They are also objecting to Quine's metaphysical rejection of essentialism. Essentialism holds up and it does so because our pre-philosophical

intuitions support it. (This carries, recall, conceptual and semantic implications (cf. Kripke 1971)). Aristotelian essentialism, it appears, is back on the table.

This is instructive for ideology theory too, since ideologies appear to be shot through with *de re* modal claims. Certainly, *what* modal attributes are correct is a matter of debate, but it seems less contentious that, ideologically, there are modal attributes of *some* kind.

The point is made well by some observations in Goodwin and Taylor (2009, p. 65):

Although many theorists would now contend that ‘human essence’, ‘motives’, ‘natural laws’ and other similar abstract absolutes are theoretical artifices with little relation to human reality, which is relative and ever-changing, they have yet to show that a normative theory can be erected without such props, since ideals must have some human reference point.

Ideologies are normative systems, with (explicit or implicit) utopian components,³⁸ in which some notion of a good society is tied to some notion of human essences and potentials (cf. Adams 1989, pp. 89-94). Arguably, some ideologies will explicitly oppose the notion of human nature (under a particular understanding), as in Owen’s ‘doctrine of circumstances’ (Owen 1813; cf. Brown 2013, p. 366) but even then, there is some (at least implicit) reference to how things would and could be for human beings. Thus, we have an irrevocability argument for *de re* IMs. In itself, however, this does not licence realist conclusions about IMs. As Barry Stroud argues in a recent monograph (2011), the irrevocability of certain opinions does not guarantee their objectivity, only that we cannot think without them. In fact, for Stroud, this can only result in ‘metaphysical dissatisfaction’, since the indispensability of certain concepts makes inaccessible an independent perspective from which to judge their veracity. In our case, however, the task is to establish methodological goals for T, and the pervasiveness of *de re* IMs at the very least suggests they should not (or could not) be ruled out *simpliciter*.

Note, that Kripke would support these contentions, but his claim is much stronger. There *are* essences in the world. Note that there is an intuitionist epistemology at work here, underpinning Kripke’s metaphysical claims, and it would be worth quoting him once more on this point:

If someone thinks that the notion of a necessary or contingent property... is a philosopher’s notion with no intuitive content, he is wrong. Of course, some philosophers think that something’s having intuitive content is very inconclusive evidence in favour of it. I think it is very heavy evidence in favour of anything myself. I really don’t know, in a

³⁸As established in Chapter III and in the previous section of this Chapter.

way, what more conclusive evidence one can have about anything, ultimately speaking. But, in any event, people who think the notion of accidental property unintuitive have intuition reversed, I think. (1981, pp. 41-42)

There are two important theses condensed into this short passage. Kripke is staking claims as to what our intuitions are *and* as to the semantics of such intuitions. The latter advances an epistemology which is provided little explicit defence in Kripke, but it is very important to recognise the heavy philosophical work that is being claimed for it. Kripke appears to insist that our strong intuitions provide evidence that the world (independent of intuition) is a certain way. By advancing intelligible examples of *de re* modal attributions that feature widely in common thought, Kripke is arguing both for the intelligibility of such attributions and, *contra* Quine, the Aristotelian essentialism they suggest.

Kripke can also reject the Quinean complaint about the unintelligibility of existential modal attributions, due to his (Kripke's) celebrated theory of the rigid designation of proper names (or kind terms), i.e. that proper names pick out the same objects (or kinds) in every PW (1981, pp. 3ff). This is in opposition to the Russellian theory of descriptions that underpins Quine's argument. Thus, on the latter account, by 'Ringo Starr' I might mean 'the drummer of the Beatles, songwriter of 'Octopus's Garden', lead singer on 'Yellow Submarine', etc. For variety, let's change the example to 'Timothy Williamson'. By 'Timothy Williamson' I might mean something like 'The current Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford University, and author of *Modal Logic as Metaphysics, The Philosophy of Philosophy, Vagueness, etc.*'. The great plausibility of this theory (which Kripke acknowledges) is due to the fact that the latter description uniquely picks out Timothy Williamson in this world. It could not describe any other actual person, living or dead. Note that in that case the proper name is reducible to something entirely *qualitative*: a description, or collection of facts. However, Kripke would insist, the description does not pick out Timothy Williamson in every PW.

Consider:

29) Timothy Williamson is adept at logic

For Kripke the name 'Timothy Williamson' (or the way we use that name) picks out the same individual in every PW. To understand the word involves understanding the truth-conditions in the actual world and in every counterfactual situation. (29) is true in this world. However, (29) may be false in other worlds since it is true *of* Timothy Williamson that he might not have learnt logic.

However,

30) The author of *Modal Logic as Metaphysics* is adept at logic

(cf. Kripke 1981, p. 6) has different truth-conditions to (29). (30) would intuitively be true in PWs in which (29) is false. These provide examples that invalidate (1)-(3), above.

Consider another case:

31) Timothy Williamson is the author of *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*

32) Necessarily, Timothy Williamson is Timothy Williamson

33) \therefore Necessarily, Timothy Williamson is the author of *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*

This is also invalid. If Williamson had not authored *Modal Logic as Metaphysics* (for example) he would still be Timothy Williamson.

So far, the modal argument is analogous to the Quinean point about referential opacity in modal contexts. However, observes Kripke, the opacity results from adopting the theory of descriptions (p. 7ff). For Kripke, proper names pick out the same object in every PW, whereas unique descriptions do not (pp. 48-9ff). The latter merely provide a contingent, actual world context within which we *find* the object, rigidly designated by a proper name. With rigid designation, we understand something in some non-qualitative, non-fact stating kind of way.

Thus, we can only say that

34) $a=b$

35) Necessarily Fa

36) \therefore Necessarily Fb

(p. 3; 1971, p. 519) is valid when 'a' and 'b' are rigid designators. 'Timothy Williamson' is a rigid designator, whereas 'The author of *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*' is not. Likewise, since, in Quine's example '9' is a rigid designator while 'the number of planets' is not, it is true that 9 is necessarily greater than 7 while it does not follow that the number of planets is necessarily greater, but this does not come down to a difference of specification or prioritising of favoured qualities. The difference can be accounted by the fact that one term is rigidly designating when the other is not (1981, p. 40). Compare

37) Hesperus is Phosphorus

38) Necessarily Hesperus is the Planet Venus

39) \therefore Necessarily Phosphorus is the Planet Venus

(pp. 57-59). From which it follows that

40) Necessarily Fa

41) \therefore There exists an (x) such that necessarily Fx

(pp. 65ff)

is valid where 'a' is a rigid designator.

Therefore, quantified modal expressions pass Quine's semantic tests when the identical terms are rigid designators. So, we have a way of guaranteeing the pure reference of modalised expressions and explaining away counterexamples. *De re* modals are saved, and so too, it seems, are quantified modal logic and essentialism.

Kripke also needs to say that rigid designation does not ultimately reduce to 'background conditions' but to mind-independent facts (else (18)-(20) would be invalid). To the extent that we can accept that names like 'Timothy Williamson' picks out the same individual in every PW, we seem to accept this fact.

It is also presupposed by the above that

42) Necessarily $a=a$

43) $a=b$

44) \therefore Necessarily $b=a$

(p. 3; 1971, p. 519ff) is valid only when 'a' and 'b' are rigid designators. As can be seen from (42)-(44), identity, properly construed, is necessary. It would not be properly construed if either 'a' or 'b' are not rigid designators, since descriptions such as 'The author of *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*' do not properly pick out the same individual in every PW.

As a response to the Quinean requirement that the essentialist explain just how the distinction between essences and accidents is to be made, Kripke can point to rigid designation. Timothy Williamson is accidentally a philosopher and essentially a human being, since he is not a philosopher in every PW whereas he is a human being in every PW in which he exists. Thus, features such as match of origins and material constitution provide examples of essential properties (1981, pp. 114-5, nn.56-7). Ultimately, the evidential source for these claims, again, is intuition. Kripke also refers to stipulation and points out that we can stipulate (e.g.) that for Timothy Williamson, this or that is a possibility for him (p. 47). The act of stipulation makes it the case. But note that it requires both the thesis of the necessity of identity and essentialism. If essentialism is false then (42)-(44) is invalid and the necessity of identity is false. If the necessity of identity is false then (34)-(36) is invalid.

This might be instructive for a theory of human nature. Kripke insists that rigid designators apply to natural kind terms as well (pp. 106-155), and 'human being' looks like a

natural kind expression if anything is. Thus, human essence and potential ought to be identifiable by rigidly designating human beings and seeking out what applies to human beings in all PWs and what applies in some. How can this be achieved? If we are to appeal to intuition in such matters, one can only point out that intuitions differ significantly between ideological positions. However, Kripke also proposes that, in cases of natural kinds, necessary properties are discernible only *a posteriori*.

The oft-cited example is from Kripke's discussion of the chemical constitution of water (pp. 128ff). Water is H₂O. Furthermore, water is *necessarily* H₂O since 'water' and 'H₂O' are rigid designators. They both pick out the same kind of thing in every PW. Since they are identical, they are identical in every PW. (Note that this requires the thesis of the necessity of identity and essentialism.) However, the chemical constitution of water is an empirical affair, discoverable by scientific observation and experiment. It was not discoverable *a priori* that water has the constitution that it has. Indeed, these speculations support Kripke's rejection of the theory of descriptions. We can imagine an early encounter with water as a cold liquid that fills the rivers, lake, seas, falls out of the sky, is potable, and so forth (p. 128). This is a qualitative description. But the description, even if it uniquely and definitely describes the substance as we have encountered it does not pick out the very stuff itself. Instead – as above – it describes the situation in which it was first encountered (p. 131). After all, we further speculate that it was later discovered that water *can* also be unpotable, frozen, warm or hot, solid or gaseous, etc. Despite a change in these physical characteristics, 'water' still picks out the same substance. The term 'water' also means the same thing. It is implied that there is some deep structure underlying all these qualitative changes. However, once the chemical structure of water was discovered, we learnt something about water. Again, the term still picks out the same substance we have been referring to all along as 'water' and still means the same thing. So we learn about the constitution of water *a posteriori*. We learn *a posteriori* that necessarily water is H₂O (p. 122-6).

Does this assist the search for essential characteristics of human nature? At first sight, it seems not, since there remain conflicting ideological views about human nature. Kripke can reply here that the characteristics may well be there, we just haven't discovered them yet *a posteriori*. Perhaps this can be left to empirical subjects, such as medicine, psychology, sociology and anthropology, to discover. Could that help us decide between ideological views on human nature? Again, this does not appear entirely likely, due to the existing ideological notions of human essence.

Consider the socialist view of human nature: communal, hospitable, active and productive. Construed using rigid designation, we would need to say that in every PW, everything that is a human being is communal, hospitable, active and productive. However, this is evidently not the case, since in the actual world there are people who are not or all or

any of these things. The same goes for other ideological positions. Not everybody is rational (liberalism) or self-seeking and frail (conservatism). Is this a fair way to treat ideological conceptions of human essence? Presumably not, since the socialist, liberal and conservative will want to say that the characteristics they identify are essential possibilities or capacities. Essential capacities. Necessary possibilities. This too is problematic. On Kripke's use of PW, worlds are actual things – abstract ways a world could be (pp. 15-21). There are no unactualized possible individuals (*ibid*). Further, essences are treated like primitive features of reality and CT is rejected. This suggests that the accessibility relations between worlds on the Kripkean model are equivalent. This supplies a tight logic and validates the modal principle S5, according to which 'possibly P' entails 'necessarily possibly P'. That means necessary possibilities are just possibilities. Clearly, from every side of the ideological divide, we can identify all kinds of possibilities. What could grant the additional quality of necessity to any of these possibilities? The Kripkean approach appears unhelpful here. That would seem to suggest that ideological views of human nature are just human possibilities that are prioritised for some additional reason. It is not clear how T could assist in this case.

There are other difficulties with Kripke's approach that are amplified from the point of view of IM. One relates to Kripke's essentialism and his epistemological reliance on intuition, and a problem with this approach discussed by Michael Della Rocca (2002). Recall that Kripke wants to assert the necessity of identity. This comes down to the theory of rigid designation. If two rigidly designating terms are identical they must be necessarily identical, since they pick out the same thing in every PW. This is based on the idea that it is just intuitive that this be so (Della Rocca 2002, p. 234-5; Kripke 1981, p. 103). And it is intuitive that 'Timothy Williamson' picks out the same individual in every PW. Furthermore, we also wish to assert possibilities for Williamson. He could have become a biologist, for example. Again, intuition (or stipulation) makes this so. In either case, these facts are determined by intuition, which is the last court of appeal. But they are not *grounded* in intuition, since they are true modal facts about things, independent of our perceptions. They are grounded in fact. Or else: they are grounded in intuition and intuition is a foundational, non-theory-laden epistemic faculty, grounded in reality (Kripke 1981, p. 42). The strength of our intuitions makes things the case. *This* however, is itself problematic since, first, some intuitions can change between individuals. It would be a statistical matter what intuitions are most prevalent amongst the population (and research in experimental philosophy *suggests* this is a very variable affair (Machery *et al.* 2004)). It is also highly debatable that our intuiting something guarantees the truth of that thing. Further, it is questionable whether this is really what scientific investigation of kinds involves, or if this is the best explanation of our linguistic intuitions. On a Lewisian account (as explained below), everyday thought permits the rigid designation of cases that apparently permit contingent

identities (Lewis 1986a, pp. 248-263). An additional problem, cited by Divers (2002, pp. 273-74), with Kripke is that we can make conflicting stipulations about modal properties.

Kripke wants to say that, when we pick out a thing in the world, that thing will have properties essentially or accidentally. This is not given by the manner in which we find the thing. Perhaps we first encounter water, say this stuff in a stream, as a cold liquid that we can drink. But this description doesn't determine the *meaning* of water. Meanings are analytic: i.e. necessary and *a priori*. Necessity is metaphysical, concerning the real nature of things. *Apriority* is epistemological, concerning our knowledge of things. The meaning of 'water' is not necessarily 'cold liquid that we can drink', because, as we have found out, water is not always cold, it is not always liquid and it is not always drinkable. Similar cases can be adduced of initial meetings with individuals. We might recount 'Will was Julie's partner, who we met around Hannah and Al's house. He was the one in the doorway with the bottle of wine.' Now, nothing in the description relates anything *necessary* about Will, nor does it involve stipulating by fiat what the word 'Will', or the description made of him, is to pick out. No, the description just provides a qualitative context within which we pick out the reference. That reference, designated rigidly, picks out 'the same individual in every PW'. There is this person, Will, who could have done a number of things. The description, by contrast, is not a rigid designator, since Will does not do such things in every PW. He might never have gone to Hannah and Al's or he might not have brought wine, or stood in the doorway, etc. Interestingly, notes Kripke, we find it much easier to do this for people than we do for natural kinds (1981, pp. 127). When it comes to water, we pick out that category of stuff in every PW. What is true of it is determined by scientific investigation. Molecular chemistry teaches the composition of water is two hydrogen atoms bonded to one oxygen atom. 'Dihydrogen monoxide' is itself a rigid designator. This is more than a mere description of water, then, since it is part of the internal structure of water, something that we find out in studying *this stuff* that we first discovered in our initial qualitative context. 'Water is H₂O' therefore is necessary. But, since we didn't come to this view by stipulative fiat, or by way of innate knowledge, it is a necessary *a posteriori* fact. We had to learn that this is the case.

So, then it cannot be possible that 'Water is not H₂O'. Once we have discovered that water is H₂O, that is what it is, necessarily so.³⁹ But since we cannot discover that without empirical investigation and study, it is *a posteriori* that water is necessarily H₂O. It is true *of* water that there is no PW in which it is not H₂O. 'Water' and 'H₂O' are both rigid designators.

³⁹The example is not ideal, since, as Lowe 2013 observes, 'any sample of pure water contains OH⁻ and H₃O⁺ ions as well as H₂O molecules' (p. 920). What's worse, as Putnam 1983 points out (pp. 63-64), a substance such as H₂₀O₁₀ that does not actually exist but would have very similar properties could intuitively be designated 'water'. I will address similar concerns to these below.

If they are identical, they both pick out the same object in every PW. Then they express a non-trivial identity statement, and this, insists Kripke, can only be a necessary affair, since if it were not, we would not be talking about identity, rigid designation, or the same thing (pp. 128-155, esp. pp. 140-41)). So, identity is always identical (a point that Lewis and others contest (Lewis 1971, 1986a, pp. 248-263)).

But this presents further problems for the conceivability-possibility link (discussed in Chapter III). It is conceivable (and therefore intuitible) that water is not H₂O (Della Rocca 2002, p. 235). After all, it was a matter of investigation to discover what water actually is. Conceivably, it could have been otherwise.⁴⁰ So conceivably it could have been otherwise, but in fact it couldn't be that water is H₂O. This is problematic since Kripke, recall, asserts the strength of modal intuition as a source of evidence. Recall Kripke's words:

[S]ome philosophers think that something's having intuitive content is very inconclusive evidence in favour of it. I think it is very heavy evidence in favour of anything, myself. I really don't know, in a way, what more conclusive evidence one can have about anything, ultimately speaking. (1981, p. 42)

Kripke's insistence on the reliability of our modal intuitions seems at odds with the theory of necessary *aposteriority*, such as the 'Water is H₂O' case, since the denial of such instances is conceivable (and hence intuitive) but, metaphysically, the denial of such instances is impossible (Della Rocca *op cit*). So, there is no more conclusive evidence than intuition, except when it comes to intuitions that turn out to be metaphysical impossibilities, which, judging by the volume of supposed natural kinds and other putative essential facts about individuals, are pervasive and habitual.

Kripke's response is that, in such cases, we ought to handle our intuitions (Della Rocca 2002, p. 236). 'Water is not H₂O' is conceivable as an *epistemic situation* (Kripke 1981, p. 104, 141-43). That is, given the qualitative epistemic situation in which we find ourselves, the thing that we think of as 'water' is compatible with a range of other identifications. Water might have been XYZ, e.g., to cite the canonical counter-instance. According to Kripke, what our intuition *really* captures is the qualitative description we give to water, i.e. the potable liquid that fills the rivers, lakes, seas, streams, comes out the tap, and so forth. That description is itself not rigidly designating, 'The potable liquid [... etc.] is H₂O' is not an identity statement about two rigid designators, so does not state a necessary truth. So, it is contingent that 'The potable liquid [... etc.] is H₂O' and its denial is intuitively conceivably the case and metaphysically

⁴⁰It is this particular form of conceivability-possibility gap that spurred Chalmers and Frank Jackson to develop a 'two-dimensional semantics'. This involves Chalmers' distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' conceivability (Chalmers and Jackson 2001. See also Gendler and Hawthorne 2002 and Chalmers 2002).

possible. By contrast 'Water is H₂O' conceived as an identity statement between rigid designators is necessary, and so couldn't be otherwise. From a *metaphysical situation*, 'Water is not H₂O' is unintuitive, according to Kripke (*ibid.*).

How can we tell the difference between metaphysical and epistemic situations? That is guaranteed by the necessity of identity, which in turn is guaranteed by essentialism. Where we can say that there is a necessary identity, such as that water is H₂O, we can be sure that it is a metaphysical situation. But we need first to know whether it is a metaphysical situation in order to judge that it is a nontrivial necessary identity statement! In turn, we can be sure that there is nontrivial necessary identity because objects have essential properties independent of our referring to them. How can we know this? From intuitions, which, in metaphysical situations, pick them out (Della Rocca 2002 pp. 240-241, 246-50). As Della Rocca points out, Kripke is reasoning in a circle. Kripke's choice of one category of intuitions over another to support essentialism is theory-laden, since the presumption of essence is what enables the distinction between intuitions! (*Ibid.*)

Kripke accepts that, when it comes to intuitions of 'epistemic situations', a different form of analysis (the qualitative analysis afforded by CT – elaborated below) is the correct approach (Della Rocca 2002, p. 238; Kripke 1981, p. 142). Now, with regard to ideology analysis, we are presented with *de re* modal claims: about human beings (as a natural kind), about societies and about individuals, amongst other things. Kripke, then, has not provided a means for deciding, in advance, whether such claims amount to *metaphysical situations*, that is identity statements between rigid designators. If Kripke is right about such statements, then we would require further argument to show which such statements actually do satisfy that designation. Ideologies are in dispute. The essential nature of people is in dispute, ideologically. So, to foreclose in advance which attributions of essence and accident are acceptable (and which intuitions are not theory-laden and reliably strong) would return true and false values for sentences with IMs, which cannot be decided using Kripke's theory.

Perhaps we could defend Kripke and insist that his theory is immune to anything we wish to say re. ideology. Kripke is just not concerned about such things. However, first of all, then, if Kripke's theory is immune, it isn't much help for us, so we would default to some other approach. Furthermore, that would seem much like special pleading, since ideologies often do lay claim to scientific and ontological status, insisting upon the essential and accidental natures of people and things. The only way, perceivably, we can handle such *differences* is to give them clear expression, and that, it appears, is only possible using a theory which doesn't distinguish in advance between 'metaphysical' and 'epistemic situations'. To move beyond this point would require further argument.

Perhaps Kripke's theory can help out when it comes to deciding between good and bad cases, but that would have to come *after* elaborating the differences, in accordance with the goals presented above, and pursuing the options.

A consequence here is that if we wish to speak of the necessity and possibility of things, we can only speak confidently about epistemic situations. However, epistemic situations apparently (and ultimately) amount to nothing more than a special category of *de dicto* modality. Suppose I conceive that water might not have been H₂O. Then, I am considering epistemically exact conditions with different underlying causes and conditions. So, I hold a picture fixed in my mind, a picture that saves the current qualitative, descriptive appearances of the world around me but alters the underlying causes and conditions. For Kripke to maintain the concept of the necessary *a posteriori*, this latter imaginary exercise cannot hold individual *objects* in the world fixed. Instead, it clamps down the current world *as it appears* and accesses other PWs with the same appearance. So, I am then thinking of possibilities *de dicto*, not *de re*. Then, we are no longer talking about essence at all. Della Rocca has provided a compelling critique of the reliability of intuitions behind metaphysical intuitions, leaving us, it seems, only with the plausibility of epistemic conceivability. As a result, it seems that Kripkean semantics cannot deliver the insights about *de re* modals that were its principal motivation.

Implications of Kripke's theory for T

There is an essentialist presupposition underlying Kripke's metaphysics that seems intolerable, certainly from the point of view of ideology theory. Kripke wants to beg the question in favour of intuitions that ought to be open to question re. ideology analysis. This would suggest a return to the Quinean argument that attributions of essence are invidious reifications of preferences, or 'background groupings'. In Kripke's case, we can look to the particular examples he adduces as essential properties, e.g. underlying structures, material constitution, match of origins, and view these – contra Kripke, pro Quine – as preferences locked in by a particular view of the world. If this is right, Kripke's theory certainly doesn't come to nought. For *Naming and Necessity* provides a very lucid account of our common modal intuitions and a compelling rejoinder to Quine. Kripke's arguments break down, if at all, only after analysis. If Della Rocca's critique holds up, and we are right to view this as a strong, ultimately Quinean objection to Kripke, then Kripke's metaphysics can show us just how powerful are the elements of language, context, tradition, convention, and sense. Then our notions of essence sit on the sharp end of a large conceptual wedge - rigid designation - thrust into our perceptions of the world by way of 'background groupings', but this time understood as referentially opaque and relative *social* preferences, etc. Our use of T would generate an understanding of the conditions constraining or selecting PWs turning around the end of the wedge.

We must conclude, then, that Kripke's arguments do *not* establish that T should assume essentialism. This reinforces the default status of anti-essentialism and the contingency of identity (*in this context*). However, one thing that Kripke's argument does bring out quite forcefully is the prevalence of *de re* modality within everyday thought *and* ideologies. Then *de re* modal predication still has some weight, though Kripke's philosophy appears ill-equipped to explain it.

Lewisian anti-essentialism

A useful point of departure for the discussion of the Lewisian position is some counterexamples to Kripke. (Lewis rarely addresses his criticisms to Kripke directly, but there is clearly profound disagreement between them on some crucial issues.) Lewis discusses cases where identity between rigid designators holds contingently. For Lewis, this shows that identity is not always necessary and that *de re* modality is referentially opaque (Lewis 1986a, pp. 248-262). In this sense, Lewis is in agreement with Quine. However, contra Quine, Lewis grants the intelligibility of *de re* modal predications, and seeks to represent them using CT (cf. Lewis 1971 and 1983b).

Lewis sets up one case as follows:

The Great Western Railway ought to have absorbed two other railways early on: the Bristol and Gloucester, and the Birmingham and Gloucester. But it tried to drive too hard a bargain. In 1845 the line from Bristol to Gloucester to Birmingham fell into rival hands. Therefore, after the grouping of railways in 1923, the post-grouping Great Western lacked a part that it might have had. What we know as the Great Western, without the missing line, was the whole of the Great Western; not, as it so easily might have been, a part of a still Greater Western. (1986a, p. 248.)

Lewis names 'GWR-' the railway as it actually is, without the Bristol-Gloucester-Birmingham line, 'GWR' the Great Western Railway, and 'GWR+' the line as it might have been - i.e. GWR- plus the missing Bristol-Gloucester-Birmingham line (*op cit.* p. 249). This, in his view, presents a paradox, which we can render using the pattern of argument introduced by Quine. Thus:

- 45) GWR = GWR-
- 46) Possibly GWR = GWR+
- 47) ∴ Possibly GWR- = GWR+

Now, if these represent purely referential contexts, then the argument ought to be valid. According to Kripke, rigid designators are referentially transparent. Note that we are talking

about *de re* modals here and rigid designators. But the argument is not valid. (45) is true. What we refer to as GWR is GWR-. Since they are identical they are *one thing*. (Else we would be double-counting: there is one Great Western, not two.) (46) is true. It is true *of* the Great Western that it might have incorporated the additional line. However, it is not possible that the Great Western without the line could have been identical with the Great Western with the line. So (47) has to be false. By Quine's criteria, we have a referentially opaque context, but this time using rigid designators. So we have a counterexample to the Kripkean claim that rigidly designating terms provide transparent contexts for *de re* modal predication. For Lewis, contra Kripke, *de re* modal contexts are referentially opaque. However, contra Quine, he holds on to *de re* modality nonetheless: 'Modal predication may be *de re*, yet not referentially transparent' (1971, p. 47).

Though Lewis does not couch things in the same terms, this position also entails that the following is invalid:

48) Possibly GWR = GWR+

49) ∴ There exists an (x) such that possibly GWR+

Otherwise (49) would assert that something exists that is possibly GWR+ *and* GWR- at the same time (since (45) and (46)/(48)). (Cf. Lewis 1986a, p. 253.)

Lewis also references Allan Gibbard's Goliath/Lumpl case (Gibbard 1975; Lewis 1986a, pp. 248, 256; cf. Noonan 2013 p. 135). Goliath is a statue of the giant made of clay. The clay itself is 'Lumpl'. In our world, 'Goliath = Lumpl'. Now, we can say *of* Goliath that had it been rolled into a ball, it would not have survived. We can say *of* Lumpl, had it been rolled into a ball, it would have survived. Furthermore, it is true *of* Goliath that if it had been made of marble, it would have survived. It is false *of* Lumpl that if it had been made of marble it would have survived. 'Goliath' and 'Lumpl' rigidly designate the same individual in every PW. In this world, Goliath and Lumpl are the same thing. Else, we would be guilty of double-counting, and violating plausible conditions of individuation (cf. Paul 2006). But Goliath has possibilities that Lumpl does not share, and vice versa. So then, once again we appear to have cases of contingent identity for rigidly designated terms. (Lewis provides a further analogous example of a washbowl ('dishpan') and a piece of plastic (1986a, pp. 252-53)).

One response to this line of argument is that the above examples do not in fact trade in rigid designators, but definite descriptions, which are known not to pass Quine's test (1986a, p. 250). Not so, however, since the above examples still go through if we speak *of* GWR, GWR- and GWR+, Goliath, Lumpl, the washbowl, the plastic. In each individual case, the designators do (or can be made to) refer to the same thing in every PW. So then, these are real counter-examples to Kripke (Lewis 1986a, pp. 250-51).

But there is inconsistency of identity and referential opacity. For example, Goliath is identical to Lump1 in this world. However, Goliath is distinct from Lump1 in worlds in which Lump1 is rolled into a ball or Goliath is made of something else. But if Goliath *is* Lump1 and the two are rigidly designating, then presumably Goliath couldn't be anything other than Lump1? But no: here is Lump1 in another PW, rolled up into a ball next to Goliath.

One could respond that these are merely artificial examples and can therefore be explained away. Two responses. One: Kripke has to accept the above examples on his terms anyway, since *he* appeals (forcefully) to everyday intuition and intelligibility. Two: we can adduce natural examples too. According to Noonan (2013), Kripke acknowledges natural cases himself in an unpublished lecture (p. 130). Thus, imagine a plant that should have flowered but only produced a stem. (Ignoring the roots) we can rigidly designate the plant with 'Plant'. We can also rigidly designate the stem with 'stem'. Then 'Plant' = 'stem'. However, the plant could have flowered. If so 'Plant' would pick out the stem plus the flowers, whereas the stem could not have. So it is possible for 'Plant' to have flowers, whereas it is not so for 'stem'. Thus 'Plant' = 'stem' but it is still possible that 'Plant' ≠ 'stem'.

These cases apparently undermine Kripke's response to the Quinean challenge. It appears that rigid designation is also vulnerable to contextual pressures and referential opacity. The difference, however, between Lewis and Quine on this point is that Lewis is unwilling to commit *de re* modal predication to the flames.

To reflect on the ideology theory implications of this judgement: Kripke has asserted essentialist claims based on his theory of rigid designation: e.g. material constitution and match of origins are essences and there are various possibilities and potentials, guaranteed by common intuition or stipulation. This is in contrast to form, appearance and so forth. Thus, commonly, we might say that if Hitler had taken a different career, he is still the Hitler we refer to by the name, due to match of origins. If somebody else had behaved as Hitler actually did they would have been 'a Hitler' only in the loose, descriptive, conceptual sense. What we mean by 'Hitler' is the person who has those origins and parts, not what that person ended up doing. It is possible that such an approach can be deployed in ideology theory. Thus, a human being is essentially tied to their biology, to their flesh and bones, even perhaps to their history, country, tradition and so forth (cf. Kripke 1981, nn. 56-57, pp. 114-115). If we undermine this idea, then there is nothing (*a priori* or otherwise) to guarantee the essential nature of match of origins and constitution over another. Thus, in some contexts, Hitler is essentially whoever did those horrendous things in the 1930s and 40s (cf. Lewis 1986a, pp. 251-252ff). If somebody with a different upbringing had done that, *they* would have been Hitler. And, indeed, we *can* think of such a context: one that grants determining power to contextual factors, for example. Further, we can extend this idea to the concept of a person, e.g., under some contexts it may

be sensible to consider the multiple realizability of personhood across various states, e.g. in different types of body, or in different systems, biological, mineral and so forth.

Furthermore, when a lover claims their partner is their *sine qua non*, the essence without which they could not be, they are either buying into the idea that contingent events can make them what they - as individuals, essentially - are (and therefore determining a particular context or background grouping) or they are willing enough to entertain the fiction for effect. Else they are being romantically hyperbolic (which of course is possible).

To look for essence in these contexts is therefore to look for the context-dependent factors that determine them. However, if we maintain - rather than relegate to unintelligibility - *de re* modal predication, we retain a clearer articulation of the position. So, regarding human nature, the socialist, conservative and liberal conceptions could be articulated and compared. Such a method would be toothless at intrinsically deciding between competing positions, but instrumental at spelling out the differences. Further, we could put the teeth in using extrinsic evaluative criteria.

It is clear that Lewis embraces a Quinean form of analysis. As expressed in the following passages:

You could do worse than plunge for the first answer to come into your head, and defend that strenuously. If you did, your answer would be right. For your answer itself would create a context, and the context would select a way of representing, and the way of representing would be such as to make your answer true. (1986a, p. 251)

...I suggest that those philosophers who preach that origins are essential are absolutely right – in the context of their own preaching. They make themselves right: their preaching constitutes a context in which *de re* modality is governed by a way of representing (as I think, by a counterpart relation) that requires match of origins. But if I ask how things would be if Saul Kripke had come from no sperm and egg but had been brought by a stork, that makes equally good sense. I create a context that makes my question make sense, and to do so it has to be a context that makes origins not essential. (p. 252)

So for Lewis, Quine is in a sense right to say that *de re* modal predication is opaque (cf. Lewis 1971 p. 54). However, Lewis elaborates a metaphysics for underpinning the semantics of *de re* modals, so they aren't rejected as unintelligible. Thus, with cases like (45) and (46), we can make both statements come out true, depending on our context. However, as Lewis is keen to acknowledge, self-contradictory or nonsense statements, like (47) and (49) respectively, can never be true. 'Not anything goes, but a great deal does' (p. 8). Further, it is possible to generate purely referential contexts, but those contexts themselves are mind-dependent. For

example, some contexts might determine that GWR is necessarily GWR-. In that case, it is not possible for GWR to be GWR+. Then we can produce valid arguments using rigid designators - but, again only within relative, reference-dependent contexts. This is made possible by Lewis's CT.

Counterpart theory

According to Lewis, there is an infinity of concrete PWs other than our own. A *de dicto* modal statement is made true according to quantifiers over PWs. Possibly there are turquoise sheep iff there is a PW in which there are turquoise sheep. Furthermore, for Lewis, there are inhabitants of PWs. Across PWs, inhabitants stand in C-relations to one another. These are determined by vague relations of similarity. A counterpart of something in this world is suitably similar to that thing and more similar to that thing than anything else in this world. Similarity is a qualitative affair but, again, it is vague. A *de re* modal statement is then made true according to C-relations. The sheep in that field over there could have been turquoise iff there is a (close, relevant) counterpart of that sheep in some PW that is also turquoise (Lewis 1968).

Lewis presents a number of principles for his CT.

- P1. Nothing is in anything except a world
- P2. Nothing is in two worlds
- P3. Whatever is a counterpart is in a world
- P4. Whatever has a counterpart is in a world
- P5. Nothing is a counterpart of anything else in its world
- P6. Anything in a world is a counterpart of itself
- P7. Some world contains all and only actual things
- P8. Something is actual

(*op cit.* p. 27.)

For Lewis, the logic of modality, *de re* and *de dicto*, can be translated in CT. This carries a number of implications for modal logic (1968, pp. 28-29, 36; cf. Divers 2002, pp. 142-44). As Divers points out (p. 143), unqualified CT does not invalidate the *M* principle that necessarily A entails A or the principle that A entails possibly A. Thus, the unqualified C-relation must be reflexive (cf. Lewis 1986a, p. 19; Loux 1979, pp. 21-3). This would agree with the arguably common assumption that if something is necessarily the case, it is a fact and if something is a fact, it is possible. Intuitively, such principles would be shared from the point of view of ideology theory. Note, however, that the principles *would* be invalidated under certain qualifications to CT, e.g. in cases of moral, doxastic or conative modalities. This too is relevant

and instructive for ideology theory. Thus, if A is morally obligatory, it doesn't follow that A is a fact. Say I have a moral obligation to pay all my debts. Paying all my debts doesn't follow as a fact. Likewise, if I am certain of A, or if I desire that A, it doesn't follow that A is the case. As I mentioned in Chapter III, we might well wish to embed the whole of T within some kind of doxastic modality, since ideologies are systems of concepts and beliefs, the conjunction of which cannot all be true.

Beyond this point, a whole raft of modal logical principles are invalidated by CT (for open sentences) (Lewis 1968, p. 36). The (Brouwer) principle that A entails that necessarily possibly A does not hold since the C-relation need not be symmetrical. There may be a counterpart in PW of you and your sibling. Nonetheless, your sibling may resemble the counterpart more than you, so you are not a counterpart of it, although it is a counterpart of you (*ibid.*). Then, A can be actually true, but there is counterpart of A for whom there is no A-counterpart.

The (S4) principle that necessarily A entails necessarily necessarily A does not hold, since the C-relation cannot be transitive. The C-relation is a relation of similarity, and similarity is not transitive (*ibid.*). So then A can be actually true, and A can be true of every counterpart of A, but false of some counterparts of counterparts of A.

From this it follows that the (S5) principle that possibly A entails that necessarily possibly A does not hold, since the C-relation cannot be equivalent (*ibid.*). Equivalence requires symmetry and transitivity. A is true of some of our counterparts but there is a counterpart of one of our counterparts for which A is not true. (Again, note that the above are only invalidated under open sentence interpretations of A).

Further, CT rejects the necessity of identity and the necessity of distinction, since one thing can have two counterparts or two things can have one counterpart (*ibid.*). CT also rejects the Barcan formula but not its converse, amongst others (*ibid.*). These points are addressed in greater detail in Chapter V.

We will have occasion to discuss the implications of this impact on logic in Chapter V. One important point to note here is that CT rejects the necessity of identity. Thus, rigid designation (the importance of which Lewis accepts (1986a, pp. 222)) cannot guarantee for us the necessary properties of objects. Ideologically speaking, given a particular determination of characteristics identical with human beings, say as rational or as communal, it is consistent to say that things might have been otherwise. And this goes through even if we rigidly designate features.

In his early presentation of CT (1968), Lewis holds to a form of essentialism (p. 32-35).

Essentialism is congenial. We do have a way of saying that an attribute is an essential attribute of an object – essential regardless of how the object happens to have been

specified and regardless of whether the attribute follows analytically from any or all specifications of the object. (p. 32)

In fact, here the necessity of identity is denied, and the C-relation is vague, based on relations of similarity *but*, for Lewis (in this earlier essay), relations of similarity are fixed, referentially transparent matters of fact. Whatever counts as an essence is an attribute that something 'shares with all and only its counterparts' (p. 35). This *earlier* version would not support cases such as GWR, which Lewis later gives in (1986a). But nonetheless whatever is an essence is still likely to be a very indeterminate affair. Lewis attests to this point himself in a postscript:

I am by no means offering a wholehearted defense of "Aristotelian essentialism." For the essences of things are settled only to the extent that the counterpart relation is, and the counterpart relation is not very settled at all. Like any relation of comparative overall similarity, it is subject to a great deal of indeterminacy...

...

The upshot is that it is hard to say anything false about essences. For any halfway reasonable statement will tend to create a context that (partially) resolves the vagueness of the counterpart relation in such a way as to make the statement true in that context. So almost anything goes. The true-hearted essentialist might well think me a false friend, a Quinean sceptic in essentialist's clothing. (1983b, p. 42)

Indeed, this point is pushed even further by a revision to CT (1971) that Lewis establishes and retains henceforth (cf. 1986a). The revision is motivated by his desire to maintain the thesis of materialism in philosophy of mind, viz. that it is necessarily the case that people occupy their bodies at a particular time if and only if people are identical with their bodies at a time (1971, p. 47ff). Lewis concedes that it is possible that 'I' and 'my body' might have been distinct. Even the CT rejection of the necessity of identity (see p. 50) and assertion of vagueness of C-relations cannot save Lewis from the self-contradictory conclusion that 'my body' and 'my body' might have been distinct. Since this poses a *reductio* to the materialist thesis, Lewis proposes the following revision of CT. C-relations are to be understood as multiple. There are *real* relations of similarity out there, but they are not of a fixed 'constant' nature. The relations are selected by way of intension and sense. Thus, the C-relation is referentially opaque, determined by context.

...[I]n the present revision of counterpart theory, *de re* modal predications are not in general transparent. Not only the denotation of the subject term matters, but also the counterpart relation it selects. If we substitute another subject term with the same

denotation but different sense, it may change the truth value of the modal predication by selecting a different counterpart relation. Then even though the denoted thing here in our world remains the same, we have a different way of following the fortunes of that thing in other worlds. (p. 54)

Thus, on this version, essentialism is effectively denied but *de re* modal predication maintained. Here then, counterparts may be utilised to express a whole variety of different modal properties, but their expressing them is determined by referentially opaque contextual pressures. There is no feature of the mind-independent world that determines essential facts of the matter. Then, there can be no human nature (understood as human essence and potential). Or better: there are multiple human natures, all dependent upon different context frames. Thus, to decide between conceptions of human nature is not the work of modal philosophy but some other set of criteria. CT can cash out the differences for the purpose of elaboration, and also to obtain some sense of our ideological opponent's perspective and understanding. Further, CT can also rule out certain claims, based on general criteria of reasonability that ought to be central to any theory – as elaborated in Chapter III.

Modal epistemology

Why then should we choose Lewisian CT over the alternatives? A response to the Quinean seems easy to defend: we just do make claims about essence and accident, about swathes of entities in our pretheoretical and theoretical speech and understanding. The proposal that all such locutions ought to be translated into statements of analyticity and preference seems implausibly radical.

But this leaves us with a decision between the stronger, less permissive Kripkean alternative and Lewisian CT. This, it appears, is a matter of modal epistemology, cast in the context of T. More specifically: does how the modal philosopher insists we know accord with how an ideology theory insists we know?

Recall that Kripke's modal epistemology ultimately comes down to an appeal to intuition. Della Rocca's critique provides strong reasons to doubt this approach. We have argued that these doubts are only amplified in the context of T. An acceptance of Kripke's epistemology would issue strong constraints on IMs, ruling out many modal attributions and validating a few. But there are independent philosophical reasons to reject Kripke's modal epistemology, due to the circularity of the essentialism-intuition that he cites in its support. These doubts are increased in the context of T. The ideology theorist does not (or ought not) insist we know how Kripke insists we know. It seems plausible to argue that intuition must be approached by T as an object of analysis rather than a legitimating ground for evaluation, *unless* we can provide independent reasons to accept it. Della Rocca's argument provides some reasons *not* to

accept it. Further, we might accept for evaluative purposes the authority of intuitions that persist across ideological divisions. However, clearly, intuitions about human essence are not going to be of this nature. It is quite plausible that Kripke's intuitions can only support some views of human nature over others. Some, perhaps more radical, ideologies understand human nature as detached from origins or material constitution. Furthermore, Lewis has provided intuitive everyday counterexamples to Kripke's identity statements using rigid designators. Since such counterexamples may plausibly persist across ideological divisions, this too undermines the prospects of a Kripke-style ideology analysis. Thus, the burden at least appears to fall with the objector to Lewis on this score.

It would be worthwhile to compare Lewis's epistemology. Lewis:

...[W]hen all is said and done, and all the tricky arguments and distinctions and counterexamples have been discovered, presumably we still face the question which prices are worth paying, which theories are on balance credible, which are the acceptably counterintuitive ones. On this question we may still differ. And if all is indeed said and done, there will be no hope of discovering still further arguments to settle our differences.

It might be otherwise if ... we had a sharp line between "linguistic intuition," which must be taken as unchallengeable evidence, and philosophical theory, which must at all costs fit this evidence. If that were so, conclusive refutations would be dismayingly abundant. But ... this foundationalist theory ... seems ill-founded in the extreme. Our "intuitions" are simply opinions; our philosophical theories are the same ... and a reasonable goal for a philosopher is to bring them into equilibrium. Our common task is to find out what equilibria there are that can withstand examination, but it remains for each of us to come to rest at one or another of them. If we lose our moorings in everyday common sense, our fault is not that we ignore part of our evidence. Rather ..., we settle for a very inadequate equilibrium. If our official theories disagree with what we cannot help thinking outside the philosophy room, then no real equilibrium has been reached And ... it is safe to say in such a case we will believe a great deal that is false. (Lewis 1983a, p. x)

Contra Kripke, intuitions cannot play a foundational epistemological role, deciding conclusively between good and bad theories. For intuitions are just opinions. But note, Lewis isn't entirely opposed to Kripke here, in that he grants significant priority to everyday opinion. As Nolan (2015) has argued, there is a phenomenal conservatism present in Lewis's thought, holding philosophy to common-sense authority. Take our appeal to cross-ideological intuition as a guide to pre-philosophical belief. We can note that the less controversial of Lewis's claims is

that we must not claim to believe philosophically what we claim not to believe pre-philosophically. That would constitute self-contradictory doublethink. To the extent that philosophers are concerned to avoid such things, it must be avoided. Likewise T, should not assert what is cross-ideologically asserted *without* further argument. The additional claim – implicit above but expressed elsewhere – is that if a ‘hypothesis is serviceable, [...] that is a reason to think that it is true.’ (1986a, p. 3). Then the serviceability of an hypothesis can be a good reason to disagree with pre-philosophical belief (and thus cross-ideological belief). This is clearly more controversial. There are two interpretations we might make here. One: If reality is assumed coherent, we can assume coherence as a necessary epistemic condition for any theory. (Note that this doesn’t imply *coherentism*.) Likewise, for characteristics such as theoretical serviceability. It seems reasonable to insist that, if we can never do any better than satisfy the necessary conditions of a theory (since sufficient conditions are always wanting), then the apparent satisfaction of the former provide good reason to believe a theory is true, if anything is. Two: however, Lewis might be saying that the coherence, serviceability (etc.) characteristics of a theory are *sufficient* to make it true. This appears to be Divers’ interpretation (2002, pp. 149-165). However, it doesn’t fit well with other claims of Lewis’s and is clearly more debatable and less defensible. Consider the following comment at the introduction of 1986a, reflecting Lewis’s Quinean influence:

Nowhere in this book will you find an argument that you must accept the position I favour because there is no alternative. I believe that philosophers who offer such arguments are almost never successful, and philosophers who demand them are mistaken. (viii)

This notably differs from the rather scornful attitude towards opponents detectable in Kripke’s writing (cf. Sider 2006, p. 1). In any case, it would be highly contentious for Lewis to insist that coherence, equilibrium, theoretical application and so forth *guarantee* the truth of a theory. Plus, it does not fit with other epistemological pronouncements in Lewis, such as that quoted above.

Now, Lewis and Kripke are disagreeing over epistemology relative to their modal metaphysics. Our concern is somewhat different, however, regarding the methodological goals for T – to repeat: whether the analysis should be (1) critical-evaluative or (2) explicatory-descriptive. If we can assert essentialism in the context of ideology theory, then (1). If not, then (2). Kripke provides reasons to assert essentialism. Lewis provides reasons not to do so. We have reasons to reject Kripke and support Lewis. In context of modal metaphysics, Kripke is insisting that certain deep-laid and pervasive intuitions guarantee that objects have essential and accidental properties independent of our referring to them. Lewis, by contrast, rejects the consistency of such intuitions *and* the idea that intuition can play such a foundational role. By

contrast, for Lewis, yes, we should accept a lot that passes for common sense, but we have reasons to accept that which fits consistently with our common-sense views (which after all are merely established opinions and nothing more). But common sense 'intuition' is not non-negotiable. We can reject it if a greater deal of theoretical 'serviceability' can be achieved and the loss in common sense is outweighed by these gains (esp. 1986a, pp. 3-5). This, for Lewis, underpins his metaphysics. For us, we are holding the metaphysical question in abeyance and asking questions as to the potential logico-semantic and conceptual gains. Since ideology theory shifts the ground of intuition and 'common sense' even further, it seems even less apparent how these notions can underpin our methodological goals (without further argument). The only apparent means to do this is to locate some intuitions or common sense that persist across ideological divides, and, as we have argued above, Kripke's intuitions plausibly do not. We shall have occasion to consider that possibility in greater detail below. Prior to a clear view of such hardy intuitions, it therefore appears reasonable to use T as a means to *comprehend* the opinions and intuitions that are promoted by ideologies (common sense or not). Then we can sketch out how the different aspects of the theory fit together. Certain views can be rejected for reasons of inconsistency, incoherence or contradiction, i.e. using generalizable criteria of reasonableness. Beyond this, however, Lewisian CT may simply elaborate the differences for means of evaluation by way of independent criteria.

The above produces two questions. One: does Lewisian CT conflict fundamentally with cross-ideological intuitions? If so, should it? Two: since there are in fact AR variants of CT, are they preferable to the alternatives? Recall that we have shelved the metaphysical question until Chapter VI, and the motivations and differences between GCT and ACT are metaphysical. Thus, an answer to the second question will have to wait until the final chapter. In what follows, I address the first question, whether CT challenges cross-ideological intuitions.

§IV.IV Question Two: Mundane vs. ideological modality

Above we provided strong reasons for rejecting Quine and accepting, with Kripke and Lewis, that *de re* modal predication is important. Quine rejects the latter for logical, conceptual and metaphysical reasons. The thrust of the foregoing dialectic compels us to consider the logical and conceptual reasons, observe which metaphysics results then approach that independently, in a separate chapter. We should not accept Quine's rejection of the conceptual resources of essence and accident or his insistence that we should not make inferences about the modal nature of objects, because these are firmly established, pre-philosophical beliefs. Furthermore, they are quite feasibly firmly established, pre-ideological beliefs (if there are such things) – or at least cross-ideological beliefs. Of course, the *contents* may change from ideology to ideology. But the *form* of *de re* modal predication – that some things *would* be destroyed under certain conditions but *could* survive across a range of scenarios – persists.⁴¹ At least, it is quite conceivable that all known political ideologies could agree with such views. After all, all ideologies have some conception of freedom, of a good society and human essence and potential (cf. Freeden 1996). An argument is needed for an ideological position that does not. Thus, we are warranted in the context of a search for T to agree with Kripke and Lewis in opposing the Quinean rejection of *de re* modal predication.

The remaining debate between Kripke and Lewis, then is to be staged in terms of what we can and cannot predicate and infer about modality. We concluded that the search for T tells *against* Kripke's argument, since it rests ultimately on an epistemological appeal to intuition which delimits modal concepts and constrains a tight logic. This stands in need of justification – justification that is apparently not available – since intuition ought itself to be an object of analysis in ideology theory unless we can cite further reasons to respect it. One such reason would be that the intuition is cross-ideological. However, the intuitive cases that Kripke cites are not obviously cross-ideological. Furthermore, in Lewis we find apparently cross-ideological intuitive counterexamples and in Della Rocca we find strong additional points of criticism. This leaves the Lewisian position, which accepts *de re* modal predication, attribution and talk of 'essences and accidents', but denies the essentialist claim that essences and accidents are constant features of the mind-independent world and produces a weak logic that rejects the necessity of identity and a range of other (contested) modal logical principles. The resultant doctrine is modally very permissive, therefore, permitting the articulation of a range

⁴¹Incidentally, this might prove a failing of alternative accounts of modal epistemology (or essence epistemology), e.g. in Fine 1994, Bealer 2002, Williamson 2007 and Lowe 2013. Those (non-equivalent) accounts exploit the fact that there is an apparent *formal* quotidian consensus on modal attributes (i.e. that there are such things), but this does not establish a *substantive* consensus about modal *contents* (i.e. exactly what those things are).

of positions, but the evaluation of none beyond standard criteria of reasoning, i.e. non-contradiction and so forth.

However, some objections may be raised to Lewis's position. The most obvious, of course, is the radical interpretation of PWs according to which PWs are concrete entities laid out in logical space. This is plausibly very cross-ideologically counterintuitive. We have resolved to put such issues on hold until the final chapter, however. We have also argued that Lewisian CT is better placed for T. *However*, there are also AR interpretations of CT, and these can be made compatible with the same conceptual and semantic conclusions of GCT, it seems. Since we are not considering the metaphysical implications until later, we cannot decide between them in this chapter on that particular score. Lewis himself rejects AR generally because it involves (amongst other things) primitive modality (and in some cases, primitive properties, states of affairs, propositions, and so forth) (cf. 1986a, pp. 136-165). There is also an apparent degree of AR primitivism in ACT: *de dicto* modal primitivism. For the ACT, a counterpart is some abstract surrogate (of some kind, see Paul 2006). Counterparts hold by way of qualitative resemblances to their counterpatees. However, an abstract counterpart has no qualities, since it is not a concrete thing. The ACT has to hold that the qualities of counterparts are the qualities they would have had were they actualised. This amounts to a form of *de dicto* modal primitivism. Since we are not concerning ourselves with metaphysical questions until Chapter VI, there is no leverage left to decide between them here. So, at this stage we have to remain agnostic between GCT and ACT, pending an argument that shows one of the two to set unjustifiable constraints on an analysis of IM. For clarity, I will focus on GCT in what follows.

We are not considering the metaphysical implications until later. However, there are some pressing issues that appear on the frontier between semantics and metaphysics that frustrate any clean bracketing-off of metaphysics entirely. The first of these is Kripke's well-known 'Humphrey Objection' (1981, pp. 45, 48-9; cf. Sider 2006). We know that Hubert Humphrey lost the 1968 US presidential election to Richard Nixon. But it is true that Humphrey *might* have won and highly plausible that he since entertained the thought that he might have won. Now, on GCT analysis, this 'could have won' is made true of Humphrey in virtue of a close counterpart of Humphrey in another PW who does win. However, for Kripke, Humphrey couldn't care less about qualitative non-actual individuals in other PWs (*ibid.*). Humphrey cares about *himself*. It is *he* who could have won, not some other individual. Now, if we follow the reasoning deployed above, we have to accept this as a strong criticism of Lewis, since, ideologically, we in very many cases quite plausibly care about *our* freedom, about a better version of *our* society and about the essences and accidents of people *here* in this beloved actual world. But Lewis cannot allow for this, which tells strongly against his account. Here, we are on the frontier of semantics and metaphysics, since metaphysically Lewis is saying

something you, I and Humphrey do not assume in our *de re* modal predications, nor need to assume. Further, semantically, this would appear to compel Humphrey to conclude that ‘Of course, I couldn’t in fact have won, because I didn’t and what actually did happen can only really be true of me, and not some otherworldly individual.’ *Mutatis mutandis* for other ideological sentences.

Lewis responds: not guilty (1986a, pp.192-98ff, 196 n.2). The failure of direct self-attribution does not apply to his theory, or if it does, it applies equally to Kripke and others. Lewis insists that the semantics remain the same. The counterpart of Humphrey in another PW is just what enables the claim that *for* Humphrey, *actual* Humphrey in this PW, he could have won. So then, we can say *both* that this Humphrey could have won *and* that our Humphrey only could have won if some otherworldly counterpart did win. For Lewis, his theory does not prevent us from saying wanted things, even if it permits us to say unwanted things (*ibid.*). That last clause illustrates the border-region between the metaphysics and the semantics. Furthermore, Kripke insists himself that PWs are abstract things of some kind. Thus, according to Lewis, we can choose how the modals get into the picture, either via his counterparts, or some Kripkean abstract ‘whatnot’ (p. 196).

Lewis grants the power of the Kripkean insistence on the modal predication of individuals. Lewis dubs this technique ‘Kripkean specification’: pick out a particular individual and say what be modally the case for it (p. 222ff). PWs forming the background conditions for such modal properties fall out of the specification. However, the difference between Lewis and Kripke here is that Kripke grounds the technique in stipulations and intuitions that are ultimately transparent (for him). Modally, reality is the way our stipulations and intuitions grant, constantly and mind-independently (e.g. Kripke 1981, pp. 47). This cannot be the case for Lewis, for whom the above-mentioned specification picks out some C-relation, which is just one out of an inconstant, multiple group. The above argument has demonstrated which we should prefer.⁴²

This isn’t the last of such problems, however. Fine (1994), Plantinga (1974, 1976, 2003), Stalnaker (1979) and Paul (2006) have all objected that, for Lewis, modal properties are determined by worlds which are outside of them. This has two counterintuitive circumstances. First, it amounts to a kind of hyper-essentialism (a hyper-essentialism that is paradoxically anti-essentialist). For Lewis, possibilities and necessities are not of this world (or any world for that matter). They are a result of accessibility relations and C-relations that quantify across ranges of worlds. Thus, if anything (at all) had been different, you or I wouldn’t have existed. If a leaf on the tree outside blew in a slightly different way, you would not have existed.

⁴²Kripke’s resistance to the idea that modal properties are ultimately reducible to qualities is also susceptible to Ship of Theseus-style objections (Chisholm 1967; cf. Lewis 1986a, pp. 43-248, Divers 2002, pp. 261, 263-74; Sider 2006, p. 2).

Whatever actually happens is true of the actual world. However, what might have happened is true only of other PWs. Thus, objects and things are tied essentially to their worlds. Everything that is the case is essentially the case, in this sense. This is apparently problematic for Lewis, since, on one hand, it too conflicts with everyday opinion and ought to be counted among the costs of his theory (which he apparently does not count). On the other hand, it validates a peculiar semantics. Once again, we can say both that it is possible for Humphrey to have won the election but also that it is not possible for Humphrey to have won the election. Here again, we have a problem residing in the border-region of semantics and metaphysics. Further, these seem intolerable for T, since, across ideologies we plausibly attribute potentials to us, to these things, to this world, and so forth. To be fair to Lewis, he can say that his metaphysics underpins our being able to speak this way. However, he has to admit that it underpins our speaking otherwise too. Whether we should tolerate this, then, appears to depend on the existence of more preferable alternatives.

A second implausible consequence of this position is that essences and accidents are located *outside* objects. However, as Fine (1994), Paul (2006), Lowe (2013) and others make clear, essences and accidents are bound up with our intuitions about the persistence and identity conditions of objects. In saying that human nature is essentially communal, rational or selfish (e.g.) ideologically we are also attributing these qualities *to* people, not to relations between actual people and external worlds. Again, Lewis can say this still generates the wanted semantics, but it enables us to say unwanted things too (both that these categories of things are inherently essentially communal and also that they are not actually essentially communal) (1986a, p. 196, n. 2).

There are a number of solutions to this problem, although we have already provided reasons to rule many of them out. The solutions involve a revival of essentialism. One is non-qualitative, the other qualitative. Above, we provided reasons to rule out non-qualitative forms of essentialism. Kripke's account resorts to appeals to intuitions we cannot accept in the context of T. A proposal from Plantinga (1976) has a similar form. For Plantinga, it is 'just obvious' that there are entities such as states of affairs, propositions, properties, and essences. Essences, in turn, are non-qualitative things, some of which do and some of which do not reside within actualised individuals. The benefit of this theory, for Plantinga, is that it yields the semantics to say there could have been people who were not actually born, or that some people might not have died when they did, *without* asserting the existence of non-actual individuals in far off worlds (see Chapter V, below). Essences are actual parts of the actual world. But they are non-qualitative and in many cases non-actualised in living things. However, this lands us in the same epistemological problems before. What criteria do we have to justify speaking this way in the context of T? Resort to obviousness is not going to help, since human

essences and accidents are not obviously the same from the point of view of differing ideologies.

An alternative approach is proffered by Paul in her (2006). Paul provides an essentialist account that attributes essential and accidental properties inherently to objects. She proposes an AR version of CT, to which an object has essential and accidental properties to the extent that they have counterparts in other PWs, all or some of whom have the said properties. This is a qualitative essentialism, for Paul, since the otherworldly individuals are counterparts to the extent that they resemble this-worldly individuals (pp. 337ff). Since this is a C-relation based on similarity, we can assume that it carries the same logic as the earlier version of GCT. However, Paul considers counterparts to be actual abstracta, although she is agnostic about what these abstracta come down to (p. 348-9).⁴³ The qualitative therefore relies on primitive *de dicto* modality: the abstract counterparts *would* resemble this-worldly things in this or that way, *were* they actualised.

For Paul, a C-relation is determined by the internal constitution of an object (pp. 351ff). Objects have inherent non-modal and modal properties. The modal properties determine which relations are qualitative similar.

This amounts to a form of essentialism, for Paul, since what the internal (modal and non-modal) constitution of an object comes down to is a mind-independent matter of fact (*ibid.*). However, Paul also recognises complications raised by the mereological composition of objects (pp. 358-366). Since all objects of everyday perception and thought are composites, they are composed of more basic elements. The philosophy of mereology, however, raises the problem as to how we can adequately decide the mereological composition of objects (e.g. *ibid.*, van Inwagen 1990, Dorr 2005). If any mereological composition is permissible, then we can have objects which consist of the fridge, the Queen and the moon, for example. Intuitively, we don't want that. If on the other hand, we wish to insist on some mereological limit, the question is how that can be achieved in some non-arbitrary fashion. However, for whichever limit one proposes another mereological limit is as plausible. Paul admits that a Quinean may wish ultimately to ground mereological summation pragmatically (p. 363). From the point of view of T, that may well seem acceptable for certain perhaps pre-ideological entities. However, this is deeply problematic when it comes to ideologically significant objects and categories, such as societies, human beings, historical events and so forth.

The upshot here is that, in fact, a more convincing response would be to accept most of Paul's metaphysics while rejecting her essentialism. The *de re* modal properties may well be inherent to the constitution of objects, but since objects are mereological composites and

⁴³Which leads us to consider Sider's (2002) metaphysically more fully-fledged 'ersatz pluriverse' contribution as paradigmatic of ACT in Chapter VI.

mereology is itself a topic of debate, the best we can assert is that mereological constitution is a mind-dependent affair. This leaves us with a kind of CT theory scarcely very different from Lewis's except that it obviates the semantic-metaphysical problems cited above. Besides this, the appearance of this CT as a method for analysing ideologies is likely to be very much the same.

So long as it is undemonstrated that *de dicto* primitivism has any unjustifiable impact on ideology analysis, we are left with a kind of CT that is agnostic between GR and AR versions (prior to Chapter VI). Further, CT is modified to accommodate Paul's revisions, i.e. that what counts as a C-relation comes down to the constitution of objects. I address the prospects for an AR approach to C-relations in Chapter VI and find fault with it.

Relativism

The latter modification appears to invite a radical form of relativism. If the very internal nature of objects is determined by their essences and potentials (as I have here conceded) but essences and potentials are inconstant and context-dependent, then all there is (at the composite level) is a matter of perspective. This means there is nothing in principle to divide ideologies from matters of everyday interest, and so the distinction between mundane and ideological modals, offered in Chapter II, collapses. Ideology then, goes all the way down. As a confession, I seriously dislike this conclusion and find it deeply counterintuitive. It appears unacceptable cross-ideologically, too. Indeed, I would insist that the intuitions underpinning the distinction in Chapter II are pervasive and irrevocable. This is troublesome, since the proposal has been offered as a means to prevent other unwanted views, discussed above. *However*, there is a plausible escape. We have argued so far that T should permit adjudication between ideologies by way of independent criteria of assessment. There is nothing to preclude the possibility that such criteria count as (perhaps abductive) criteria for objectivity (and there is nothing to prevent a separation of criteria that track the distinction between mundane and ideological cases, as proposed in Chapter II). Likewise, if we say that essences and potentials ought to be articulated but nonetheless determined by 'background groupings', there is nothing apparently to rule out the possibility that some background groupings are more objective in some sense than others.

Conclusion

It is concluded, then, that Quine provides some serious considerations for ideology discourse, raising strong suspicions of attributions of essence, potential and accident, referring us to 'background groupings' behind the scenes. However, Quine's proposal is implausibly extreme and conflicts with everyday perception and (by so doing) his own claims about mundane, pre-philosophical belief. Kripke, in making this objection strikingly clear, provides some powerful

and insightful arguments for transparent *de re* modal contexts. The argument ultimately fails, however, due to a questionable underlying epistemology, which is all the worse in the context of ideology analysis. Lewis's proposal, by contrast, provides the means to represent *de re* modals (contra Quine), but without the naïve essentialist intuitions giving the lie to Kripke's methods. From here we can conclude that T should assume anti-essentialism, but one which represents (opaque) *de re* modal predications and leaves space for extrinsic criteria of judgement (Question One). Furthermore, it appears that some form of anti-essentialist (AR or GR) CT is best suited to this role (Question Two). Lastly, CT will nonetheless have to be modified to agree with (arguably) cross-ideological opinions about the essential constituents of objects. We noted that recent debates in mereology are instructive for this purpose. Lastly, this suggests that ideology goes all the way down, since we have concluded that the essential mereological constitution of ostensibly mind-independent objects is a mind- or context-dependent affair. However, that does not in itself exclude the possibility for external criteria of objectivity. But such criteria could not include naive externalist modal intuitions that deliver infallible access to the great outdoors.

Chapter V

Liberalism and Nested Modality

Introduction

In outline, the current chapter addresses Questions One and Two by first introducing liberalism, providing a brief CPW analysis, raising some conflicting PW approaches in that light and then deciding between them. To begin, I place exclusive focus on Michael Freeden's elaboration of the core concepts within J. S Mill's political philosophy (Freeden 1996, pp. 144-177; Mill 1859, 1863). These concepts are *freedom*, *individuality* and *development*. Freeden takes as 'hypothesis rather than proven fact' his presentation of Mill's politics as archetypical of liberalism generally (Freeden 1996, p.144). However, his subsequent discussion of the history of liberalism, through French and American alternatives, the social liberalism of the late nineteenth century and beyond, relies on the constellation of those concepts as broadly defining for liberalism (pp. 144-177). To save space and focus the argument, I therefore restrict coverage to Freeden's elaboration of the 'Millite core', and will henceforth refer to this simply as 'the liberal' view. A critic might wish to challenge, adjust or expand those particulars, in light of broader scholarship, but I suspect any adjustment should prove informative and the PW treatment offered here nonetheless assistive. Freeden is keen to emphasise that, in Mill's thought, freedom, individuality and development are inter-defining, or inter-'decontesting' (p. 144-177). I therefore begin with an exposition of the *contested* forms of those concepts to demonstrate how they mutually 'decontest' in Mill's work (via Freeden's 'morphological' lens (pp. 48-95)). Through this account, I presenting a preliminary CPW analysis.

The presence of conflicting ontologically-committal PW approaches then raises certain semantic and conceptual questions relevant to Question One. The ('Millite') liberal views humans as essentially capable of reason, attainable through a life of broad experience and opportunity, facilitated by social freedom and non-interference. Freedom is a set of possibilities to act. I might have more freedom than I actually do have. Then, it is possible to have possibilities I do not currently have. This raises the question how to handle nested modals of that kind. If they cannot be tolerated, T should be evaluative (since it would invalidate the latter). If they can be tolerated, T should be explicative. Here, Question One concerns whether GR or AR rule out the nested modals and whether they would be justified in doing so. I first address this problem to some principles in modal logic, then explain how that is largely a distraction. Our main topic of concern is the expression of ideological claims, not disputed rules of modal inference. It is then explained that all approaches to PW can handle the nested modals, so there is no need to invalidate it. Thus, T should be explicative.

Question Two is then pursued by appraising implications for adopting either approach to PW in this context. Both GR and AR accommodate iterated modality, but there are some pertinent differences. GR entails the non-transitivity of iterated modals, whereas AR does not (the modal principle S4). However, this is not sufficient to decide between them. Lastly, I discuss some conceptual issues of AR. On this score, I argue, AR is unjustifiably restrictive whereas CT is not. Since I hold the assessment of ACT in abeyance until Chapter VI, I conclude in favour of GR.

§V.I CPW analysis of liberalism

Recall that, for Freeden, political concepts, taken separately, are essentially contestable (e.g. Freeden 1996, pp. 55-60ff). Their ideological meaning is produced (or 'de-contested') in ideological contexts, i.e. constellations of political concepts. Different constellations contain different rankings: core, adjacent, marginal, peripheral. As we saw in Chapter IV, for socialism, community, welfare, activity, equality and history are at the core. For conservatism (Chapter III), the core concepts are resistance to inorganic change and the extra-human sources of social stability. For Freeden, Mill's 'liberalism' contains three core concepts: *liberty*, *individuality* and *development*. The three are intimately interconnected and inter-defining. This is exemplified, for Freeden, in Mill's expression 'the free development of the individual' (p. 145).

Separately, political concepts are essentially contestable. *Liberty*, for example, can refer to abandon, recklessness, idleness, choice, autonomy, non-interference, exercise, self-mastery, etc. *Individuality* may refer to 'vicious and anti-social competition' (*ibid.*) or unique moral or intellectual attributes, etc. *Development* may be illiberal, authoritarian and oppressive, mechanical and deterministic (p. 146), or individual and melioristic. Regardless of these differences, each concept also has an ineliminable core that holds across all ideological contexts. Freeden:

...for liberty, it is the notion of non-constraint; for individualism, the notion of the person as a separate entity possessing unique attributes and capable of choice; for progress, the notion of movement from less desirable to more desirable states – 'the idea of moving onward', as Mill puts it [in *Representative Government*, p. 388]. (p. 145)

The intermeshing of these concepts in Mill's writing guarantees a particular conception of each concept and rules out others. As Freeden puts it, 'This structural interlocking ensures that sizeable potential areas of meaning which each concept could logically signify are ruled out of court – a prime function of any ideology' (p. 146).

Therefore, to generate an informative CPW analysis of 'Millite' liberalism (according to Freeden) that portrays the important interrelationships between the core concepts of freedom, individuality and development, I will first offer a CPW elaboration of their *contested* versions. Then, I will elucidate the liberal *decontestation* of the three. From here, it will be seen that liberalism portrays a number of stratified modalities, of possible possibilities. This leads to questions about how these are to be understood and accommodated by T (re. Questions One and Two).

Contested concepts

The contested form of freedom may be cast using CPW as follows:

The absence of social blocks of access to other PWs

It is important to remember that this is the contested form. An ideology will fill in the subject of this freedom, the type of absence, the type of blocks, the ranges and contents of PWs. We can say that the *subject* is an inhabitant of a world. What world that is is not defined in advance by contested freedom. However, political freedom is always applied to human beings, in some sense. It can apply to human beings in different ways. It can be one inhabitant, in the form of human society: society as a somewhat abstract separate humanlike entity. It can be all individuals or some individuals. Then it applies either to all inhabitants of a world or to some. These inhabitants, whoever and however many they are, are not blocked, that is, they enjoy an absence of blocks, from access to a range of other PWs. The type of block they are missing would be caused by human beings. That much is also a feature of contested political freedom. As Isaiah Berlin (1969, p. xlii) points out, we cannot admit as an impediment to political freedom non-human causes. My liberty is not infringed by my inability to fly, or play professional football, or absorb all five volumes of *Summa Theologica* in half an hour. These are natural unfreedoms, unrelated to political freedom (cf. Warburton 2001, pp. 5-7). So, using CPW, we could say, the inhabitants are unblocked from social impediments to PWs. And these PWs are socially accessible.

Alternatively, the subject of *contested* liberty is undefined or unattributed, as are the blocks to other PWs and what propositions are true of those unblocked worlds. So, liberty could be decontested by defining those features. Nonetheless, however it is filled out will involve the removal of some such blocks for some subject to some PWs.

Thus, contested liberty - the ineliminable bit that carries across all political liberties - is a *relation* of some sort. What it is a relation from and to is undetermined in contested form. Using PWs, we can say that freedom is an accessibility relation (or set of relations) between some world, or some part of some world and others. We could think of this metaphorically as a highway or tunnel linking two universes. In contested form, the actual points that the highways or tunnels link are undecided. However, we have also said that liberty involves an absence of *social* blocks. That means we can say that the highways or tunnels link worlds that are socially similar in some way. For example, if I am free to visit the library, we could say that I have access to other worlds in which (or according to which) I visit the library. If my freedom is a kind of political or social freedom, these worlds are not (significantly) socially or political different from my own. This provides a way to distinguish political freedom from other types of freedom. If there are other PWs in which I visit the library, but all such worlds are politically or socially very unlike my world, I will have freedom in a more abstract sense, say physical

freedom. In these worlds, I do something quite contrary to actual political or social facts. It may be that in all the worlds that are significantly socially and politically like my world, I visit the library only by breaking the law or some rules. In this case, we can say that I have physical freedom, but no political or social freedom, to visit the library. If I am fully law-abiding, then, my inability to visit the library is a matter of social or political necessity, for I am then not law-abiding in socially accessible worlds in which I visit the library. So, the worlds connected by liberty are significantly socially or politically similar – and are thus ‘socially accessible’. As *contested* liberty, we cannot yet say who or what gains access or what they gain access to, only that the worlds are socially accessible. Note that political liberty can refer to individuals, whole societies or groups and can amount to a number of things. The *manner* of social accessibility may also differ. The manner in which liberty is socially accessible can amount to different things, and so the kind of similarity that holds across socially accessible worlds can differ between liberties.

It is plausible to assume that any decontestation of liberty connotes a desirable state of affairs, not obviously (just) an actual one. If liberals merely want to point out that people have social access to a variety of PWs, they are not saying much. It is a possibility, true of some PWs or ranges of PWs. It is therefore also apparently contingent. It might not be the case. It can fail to be the case. It is not the case across some worlds. But of the ways things can be, things *ought* to be this way. I will return to this form of world-valuing or world-privileging further down.

Contested individualism, for Freedman, is ‘the notion of the person as a separate entity possessing unique attributes and capable of choice’ (1996, p. 145). This entails a focus on human beings as separate entities, each of which exists (or is represented or have counterparts) in other PWs.

Beyond that, individualism can be filled out in a number of ways. Individualism can impute a fact or ideal. And there are different forms of facts and ideals and they can combine in various ways (*ibid.*). For example, individualism can be construed as an essential fact. In all PWs, human beings are unique entities, capable of choice. On that view, there can be no (relevant) PWs in which humans are not unique entities. In all PWs, human beings are unique entities. (Note that there may be a restriction over types of humans. A racist or misogynist might apply this concept only to certain races or genders.) By contrast, individuality can be construed as a possibility and an ideal. There are many PWs in which humans are not unique entities. In some worlds this is possible, but represents a more desirable, ethical, or ‘complete’ state of affairs. It is usual to claim that only the correct type of state or social formation can enable this to happen. By another contrast, we may have a mixture, e.g. in all PWs, human beings constitute the unique centres of decision-making and creativity, societies are aggregates of such unique centres, but there are other PWs in which people have developed

greater, more desirable levels of individuality. On such a view, all actual individuals may have some fully-formed human beings as counterparts (or be represented as such by other PWs). That would amount to asserting a possibility as an essential attribute, even if it is not an actual one. I will elaborate the decontestation of this concept in Mill (according to Freeden), below.

Adding individualism to liberty enables part decontestation of the two. The accessibility relations between socially accessible worlds in liberalism are linked to individuals. Human inhabitants of the actual world have their own ranges of accessibility relations to other socially accessible worlds. Furthermore, across these worlds, people (or their counterparts) do a variety of things. Note that the notion 'capable of choice' is also modal. If individuals are unique and capable of choice, first they are separate and defined within the actual world and further there are a range of worlds that are accessible to them *in virtue of what they uniquely are*. Though Freeden doesn't say it, this looks a lot like a claim about human nature. Human beings are by nature individual and capable of choice. We can further construe this in PWs language by saying that, across all (relevant) PWs in which people are not hindered by obstacles or influences, they do a large variety of things. To say that people are capable of choice can be plausibly interpreted as: people possess resources, true to what they are, enabling them to exercise choice if unhindered by obstacles. There are a variety of PWs in which actual individuals do a variety of things unhindered by obstacles. It's a short distance from here to note that the obstacles may be construed as internal or external. In any case, all liberalisms presuppose at some level that external obstacles, opposed by others – the state, society, malintents – may resist the performance of choice (access to worlds) which is a feature of individuals as unique entities, and should thereby be removed.

A quick note on equality: I have deliberately avoided saying that *all* humans enjoy the above characteristics equally. This may often be implied by many (certainly modern) liberalisms. However, it is not always the case. Freeden, it should be noted, does not locate equality at the core of Mill's liberal morphology (Freeden 1996, p. 159-62). Equality is an adjacent concept, one that leads out from, but does not back up, the core concepts. The concept of equality in (Millite) liberalism is decontested as a *result* of the core and of 'cultural' pressures.

Individuality, then, hooks up with liberty in linking the routes of access to a variety of socially accessible PWs to actual individual human beings, discernible units, who are represented as having social access (or who possess a variety of socially accessible counterparts) across a range of worlds. Development, or 'progress', plugs in to this combination. Contested progress, Freeden has said, is 'the notion of movement from less desirable to more desirable states – "the idea of moving forward", as Mill puts it [*Representative Government*, p. 388, cited in Freeden, p. 145]' (p. 145). Combined with the other concepts, this creates the idea that the value of choice, of the ability to choose, leads to

the enactment of improvements. So, this further clarifies details of possibilities for (or counterparts of) actual individuals. Some possibilities (or counterparts) of actual individuals are in a more desirable state than the actual state of affairs. These more desirable states are accessible by individual choice where social means permit them to do so.

In the next few paragraphs, I will elaborate the further decontestation of these core concepts, as Freedon presents them. As mentioned above, liberty is attached to individuality. It is furthermore decontested as freedom of thought, expression and action and non-interference from others (pp. 145-147ff). Liberty is the social accessibility of actual unique individuals to a range of worlds wherein they think and act in a large variety of ways. Mill also thinks this leads to progress, a better possible future. Therefore, some of the actions in these other PWs are better and more desirable. It might be that he appears reluctant to stipulate exactly what these are, because that is determined entirely *by* individuals. 'The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way' (Mill 1859, p. 72). However, as Freedon insists, this does not amount to a 'neutrality among competing conceptions of the good, as modern commentators often argue' (Freedon 1996, p. 146). Mill expects that liberty enables self-cultivation, development (1859, pp. 59-74, 119-140). There are better PWs among the alternate counterparts. So, it seems that, for Mill, there are better and worse PWs for each individual, and this is objectively the case, determined by more than the individual's mere wishes. Hence the premium Mill places on education (pp. 176-78). However, Mill is still reluctant to state exactly what such PWs consist of. For Freedon, Mill holds to a concept of self-determination, which is also a concept of self-development, but it is not a perfectionist concept of self-realization (Freedon 1996, pp. 146-148). This is an interesting distinction but Freedon does not enlarge upon it. However, we can frame the distinction in PWs terms by stating that self-development is the enactment of possibilities carried out in more desirable worlds. A perfectionist self-realization might amount to stipulating in greater detail the actual features of these worlds *and/or* as holding better worlds up as representing more real or more complete versions of one's actual self. This interpretation is corroborated later in Freedon's text (1996 p. 147) by his observation that, for Mill, progress is melioristic, not perfectionist or teleological. So, there are better worlds or counterparts for individuals, and these better worlds or counterparts are in some sense objectively better, beyond the mere desires of individuals. But Mill grants authority *to* individuals to realise what these are and how to achieve them. This raises the question whether a breadth of alternate worlds or counterparts are also a fact for these better worlds or counterparts. This can be answered in the context of Freedon's discussion of Mill's view of rationality.

Freedon observes that, for Mill, 'progress is the "cultivation of individuality, which produces, or can produce human beings"' (Freedon 1996, p. 147). Notice therefore that Mill

also locates individuality as a desirable endpoint of human endeavour. This suggests, as noted above, that, for Mill, there is a basic individuality about people that can be further developed and brought out, to their benefit, by way of creative activity within a fertile sphere of non-interference.

Progress is decontested in the context of rationality. Rationality, as Freeden notes, is itself a contestable term, signifying at different times ‘rightness, or moderation, or self-willing and autonomy, or calculated means-end purposiveness, or obedience to the law of God’ (p. 149). Further, Mill clearly adheres to a conception of rationality implied by (his version of) the utilitarian calculus and to a notion of correct reasoning as ‘rational argument and evidence’ (p. 149). So, rationality is a means. However, as Freeden observes, rationality for Mill is also a desired end, connected with harmony. Rational harmony is both internal and external: it signifies the higher achievement of individuality by instilling and exercising virtue and happiness (p. 149) and, furthermore, sociability, that is, accord and sympathy with others. For Freeden, rationality and sociability are also core concepts in Mill’s morphology.

Thus concludes the CPW analysis of ‘Millite liberalism’. Crucially, it requires the idea that there are freedoms one can acquire. Further, the acquisition of such freedoms is desirable and should be promoted. So, the liberal strings non-alethic, prescriptive modals to alethic, descriptive modals. On this construal, there are worlds of a strong (U)-kind within traditional Millite liberalism, and those worlds have conative and deontic features.⁴⁴ To the extent that other ideologies trade (in some way or other) in the concept of political freedom (as indicated in Chapters III and IV), these features would have to be addressed by T. (Corbett 1965 even treats freedom as *the* central concept of ideologies *tout court*, although this has been directly challenged in Adams 1989, p. 16-19.) I discussed in Chapter III how conatives and deontics can be accommodated by competing approaches to PW and will not continue that here. Of particular note at this juncture is the idea that there are freedoms one lacks but could obtain. The thought seems central to liberalism, is shared in other ideologies and, importantly, connects with value judgements. In what follows, I will therefore focus on the nested modals implied in this idea and discuss how they fare with various approaches to PW, with a view to addressing Questions One and Two.

⁴⁴There are some liberal exceptions to this in the so-called ‘Cold War liberalism’ of Berlin, Popper, Talmon and others. Cf. Berlin 1969, Leopold 2012; Gray 2013 pp. 74-110; Goodwin and Taylor 2009, pp. 93-119. However, Chapter III suggest that proponents of that stance are in fact conservatives.

§V.II Question One: Nested modality and sentence 'S'

Amongst other things, the above arrangement of concepts produces the claim that it is possible for people to have freedoms they do not currently possess. For ease of reference, call this 'Sentence 'S'':

S) It is possible to have possibilities you don't currently have

On the face of it, this involves iterated or nested levels of modality. There is a possibility that you could be freer than you actually are. Freedom is a form of possibility. Then it is possible for you to have possibilities you don't currently have.

Return to our Questions One and Two: what goals should T serve and what PW approach best accommodates T? Since freedom is central to liberalism, and the idea that one can have freedoms one does not possess leads out from that, the issue of iterated modality relates to these questions. Different PW theories provide different semantics and logics for handling iterated modals. Then, we should see how the different approaches might handle the iterated case identified above, how they differ, and how to choose between them. If some theories are more restrictive, and it is better to choose a more restrictive theory, then, for Question One, T ought to rule out cases of iterated modality. We cannot then accept claims like 'it is possible to have possibilities you currently have' at face value. That would issue radical implications for liberalism and other ideologies that utilise modally analogous conceptions of freedom. Alternatively, if it is better to choose a more permissive theory, T should be explicative and permit illustration and analysis of iterated modals (only to be adjudicated only by extrinsic criteria). To pursue this line of reasoning, I will first investigate just *how* the sentence (S) can be articulated using the competing theories. Then I will explore the logical implications of each theory and assess the acceptability of those implications for T.

First, a few words are needed about modal logic.

Modal logic

Philosophical questions about iterated modality naturally lead to some controversial modal axioms, specifically, for our discussion: the Barcan Formula, S4 and S5. The principles may be stated thus:

(BF) If it is possible for there to exist something with the property, F then there exists something that has the possible property, F. [If there could be an F-thing then there is a thing that is potentially-F.]

Equivalently: If everything is necessarily F then necessarily, everything is F

(S4) If necessarily A then necessarily necessarily A

The following are theorems of S4: Necessarily A iff necessarily necessarily A and possibly A iff possibly possibly A.

(S5) If possibly A then necessarily possibly A.

The following is a theorem of S5: Necessarily A iff possibly necessarily A

(Cf. Divers 2002, p. 213-226; Loux 1979b, pp. 16-36.) These axioms are invalidated by GCT (Lewis 1968, p. 36; Divers 2002, pp. 142-44).⁴⁵

Interpreted with PW, BF reads: if there is a PW in which something has F, there is something in this world which has F in some PWs. Furthermore, if everything in this world has F in every PW, then in every PW everything has F. This is often taken as an explicit statement of actualism, since then every modal claim is ultimately reducible to actually existing entities and/or properties (Menzel 2014). It points up a controversial consequence of actualism: that all possible facts entail actual things of some kind or other. As Divers points out (2002, p. 213), the controversy relates to a conflation of *de re* with *de dicto* possibility, which counters the strong intuition that ‘there are possibilities *de dicto* that are not possibilities *de re* for any actual individual’ (*ibid.*). The example Divers produces is this:

It could have been that (actually childless) Richard had a son even though no actual individual is such that it could have been the son of Richard. (*ibid.*)

By contrast, (BF) appears to hold that, if it is possible for Richard to have had a son, *there actually exists* something that could have been Richard’s son. This, of course, conflicts significantly with intuition (and could be cited as one horn of a PW realist dilemma with Lewisian concrete possibilia as the other horn). Furthermore, it appears to present issues for our target sentence, S. The claim that it is possible to have possibilities you don’t currently have apparently involves *de dicto* and *de re* possibilities that differ in nature. If we conflate this distinction, the sentence is contradictory. Then it would say that it is possibly the case that you have something and it is not possibly the case that you have something. By contrast, the sentence appears to require that it is (*de dicto*) possible for you to have a (*de re*) possibility you do not currently have. This is quite intelligible, especially if we construe it as freedoms one might have but does not have. Then, in answer to Questions One and Two, we ought to decide

⁴⁵Although S4 and S5 are valid where ‘A’ is a closed sentence – i.e. they are valid as claims about *de dicto* modality, not *de re* modality.

whether to accept or reject BF and its outcomes and to explore which PW theory best accommodates this. A seeming outcome, then, is that S is incoherent.

It is somewhat similar with the modal axiom S4, to which any necessity is a necessary necessity. From this it follows that any possible possibility is just a possibility (cf. Loux 1979b, p. 17). To say, then, that it is possible for me to have a possibility is just to say that I have a possibility. Again, it would be incoherent to claim that it is possible to have a possibility I don't currently have. According to the celebrated Kripkean semantics, S4 obtains when the accessibility relations between PWs is transitive. If I have a property in a PW, *v*, that is accessible to PW, *w*, which is accessible to this world, @, it is a possibility for me in *w* but it is also a possibility for me here, in @. Thus, if a possibility is a possibility, it is just a possibility, pure and simple. I will return to this point below.

The same issue arises with the modal axiom S5, according to which any possibility is a necessary possibility. According to the accepted semantics, S5 holds when accessibility relations between worlds are equivalent. Since equivalence entails transitivity (but not conversely), S5 entails S4 (but not conversely).

However, all this concern about modal axioms is something of a red herring. This, for two reasons. On the one hand, certain species of AR might reject BF *but also* reject our sentence S. The modal principles must hold, if they hold, at every PW. However, versions of AR, such as (interpretations of) combinatorial realism (CR, see Divers 2002, p. 215-16; Quine 1969; Cresswell 1972; Bigelow 1988; Armstrong 1989), produce counter-instances in other PWs. If *v* is accessible to *w* only when *v* is constituted out of recombined elements of *w*, then accessibility relations cannot be symmetrical. For then, if world *z* is constructed out of a subset of elements of *v*, in turn constructed out of a subset of elements of *w*, then *z* is accessible to *v*, *v* is accessible to *w* and *z* is accessible to *w*, *but v* is not accessible to *z*, *w* is not accessible to *v* and *w*, of course, is not accessible to *z*. In that case, the antecedent of BF can hold, e.g. that there is a son of Richard in *w*, but the consequent does not hold, that there is something in *v* that could have been the son of Richard (Divers 2002, p. 214). But invalidation of this principle does not obviously vindicate our sentence S, since on the face of it the sentence is not some logical postulate that has to hold true at all PWs if it is true. It only needs to hold true at our world. The species of CR lighted on here invalidates BF since instances of it are false in other PWs. However, instances are not false in this world. (Note also that Divers (2002, p. 216) provides a way out of this issue for CR in any case.)

On the other hand, the modal principles require that 'possibility' is treated as absolute, or at least that we do not equivocate on the meaning of 'possibility'. BF *does* conflate *de re* and *de dicto* modality, as Divers recognises (2002, p. 213). S appears to distinguish them. However, S (so construed) also equivocates on *kinds* of modality.

Return to S:

'It is possible to have possibilities you don't currently have'

This was taken as an interpretation of the following sentence:

'It is possible to have freedoms you don't currently have'

We have said that 'freedoms' are types of possibility. However, the first 'possibility' suggests physical possibility, whereas the second suggests social possibility, as explained in the previous section.

I have suggested that BF is irrelevant to the question about S, since AR might reject BF and still reject S. I cited the significance of S5 because it entails S4 (but not conversely). S4, in turn seems problematic for S, since it tells us to equate possible possibilities with possibilities (Loux *op cit.*), where S requires a distinction. But this would only be an issue if we do not equivocate on kinds of possibility. The question whether S conflicts with S4 depends on whether sentences that are entailed by S that contain iterated but non-equivocal modals conflict with S4. But they do not. Consider the following. Let's construe 'possibility' as physical possibility. Consider the sentence

It is physically possible to have physical possibilities

This is consistent (in fact entailed) by S:

It is physically possible to have social possibilities you don't currently have

The first part of S asserts a physical possibility. Trivially, if something is physically possible, it is physically possible. Now contrast:

It is physically possible to have physical possibilities you don't have

Intuitively, this is precluded by S. If I have a physical possibility, it means that I can physically do something. If I lack a physical possibility, it means I cannot physically do something. For it to be physically possible to be physically possible to do something suggests that I could

physically do something I could physically do. Then I couldn't physically do something I couldn't physically do.

Things go similarly with social possibility:

I am free to have freedoms

This is consistent with S, since if I were to be free, I would have freedom.

I am free to have freedoms I don't currently have.

This looks like a straight contradiction, inconsistent with S.

Now, CT invalidates S4 (and BF and S5) (for *de re* modals), since C-relations are not treated as transitive (or symmetrical) and *a fortiori* not as equivalent (Lewis 1968, *op cit.*). This does not mean, however, that CT cannot accommodate such relations under certain interpretations. The question we need to ask, for Question One, is whether, for, T, the semantic restrictions should be forced on us by T, the analytic device, or by the ideologies under question, the analysandum. But this is just to restate our initial question. So far, the discussion has provided no means to decide the issue. To proceed, it would serve our purposes better to explore how the competing approaches might represent S, to draw out the implications from their doing so, and then decide which implications to accept. The decision between these implications returns us to the question of epistemology and of intuition and cross-ideological intuition.

The main questions to ask here are: (1) How does the theory accommodate nested kinds of modality, so as to interpret sentences of the kind S? (2) What implications does the theory have for the transitivity of modality and is this acceptable? (3) What implications does the theory have for the *de re/de dicto* distinction and is this acceptable?

§V.III Counterpart theory interpretation of S

CT may interpret S thus (see Lewis 1968, pp. 67-39; 1986a, pp. 8-10, 20, 27-40). There is the actual world @, an actual individual, x, a range of PWs w, another range of PWs, v, and counterparts, y, of x in w and counterparts, z, of y in v. w are physically but not socially accessible from @. v are socially and physically accessible from w. y is a physical but not social possibility for x, whereas z is a physical and social possibility for y. Then, it is physically possible, for x, to have social possibilities x does not currently have. In other words, x could have freedoms x does not currently have.

On this model, we have possibility *de dicto* (the physical possibility) and possibility *de re* (the social possibility) and the different kinds of possibility, physical and social, which are different in nature.

CT very powerfully answers (1), generating relative possibilities by allowing C-relations to range over PWs with different characteristics. With regard to (2), this could go either of two ways. CT has the resources to permit non-transitive C-relations. Therefore, some possible possibilities are not a possibility. Note that accessibility relations and C-relations are not homogenous. Indeed, Lewis (1968, pp. 38-39), holds that relative modalities are generated as a special case of relationship between accessibility relations and C-relations. Then, CT can allow that a range of worlds (e.g.) are socially accessible to one another, in virtue of having the same social conditions – laws, conventions, etc. – but counterparts ranging across them are not all counterparts of one another. Then there might be cases where I am free to be free to do Q, but I am not free to do Q.⁴⁶ However, this sounds very odd. Lewis can reply here that this is inconsequential, since CT *permits* cases where principles such as S4 hold (he says just this in *ibid.*). In such cases, the transitive socially accessible worlds are paired with transitive C-relations within those worlds. Postulated thus, if I am free to be free to do Q, I am just free to do Q. CT has the flexibility to choose. The restriction is not forced on us by the theory, but by the ideology in question.

As mentioned above, regarding (3), CT permits *de dicto* possibilities that are not *de re* possibilities. We can have socially accessible PWs where individuals do a range of things but not all those individuals will be counterparts of me, even if they are counterparts of my counterparts. This might permit some very loose cases. Consider: it is *de dicto* socially possible to become a weight-lifter. It might also be *de re* socially possibly socially possible to become a weight lifter, since there are counterparts of my counterparts who are weight-lifters. Nonetheless, it is not socially possible for me to be a weight-lifter, since the counterparts of my counterparts who are weight-lifters are not counterparts of me. One consequence of this

⁴⁶This might speak to cases of Frankfurt-type 'lower' and 'higher' desires (Frankfurt 1971).

view is that it is apparently counterintuitive on first blush, as noted above. However, CT has the flexibility to accommodate our intuitions to fit. Another consequence harks back to Lewis's particular strand of anti-essentialism. With regard to the weight-lifter case, some finer restriction produces cases wherein a possible possibility for me is not a possibility for me. The finer restriction will relate to a qualification of details i.e. the context generating the C-relations – one that specifies my features and rules out direct possibilities for me. A further consequence is that this can clarify our understanding of 'freedom'. Society can grant us freedoms and create opportunities for us. Those opportunities present possibilities in the nested sense: i.e. that there are free freedoms. So, then there is potential for conceptions of freedom and opportunity to be somewhat misleading. We may not want this to be the case, but the question is how to handle that. Should such questions be forced on us by T, or should T merely provide the latitude for a wider set of considerations to determine such matters? These questions will be discussed below, after an examination of the alternatives presented by AR.

§V.IV Species of AR interpretations of S

GR and AR briefly compared

One significant generic distinction between GR and AR is that GR takes worlds as primitive and *sui generis*, whereas, for AR (*qua* actualist), some other class of entity that exists in the actual world is primitive and *sui generis* and this class provides the materials for constituting PWs. For GR, PWs already exist, and we quantify over them and – in a sense – discover facts about them, in modal discourse. By contrast, for AR, PWs are *constructed*, and the way in which they are constructed determines what possibilities there are and what modal inferences are permitted. Of course, AR is not antirealist, so the PWs are not constructs in the sense that scientific theories are constructs for social constructivists. Rather, AR take PWs as constructed mind-independently out of something else, which in turn exists entirely and exclusively in the actual world. In some cases (if not all), AR presupposes possibility in grounding PWs. In all cases, AR sets tighter restrictions than GR on the available possibilities. The task for a search for T, is whether these features of AR are justifiable and preferable in that context. (Answers to that question provide information for our Questions One and Two.)

Species of AR

We shall ignore actualist species of CT for now and return to them for consideration in Chapter VI. Significant features of species of AR are as follows. They treat all that exists (possible or not) as equivalent to all that actually exists (cf. Adams 1974; Kripke 1981; Loux 1979b; Lycan 1979; Stalnaker 1984, 2003; Plantinga 1974, 1976, 2003). There are no non-actual existents, and that *de dicto* and *de re* modals are homogenous (Divers 2002, p. 171). According to Divers' treatment, there are various species of AR, e.g. Plantingan Realism (PR), that treats PWs as maximal, possible states of affairs; Combinatorial Realism (CR) that treats PWs as complete recombinations of parts of the actual world (properties, relations, individuals, etc.); Nature Realism (NR), that treats PWs as 'world-natures' or 'ways a world might be' i.e. complex relational properties; Book Realism (BR) that treats PWs as maximal 'world stories' constructed out of actual language sentences and sub-sentential components and their propositional implications (Divers 2002) (cf. Lewis 1986a, pp. 136-191). Since the species of AR in one way or another treat actual existence as absolute (made explicit in Adams 1974), they impose a theoretical restriction on the range of possibilities. This suggests semantic and conceptual restrictions and less flexibility than GR. Thus, in addressing our overarching Questions One and Two, it is imperative to consider, again, whether (1) the species can accommodate S, (2) what the implications are for the transitivity of modality, and whether this is acceptable and (3) what the implications are for the *de re/de dicto* distinction and whether this is acceptable.

A generic AR rendering of S

As a preliminary to discussion of the various species, we can elaborate a generic AR framework for S and thereafter discuss how that framework is to be understood by the various species. Note that this has to express nested kinds of possibility – i.e. relative possibilities – without recourse to counterparts or non-actual existents.

Take the actual world @, some range of worlds w, and some other range of worlds v. w is 'nomologically accessible' to @, i.e. has the same natural laws and facts of nature as @. According to @, there is a member of @ for whom w has different social conditions as @. Say, people over 5ft are not permitted into libraries according to @ whereas they are according to w. v has the same natural laws and facts of nature as w and @. However, v has the same social conditions as w. v is socially accessible from w. According to @, there is an individual over 5ft who doesn't visit the library at @. That individual also does not visit the library at all worlds socially accessible from @ unless the individual breaks the law. According to @, the individual visits the library in some w-worlds. Also, the individual does a whole range of things throughout the v-worlds. Since the v-worlds are socially and physically accessible to the w-worlds, if @ had been one of the w-worlds, or becomes one of the w-worlds through human action, then there are more socially and physically accessible v-worlds. Thus, the individual physically could have more social possibilities than the individual actually enjoys. Then some people could have more freedom.

In permitting differences of relative possibility, it appears that generic AR can handle sentences of the kind S. The three-part question then is whether (1) each species can handle this interpretation and whether we ought to accept their implications for (2) transitivity of modality and (3) the *de dicto* / *de re* distinction.

The PR interpretation of S

For Plantinga, PWs are accommodated to actualism by postulating intensional entities: states of affairs, propositions and properties (Plantinga 1974, 1976 and 2003; Divers 2002, pp. 173-4ff). Some states of affairs obtain, whereas others are merely possible. Some propositions have truth as a property, others do not. Some properties are instantiated, others are not. The PWs are all maximally consistent sets of possible states of affairs. The actual world is the set of all maximally consistent possible states of affairs that obtain. Actual properties are all those properties that obtain. The actual world is also populated by unobtaining states of affairs and uninstantiated properties. So, there is a platonism to Plantingan AR. Individuals exist at a world if they exist according to a set of maximally consistent states of affairs. Individuals

actually exist (and exist *simpliciter*) if they exist according to the set of maximally consistent states of affairs that obtain. There are no nonactual individuals, for Plantinga, although there are essences of individuals, viz, essential and exclusive properties of single individuals. The actual world is also populated by the essences of living, unborn and dead individuals.

For Plantinga (*ibid.*), states of affairs, propositions and properties are not reducible to sets of individuals and sets of PWs. Indeed, if we were to construe (for e.g.) properties as functions from sets of individuals to sets of PWs (as in GR), then some distinct properties would have identical set members (esp. 1974, p. 259-62). Since there are no non-actual individuals, there would be identical sets with distinct identities. (Eg. 'Being the author of *The Republic*' and 'Being Socrates' most famous pupil', etc.) *Mutatis mutandis* for states of affairs and propositions. So, Plantinga's ontology has to take states of affairs, propositions and properties as *sui generis* entities. PWs then, are constituted *out of* states of affairs. *De dicto* possibilities and necessities are determined by propositions that hold true across domains of maximally consistent states of affairs and *de re* modal properties are determined by the properties that are instantiated according to worlds (but not instantiated *simpliciter*). Since propositions are treated as entities that possess truth or falsity as properties - some necessarily if true across all sets of maximally consistent states of affairs, some contingently if false in some sets of maximally consistent states of affairs, etc. - *de dicto* possibility is a special case of modality *de re*, for Plantinga (1974, p. 261).

PR can handle the above interpretation, for it can easily accommodate relative possibility (see Plantinga 1974, pp. 51-54). Let's say that the w-worlds have the same natural laws as @. Either the natural laws just are states of affairs that constrain other states of affairs or the natural laws are supervenient on states of affairs. Either way, the ws are nomologically accessible from @ in that the states of affairs that relate to natural laws are identical. Many other states of affairs are identical too. However, the states of affairs about social conditions (laws, structures, conventions, institutions, etc.) are different in important respects. The laws forbid people over 5ft from visiting libraries in @ whereas no such laws exist in w. Further, across w, and all worlds (v) socially and physically accessible from w (i.e. those worlds that have the same social conditions) there are many people over 5ft visiting libraries. By contrast, in @ and all those worlds socially accessible to @, there are few people over 5ft visiting libraries and all those who do are breaking the law. This explicates how conditions such as laws generate possibilities. w are socially inaccessible to @, although they are nomologically accessible. v, by contrast are socially and nomologically accessible to w. Now, for an individual, x, in this world, @, it is physically possible that she visits the library but she is not socially free to do so. In w, however, social conditions permit x to visit the library, such that many worlds in v represent x as visiting the library. Since w is physically accessible to @, it is physically possible for the social conditions to change. If they do so change, perhaps by way

of policy or activism, @ will belong to the set of w-worlds. Then there will be many socially accessible v-worlds that represent x as visiting the library. Thus, it is possible for x to have freedoms she actually lacks.

PR then offers a powerful means for handling nested kinds of modality, as in S. It doesn't preclude the expression of face-value liberal sentences of that kind. There are, however, implications for transitivity and the *de dicto/re* distinction.

Concerning transitivity, whatever is a possible possibility (of a certain kind) for x in @ is a possibility (of that same kind) for x. This must hold on PR if there are no non-actual individuals and a possibility is just a proposition, property or relation that holds in a different PW. Note that this will be the case irrespective of S4, since we are concerned only with S from the point of view of @. If something is physically possible, then there is a PW, v, with the same physical laws as another world, w, and w has the same physical laws as @. Then v is also physically accessible from @. Likewise, if somebody is free to be free, they are just free, since then there is a range of worlds, w, with the same social conditions as @ and a range of worlds v with the same social conditions as w. Across, w, x does a large number of things, according to the various w-worlds, and across v, x does a large number of things, according to the various v-worlds. Then, the v-worlds are also socially accessible to @; whatever is a social possibility for x is made so in virtue of those worlds attributing claims (acts, properties, relations, etc.) to x (and not a counterpart of x or anything other than x). So then to be free to be free is just to be free.

Differences from GR

The above agrees with our understanding of S and places no unexpected restrictions on it. It also has the benefit of not admitting the *possibility* of (counterintuitive) cases where one can be free to be free without being free. GCT, by contrast, permits this. Note, however, that CT does not force this on us and can allow cases where being free to be free just is to be free. But is this inbuilt flexibility really a flaw of CT? It might, in fact, illuminate the conception of freedom. Suppose that being free to be free does not automatically entail that one is free. Call the former 'higher-order', and the latter 'lower-order', 'freedom' (cf. Frankfurt 1971 on desire). Suppose also that our everyday political concept 'freedom' is ambiguous between high-order and lower-order freedoms. Then, a liberal might claim one has freedom to do such and such. This might *create* the sense of a real power to do something, when in fact that power is lacking. Some might well argue this occurs. I might have the freedom to become a lawyer in the sense that society does not prevent me from doing so. Alternatively, I might have the freedom to become a lawyer in the sense that there are things I could do and were I to do those things society would not prevent me from becoming a lawyer, should I wish to do so. That would mean I am free to be free to become a lawyer but I am not free to become a lawyer. Training

and development comes to mind, or acquisition of rights by way of certain acts. Can this intransitivity be accommodated by PR? Seemingly so: we only need to tweak the states of affairs determining each world. In fact, this highlights that, really, we have not identified non-transitive freedom, since the social conditions have been altered. We are in fact equivocating again, but this time, perhaps, within finer distinctions. If the CT implication is correct, it would have to go deeper. This would relate to an interaction between my own constitution (intrinsic and extrinsic properties) and the world, effectively bringing to the fore interactions between (supposed) negative and positive freedoms (Berlin 1969). If we grant CT, then I can be free to be free in the sense that social conditions in this world and a number of other PWs *and* counterparts of *my* counterparts are lawyers or weightlifters or whatever. But I am not free to be these things if none of my counterparts are lawyers or weightlifters or whatever. What makes the difference is not the worldly conditions but the nature of my counterparts and my counterparts' counterparts. So, if there is a conflation between higher-order and lower-order freedom there is a conflation between what I, given what society permits me to do *and* what I am like in myself, am free to do. Freedom would then have to be construed thus and then would be amenable to analysis in virtue of the possibility of conflation between higher-order and lower-order kinds, since higher-order freedoms do not entail lower-order freedom. This might prove illuminating. That relates to a difference in *de dicto* and *de re* modality.

CT allows such a difference by contrasting *de dicto* and *de re* modality by contrasting accessibility relations with C-relations. There may be multiple accessible PWs, with more possibilities than there are possibilities (i.e. potentials) for me. PR cannot allow this, even granted the tweaking mentioned above. If there are possible possibilities for me, they are just possibilities for me, since relative possibility is only guaranteed by types of PW – i.e. states of affairs that hold at different worlds.

Perhaps it is fortuitous that PR agrees with the general structure of S. Perhaps it forces undesirable restrictions on us. It is not entirely obvious that the options generated by CT above are a virtue or vice of the theory, so the decision between them would be better made elsewhere, with the point established that the above outlines the consequences of adopting either theory, the nettles to be grasped.

Benefits of PR

In selecting states of affairs as obtaining, propositions as true and properties as instantiated, PR does agree with already existing parlance and adds no additional contents, such as counterparts within *sui generis* PWs. Granted PR, T would propose which states of affairs obtain, which properties are instantiated and which propositions are true. So, metaphysically PR has considerable appeal in fulfilling the role of T.

It should be noted here that PR is more restrictive semantically and conceptually than CT, in virtue of the homogeneity between *de dicto* and *de re* modals in PR. Since that does not obviously conflict with the target sentence S, this is not an apparent site to stage a battle between the two theories. Instead, better to recognise the differences on this point as different outcomes that one must accept in choosing between them.

If we choose PR, we have to accept that stronger restrictions are forced on us by T, rather than just the ideology, whereas, granted CT, there are no more restrictions than general and generalizable criteria of reasonableness – non-contradiction, coherence and so forth.

The CR interpretation of S

In Divers (2002, pp. 174-77), combinatorial realism (CR) is identified amongst the two theories covered by Lewis as ‘linguistic ersatzism’, with book realism (BR) as the other (Lewis 1986a, pp. 136-191) (cf. Quine 1969; Cresswell 1972; Bigelow 1988; Armstrong 1989). Both Lewis’ and Divers’ strategies are to explicate the options as systematically as possible, deriving certain concepts and propositions from other writers, but without attributing the exemplary versions to any particular writer. Thus, I focus here on their explications (as with BR and NR).

CR constructs PWs out of primitive individuals and primitive properties and sets. Principally, CR avails itself of two sets: the combinatorial base set and the combinatorial range set. The combinatorial base set is the set of all existing primitive individuals and primitive properties (including 1-place and more-than 1-place properties). The combinatorial range set is the set of all sequences of combinations of the properties (1-place and up) with (1 and up) individuals. Each sequence, a member of the combinatorial range set, is a basic state of affairs. PWs are subsets of the combinatorial range set. The actualised world is the subset of the combinatorial range set whose members all obtain (see Divers 2002, pp. 174-77).

At this stage, it becomes clear that there are issues about how PWs are to be constructed without admitting impossibilities, since there is nothing explicit in the above that precludes impossibilities. This relates to certain conceptual issues with CR and BR, to be tackled further down.

CR interprets S thus. Since the PWs are subsets of the combinatorial range set then we can generate *w* by selecting all the subsets that contain members that together replicate the natural facts and laws of @ but not all the social conditions of @, such that, according to *w*, i.e. according to some of the members of the subsets, it is permitted for people over 5ft to visit the library. Further, we can generate the range of worlds *v* by determining them as the subsets of the combinatorial range set that contain members according to which (1) the natural facts and laws are identical to those of *w* and @, (2) the social conditions are identical to *w* but not @ and (3), across the range of *v*, *x* does a range of things, including, in significantly

many of these worlds, visits the library legally and without hindrance. Thus, x actually has fewer freedoms x could have.

Differences from PR

The difference from PR is that, since all worlds are constituted out of the sets of primitive individuals and properties, then w is built out of a recombination of bits of $@$ and V is built, either out of a recombination of bits of W or bits of $@$ (or bits of w and *a fortiori* bits of $@$). By contrast, PR takes PWs as maximally consistent and possible states of affairs, many of which may not actually obtain. Accessibility for CR is defined as: either v is accessible from w if v is constructed out of elements of w or v is accessible from w if w and v are constructed out of the bits of $@$ (cf. Divers 2002, pp. 215-16). This means that any PW other than the actual world can only ever be more and never less impoverished than the actual world in terms of its basic properties and individuals (although of course it could have many more states of affairs). This poses a number of conceptual issues that I will discuss further down.

An important difference between CR and PR is that, ultimately, for CR, a possibility is just a recombination of things as they are. Then all we need to believe in are sets and all the things that we already believe exist. CR can refer to states of affairs and propositions, but does not take such things as primitive. Instead, CR only needs to take sets (and set-theoretic elements) and primitive individuals and properties as given. Then we do not require reference to uninstantiated properties. We also do not need to postulate unactual concreta, and actual abstracta can be kept to a minimum, in referring only to sets, which many otherwise austere naturalists, such as Quine (1948 pp. 13-15), are willing to accept (cf. Quine 1969). Certainly, we can ask difficult questions about what the concrete instantiated primitive individuals and properties ultimately are and how we can know. But, to the extent that we are already prone to believe in such things, so much the better for the ontology.

Differences from GR

An important difference between CR and GR is that CR does not commit us the existence of concrete possibilia, worlds and individuals. A drawback is that GR provides the resources to define properties, where CR takes properties as *sui generis*. This raises complications that Lewis takes seriously (though not knockdown, see 1986a, p. 165). We will consider whether these complications are acceptable within the current context below.

Implications

CR generally produces the same outcomes about transitivity and *de re / de dicto* modals as PR. A possibility for x is how a PW represents x . Thus, a possibility for x is how a set of combinations of individuals and properties represents x . (Representation too presents issues

that I address below.) Then, just like PR, modality is transitive, since if a world, w , is i -accessible to me, it is i -accessible because certain i -conditions hold. If another world, v , is i -accessible to world w , then v is also i -accessible to this world. Thus, if I am free to be free I am just free. There is less flexibility here than with CT, although of course this does not constrict our target sentence. I have already deemed that answers to the question which theory is best must be found elsewhere, in what other aspects of the theory we are willing to accept or deny.

BR interpretations of S

Lewis's analysis of book realism (BR), 'linguistic ersatzism' covers both BR and CR, as Divers intimates (Lewis 1986a, pp. 142-165; Divers 2002, p. 275). After all, CR also has the job of *representing* that the world is a certain way. An exemplary version of BR takes PWs as maximally consistent sets of sentences. These sentences could be constructed out of plain English, out of some idealised language, out of mathematics, out of distributions of 1s (for occupied) and 0s (for vacant) across axes $\langle x,y,z,t \rangle$ denoting spacetime coordinates, or from a Lagadonian language that uses objects and properties as names for themselves (Lewis 1986a, p. 145ff). For Lewis, linguistic ersatzism is the most respectable AR option. It does not fail, for him, for want of rational coherence. But it does fail, in his view, by comparison with GR (p. 165).

The issue of how PWs preclude inconsistencies also presents itself here for BR, but this will be discussed further down. There are also issues with explicit and implicit representation, with primitive modality and with impoverishment of possibilities. Again, this will be discussed further down.

BR has no trouble with S. @ is the actual world. w are constituted from the sets of sentences, among which the identical laws and facts of nature as @ are described but distinct social conditions from @ are described. Thus, w is nomologically but not socially accessible from @. v are constituted from the sets of sentences, among which are identical laws and facts of nature as @ and w are described and the identical social conditions as w are described. Thus, v are nomologically and socially accessible from v but only nomologically accessible from @. x is an actual individual. The sentences in w describe social conditions that permit x to visit the library. Various sentences in v describe x legally visiting the library (amongst a variety of things).

Implications

The *de re / de dicto* and transitivity issue goes the same as before. Since a possibility is determined by PWs and *de re* modals are homogenous with *de dicto* modals, a possibility is a possible possibility. Thus, if I am free to be free, I am just free. BR then does not have the

flexibility offered by GR, but it does not unhelpfully constrain S. The decision whether to accept BR over alternatives does not then hinge on this question.

Differences from CR and PR and benefits

BR shares many components with CR and likewise differs from PR. The book realist need not posit the existence of unactualised states of affairs or uninstantiated properties. Rather, BR needs only the existence of sets and the existence of something to count as the language plus the idea that the language represents in some way or other. This too is convenient for T, since arguably ideology has a lot to do with meaning, discourse and language. T might do well to focus on the meaningfulness created by ideologies by viewing them as forms of language. There is a strong precedent for this in Althusser 1971, Geertz (1973a), arguably Freedom (1996), and in J B Thompson (1984, 1990).

The additional conceptual issues related to representation, primitive modality and limited possibilities will be discussed after a brief over-view of nature realism.

NR interpretations of S

According to Divers, nature realism (NR) is the least developed of the options (2002, pp. 177-8). I will therefore not dedicate too much space to it here, albeit this seems closest to Kripke's intentions, already discussed, and those of Stalnaker (Kripke 1981, esp. p. 19; Stalnaker 1984; 1996). For NR, a PW is a 'world-nature', i.e. a kind of complex property that contains simpler and simple properties and contains them completely. A PW-world-nature is a special kind of structural property – a certain way the world could be, rather than a world that is a certain way. The actualised world is the world-nature that contains all the instantiated properties. Thus, the actualised world is the only world-nature that is instantiated. All other world-natures are uninstantiated (although many uninstantiated world-natures will contain instantiated properties).

NR can handle S in that the ws are uninstantiated world-natures that contain the properties such that the same laws of nature as @ hold but not the same social conditions. The vs are uninstantiated world-natures that contain the properties such that the same laws of nature and the same social conditions as w hold. @ is instantiated. In @ it is unlawful for x to visit the library, whereas it is not in w or v. Across the v-worlds, x does a number of things. In many v-worlds, x visits the library legally. Thus, by NR, x could have had more freedom than x actually has.

Generally, the same *de re / de dicto* and transitive conditions hold as in the other species, so I refer the reader to descriptions already provided above. There is one exception: ACT, articulated by philosophers who stand closest to NR: e.g, Stalnaker (1987), Sider (2002, 2006) and Paul (2006). As it stands, ACT is a metaphysical thesis (and bears a close resemblance

to fictionalist GR) (cf. Sider 2002, pp. 35ff). Therefore, discussion of that strand of actualism will be postponed until the next chapter.

Benefits of NR

The difference between (non-CT) NR and the others is that NR is probably closest to what people mean, or want to mean, in referring to PWs. As Stalnaker and Kripke both insist, Lewis is wrong to paraphrase ‘ways things could have been’ into ‘worlds that are a way’ (Lewis 1973, pp. 84-91; Kripke 1981, p. 19; Stalnaker 1984; 1996). This could be seen as a benefit to NR, since then PWs can be treated as *sui generis* (or nearly such) without seemingly extravagant ontological commitments. Informally and anecdotally, NR attracts fewer incredulous stares and greater agreement – a point which Lewis acknowledges (1973, p. 86; 1986a, pp. 133-135) (discussed later on). Thus, NR appears to face fewer obstacles as an application for analysing IMs.

Note that, as with all species of AR, NR does not contain unactualised individuals (only actual instantiated or uninstantiated properties). Nonactual facts about individuals are obtained by representing individuals in certain ways – just as testimonials, reports, CVs, newspapers, blog posts and social media profiles represent actual individuals in certain ways. It is possible for some to be less accurate than others. Then, there are many PWs (on any actualist designation) that misrepresent actual individuals – as having certain intrinsic or extrinsic, simple or complex properties.

Conclusions about AR’s suitability for S

It is concluded in this section that the various approaches to AR have their own virtues. All can handle statements of the kind S, which appear crucial for explicating ideologies, such as liberalism. With the possible exception of ACT, to be discussed in Chapter VI, they do not allow for important *de dicto* / *de re* distinctions and the non-transitivity of modality, regarding ideological relevant cases – i.e. in attributing possible possibilities to individuals in this world. We concluded that this isn’t overly restrictive for S, although it does mean that this reduction in flexibility is a consequence of adopting AR. This may already be undesirable for ideology analysis. However, since cases of modal non-transitivity appear contentious, this cannot be an issue on which to choose between AR and GR. We can only acknowledge it as an outcome of doing so.

The above discussion covered some ideologically-relevant semantic issues for adopting GR or one of the AR competitors, and proved inconclusive in deciding between them. The following section discusses some ideologically-relevant conceptual issues.

§V.V Question Two: Conceptual issues

Lewis cites a number of issues that, according to him, make AR more ‘troublesome’, less theoretically beneficial and less weighty on balance than GR (1986a, pp. 136-191). We can summarise the issues (following Divers 2002, pp. 181-195) as: (1) the problem of inconsistency, (2) the problem of indiscernible individuals and (3) the problem of poverty of possibilities (Lewis *op cit.* and Divers *op cit.*). (1) The problem of inconsistency, arises from the fact that AR PWs do not in principle preclude impossibilities. This is deeply problematic, since foremost among desiderata for PWs is the conceptual analysis of possibilities. Standardly, ‘P is a possibility iff there is some PW in which P’. Divers explicitly expresses the problem: if the worlds selected on the right side of the biconditional include impossibilities, then the left side must be false (2002, p. 181). Thus, AR requires some means for precluding inconsistent worlds. (2) The problem of indiscernible individuals arises from the fact that ARs which generate possibilities out of existing and instantiated qualitative facts cannot thereby distinguish distinct but qualitatively indiscernible cases. For Lewis, this is unproblematic for whole worlds, but it is problematic for individuals. I will only focus on the latter case. (3) The problem of poverty of possibilities likewise arises due to fact that ARs which generate possibilities out of existing and instantiated qualitative facts cannot therefore allow for unknowable alien properties.

We can note that (1) is an issue for all species of AR, since (as Divers 2002 explains, p. 181ff) the manner in which all species are formulated to generate possibilities from actualia does not in principle preclude impossibilities. (2) is an issue for BR and CR, since they build PWs out of already accepted instantiated and concrete entities – i.e. bits of language, mathematics, spacetime coordinates, or concrete individuals and instantiated simple properties. (3) is likewise a problem for BR and CR since what there can be is ultimately constructible out of what concretely is (and is instantiated).

The following dialectic takes the argument as settled that these three points really are problems for AR. As explained in Chapter IV, I do not, however, take as settled Lewis’s assumption that GR affords fewer non-ontological (semantic and conceptual) issues. The question is whether AR’s problems and their solutions are tolerable for T. My conclusion is that, if we dialectically ignore the question of ontology (since that has been reserved for Chapter VI), there is small reason for T to countenance the AR problems, since they are unjustifiably restrictive for an analysis of IM. By contrast, (and as previously discussed) GR can be modified to accommodate certain objections raised from the point of view of a search for T. (Note, however, that this is prior to an exploration of the fictionalist and ACT options.)

1. The problem of consistency

GR postulates PWs as *sui generis* complex, maximal, concrete entities. PWs are real, physical things, much like our world (in many cases). GR also postulates that none of these worlds are inconsistent (see esp. Lewis 1986a, p. 7, n. 3), due to the argument that nothing exists according to which one can assert truths while contradicting oneself (a claim which enjoys significant plausibility and consensus, but which is not absolutely incontrovertible – see, e.g., Priest 2013). Then, GR can analyse possibilities as facts in PWs without threat of inconsistency.

Things are otherwise for AR, however. AR is concerned to constitute PWs out of pieces of the actual world. The conditions under which the species of AR do this do not automatically preclude the possibility that a PW includes inconsistency. For example, if a PW is a subset of the combinatorial range set (CR), then the PW could contain sequences of properties and individuals that conjointly contradict one another. If a PW is a collection of sentences, or bunch of implications from collections of sentences, then some of those collections could conjointly contradict one another. If a PW is a world-nature, i.e. a structural property containing simpler properties, then some of those simpler properties may be inconsistent with one another. The only exception here is PR, which includes possibility in its definition. For PR, a PW is a maximally consistent possible state of affairs.

Lewis's complaint is that AR PWs must either resort to inconsistency or primitive modality (1986a, p. 142-65). According to Lewis's cost-benefit methodology (which some AR theorists apparently take for granted – e.g. Paul 2006, Sider 2006 etc.) inconsistency is theoretically serious, and serious overall, whereas primitive modality is undesirable but negotiable by way of comparison with competitors. By Lewis's lights, AR can rescue itself by way of primitive modality, but this is in turn outweighed by GR for lack of primitive modality (Lewis 1986a, pp. 150-57; Divers 2002, pp. 181-95). The question here is if GR indeed does outweigh AR on this score and whether, if so, this makes GR more desirable than AR for T.

Note that these questions feed back into Questions One and Two. If any approach sets restrictions on IM, the question is whether we should want those restrictions or want merely to explicate IM. That is a methodological question. In turn, Question Two: which approach to PW is preferable. In Chapters III and IV, it was concluded that T should *not* be evaluative and rule out some IMs at the expense of others. Instead, T should provide means to explicate IMs for adjudication by independent criteria. So far, it was also concluded that CT provides the best means to achieve this. However, it was also noted that GCT includes undesirable elements that would be better modified to accommodate intuitions that, it is assumed, would be consistent across ideologies. This impacts the weighting of GR. I agree with Paul (2006) in taking as a compelling, shared belief the view that essences are inherent to objects. Thus, GCT should be modified along Paul's lines, positing C-relations as mereological constituents

of objects (but nonetheless grounded in qualitative similarity), not, as Lewis has it, by way of external relations to individuals in other worlds (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, anti-essentialism was maintained, due to the potentially ideologically question-begging nature of the intuitionist arguments underpinning essentialism, in Kripke (1981), Paul (2006), Plantinga (1976) and others. Thus, essences are predicated as inherent to objects, but they cannot be constant aspects of mind- or context-independent reality.

First, the argument may be raised that GR also posits primitive modality in denying inconsistency within worlds. As Lewis himself observes, inconsistency is implicitly modal, since two sentences A and B are inconsistent if it is not possible that both A and B. We noted above that the consistency of worlds (and therefore preclusion of inconsistent PWs) is a postulate of GR. *However*, this is not quite accurate. According to accepted belief (notwithstanding Hegelians, Priest, 'Copenhagen Interpretation' quantum theorists and the like), there are no actual inconsistent facts. All true propositions are mutually consistent. This is a fact of logic (again: notwithstanding the previous-mentioned dissenters). Thus, if anything of any kind concretely exists or would exist, contradictory propositions cannot be true of it. Then, if PWs concretely exist *sui generis*, then they would have to be consistent. So, the necessary consistency of worlds results from facts of logic and the GR postulate that there are concrete possibilia. One might argue that the facts of logic themselves rest on modal assumptions (e.g. about truth-preservation), but this would be shared by all modal realists in any case. So, GR escapes the charge that PWs posit primitive modality (at this point).

Second, is GR therefore more desirable on this score for T? This depends on AR responses to the problem. The AR wants to avoid inconsistency. Both Lewis and Divers proceed to explain how AR can resort to syntactic accounts to prevent reference to modality (Lewis 1986a, pp. 150-57; Divers 2002, pp. 181-95). Put simply, syntactically, AR can define inconsistency by reference to theoremhood: P is inconsistent with S if P is not a theorem of S. Syntactically, AR can resort to axioms that exclude logical impossibilities. For e.g., it is not the case that Fa and not Fa: 'Not (F(a) and not F(a))' (Divers 2002, p. 183). The latter negative statement is a theorem of predicate logic and ought to be included in the constitution of PWs. However, not all putative absolute impossibilities can be captured syntactically. Canonically, nothing is both red and green all over at the same time (and in the same way). However, 'not (red(a) and green(a))' is not a theorem of predicate logic (*ibid.*). If we don't want to deny the existence of absolute non-logical impossibilities of this kind, then we have to resort to some form of primitivism. Then, the AR theory will have to postulate ranges of necessary truths that exclude such impossibilities (p. 184). This leads to the following issues: first, AR is unable to fully analyse all modals and, second, exactly what modal primitives should be asserted seems impossible.

The latter point is brought out by emphasising (after Lewis) that PWs will have to generate micro-physical possibilities (1986a, pp. 152-57). The laws of nature, after all, might have been otherwise, and those laws could relate to subatomic particles, fields, or some other form of basic constituent. However, we would want that the arrangement of possible micro-facts does not produce or conflict with arrangements of impossible macro-facts. The primitive modalities will have to offer suitable bridging rules between micro- and macro-possibilities that preclude incompatibilities or inconsistencies. Practically, that appears unachievable. Further, the exclusion of such impossibilities by asserting necessities might have to cover issues such as match of origins or material constitution (Divers 2002, p. 187). Those latter points are particularly problematic, since, as discussed in Chapter IV, match of origins and material constitution are ostensibly essentialist claims, which could prejudice a view on human nature.

This leads to the question whether the latter issues can be tolerated by T. The main problem is that the theory would contain many inexplicit primitive modals. Since we are compelled to treat so many modals as primitive and inexplicit, it would make sense to speak like the antirealist and treat PWs as ‘constructible’ – since the question may always be asked whether the right number of primitives are in place. In outlining and analysing our ideologies we will have to thump the table on the question of inconsistencies. However things turn out, inconsistencies must be absent. A problem here is that the ideology might itself be inconsistent, and we should want to display and explore that for the purpose of evaluation by way of general standards of reasonableness, as discussed in Chapter III. In fact, primitive consistency might be an asset. We want that the inconsistency comes not from T but from the ideology. So then, in analysing ideologies, a question for any detected inconsistency is whether it comes from T or from the ideology. (T ought to illustrate ideologies by treating the latter as sets of postulates added to T.) Suppose an ideology promotes full equality and full freedom. A question then is whether any reasonably relevant world contains both. It would be an irrelevant world if there are entirely red and green things (say), and the issue would be independent of whether human essence includes match of origins, material constitution and so forth. So, inexplicit primitive modality might not be intolerable for T. Nonetheless, this produces the idea that T and ideologies together generate worlds. In analysing IM we are looking to construct PWs, not to search them out and observe the features. To my mind, this would shift the main focus of T from ideologies to PWs as ideologies, which is a departure from our original motivation. This feature, I submit, is an imperfection, rather than a fatal flaw – but a flaw nonetheless. T can tolerate it, but would be theoretically nicer without. One thing that should be highlighted here is that an upshot of an AR analysis of IM must focus on the question whether PWs are constructible from this or that ideology. It cannot therefore pretend that consistent PWs are already unproblematically out there and all we need is to analyse ideologies by their means.

Above, I exempted PR from discussion, for it already admits primitive modality, since PWs are defined as maximally consistent and possible states of affairs. However, PR is not exempted from the above criticisms, since the question just what possibilities count is a question for PR too.

The following two issues relate to CR and BR, since they reduce PWs to instantiated actualia (plus sets). PR and NR do not have this issue, since, for them, PWs are mainly uninstantiated entities of some kind or other. Nonetheless, where the latter escape the following criticisms, they fall back on a table-thumping primitivism that returns us to the criticisms cited above. PR and NR are also susceptible to the criticism in Chapter III that T ought to explicate the broadest range of possibilities, so modality and other related components of ideologies, such as properties, propositions, mental content, etc. are better reduced and analysed by T, not postulated *sui generis*. Plus, PR and (versions of) NR are susceptible to the criticism in Chapter IV, that T ought not to presuppose essentialism, since that can beg the question in favour of certain modal attributions and rests on an intuitionism that is unjustifiable from the perspective of ideology analysis. Admittedly, there are CT (and anti-essentialist) versions of NR, but discussion of that variant must be postponed to Chapter VI, for reasons already offered.

2. The problem of indiscernible individuals

This is a problem for CR and BR. Succinctly stated, if PWs are constructed out of sets of sequences of primitive individuals and instantiated primitive properties, then there cannot be distinct but qualitatively indiscernible worlds or individuals, since sets with equivalent members are identical. Likewise, if PWs are constructed out of sets of sentences that explicitly or implicitly represent worlds and individuals, there cannot be distinct but qualitatively indiscernible worlds or individuals, since sentences that say or imply the same thing have identical consequences. (Rigid designation is no help. The device requires things to exist prior to designation, which is unavailable for possibilia reducible to language. Kripke's denial of the possibility of unicorns support this. (See Divers 2002, p. 187 and Kripke 1981, p. 157-8.))

Lewis is indifferent about the prospect of indiscernible worlds, and that will not detain us here. By contrast, the prospect of indiscernible individuals is taken as serious. If we want to say that it is possible, e.g. for there to exist a perfect crystalline lattice, infinite in every direction, each 'node' or 'individual' within that lattice will be indiscernible from the next. Nonetheless there are infinite individuals (Lewis 1986a, p. 157.) Further, if we want to say it is possible, e.g. for there to be two-way eternal recurrence, any individual within a particular epoch will be indiscernible from an individual in the next (*ibid.*).

Whether this is an issue for T seems moot. We want that our worlds are ideologically relevant. Then our worlds need to be physically like our world and like our world in other salient ways too. It would be nice if all possibilities could be covered, but the possibility of a perfect crystalline lattice is academic from the perspective of T. Two-way eternal recurrence seems more problematic, since that seems closer to a world-view or religion that T ought to analyse. Again, to the extent that possibilities of that sort are removed from our central analytical concerns, they may be moot. However, the problem is enhanced somewhat by the suggestion of the Poincaré Conjecture.⁴⁷

3. The problem of poverty of possibilities

This is a problem for CR and BR. Succinctly stated, if PWs are constructed out of sets of sequences of primitive individuals and instantiated primitive properties, then the available possibilities constrained by the actual individuals and instantiated properties. There cannot be alien properties, not instantiated in our world or not constructible from properties instantiated in our world. Likewise, if PWs are constructed out of sets of sentences that explicitly or implicitly represent worlds and individuals, there cannot be alien properties, not described, denoted or connoted by anything (or any combination of anything) in our world. (Again: rigid designation is no help, for the same reasons provided above.)

We can debate whether this is an issue for T. Once again, we want our worlds to be ideologically relevant. The chance of irrelevant possibilities is reduced by CR and BR if they exclude alien (and therefore irrelevant) possibilities. However, note the GR does not impose irrelevance on us, since she offers the resources to achieve relevance by way of relative accessibility and C-relations. CR and BR constrain us to have fewer possibilities. Perhaps this point too is moot? I have two objections. One concerns contingent non-existents. The other concerns the issue of incredulity.

Contingent non-existents

The problem was raised earlier about the fact that we want to say it is contingent that some people do not exist but might have. GR, PR and NR have no problem with this, since contingent nonexistents are either otherworldly individuals (GR), essences (PR) or some unactualized set of properties (NR). However, CR and BR have trouble handling this idea. As Divers puts it:

It could have been that (actually childless) Richard had a son even though no actual individual is such that it could have been the son of Richard. (2002, p. 213ff)

⁴⁷My thanks to Mabon Mackwilliams for explaining this to me.

If CR and BR do not wish to deny this possibility, then they would have to say that Richard's possible son is ultimately a set of sequences of already existing simple individuals and instantiated properties or a set of sentences that denote or connote Richard's son. This might be fine, although it raises contentious implications about what it means to be a person. However, the problem is complicated further by the problem (as Divers explains, pp. 217-18) that there may have been contingent facts about Richard's unborn son. It could have been that Richard has a son who was contingently a philosopher. For CR, this is problematic in that then we need distinguishable sequences of sets, one which collects properties and individuals that constitute a son of Richard who is a philosopher and one which collects properties and individuals that constitute a son of Richard who is not a philosopher. The problem here is that if Richard's son does not already exist (*ex hypothesi*) then the two sets appear to represent two different individuals, not one individual with different properties. Likewise with BR, for worlds represent individuals by containing (denoted or connoted) descriptions. However, the description of Richard's son as a philosopher and the description of Richard's son as not a philosopher are different. Then we have two individuals represented. Once again, rigid designation is no help here, since the device requires that things first exist prior to designation. This is deeply problematic and possibly fatal for BR and CR, since future generations and distinguishable contingent facts about future generations are important components of any ideology theory.

Incredulity

Another issue might relate to incredulity. In analysing ideologies, we should not be prejudiced from the outset. Lewis remarks that the earliest responses to GR were not clear objections, just 'incredulous stares' in response to the GR ontology of infinite concrete possibilia (1973, p. 86; 1986a, pp. 133-35). Lewis nonetheless takes this reaction very seriously, since he is concerned to respect common sense so far as possible (1983 p. x; 1986a, pp. 3-5ff; Nolan 2015; Beebe and McBride 2015). It is very plausible that all actualist theories are motivated by incredulity toward the GR ontology. And, indeed, there is a sense of the outright outrageous about GR. However, since ideologies are full of modal concepts, an adequate analysis ought not to be incredulous from the start. If the acceptance of GR promotes a credulous attitude more generally, then the GR attitude is preferable. However, this is a weak argument since it clearly does not follow that incredulity towards possibilia entails prejudice towards ideologies.

Perhaps there is a stronger point beneath all this, however. For Lewis, incredulity is important and counts as a worthy objection because he respects common opinion. But it *is*

significant for *our* context that common sense carries less epistemic weight. It is an important concern for ideology analysis that ‘everyday’, ‘obvious’ ideas can be ideologically determined (as some writers have argued – e.g. Marx and Engels 1846; Althusser 1971; Thompson 1984; Leopold 2013; Žižek 1994, 2009). Then it is better to *resist* incredulity if it rests on quiescent acceptance of convention. This is at least true if convention does not turn out to be cross-ideologically stable. But there is also space to challenge cross-ideologically stable intuitions if we have strong reasons to do so (e.g. theoretical serviceability). I extend this suggestion in closer relation to metaphysics in the following chapter.

Conclusion

Thus concludes our CPW analysis of Freeden’s exposition of (‘Millite’) liberalism and discussion of the options for comprehending a central element to liberalism: iterated modals. We can see that the liberal conception of freedom ties alethic to non-alethic modals, for the notion of greater possible freedoms relates closely to desirable potentials against which social conditions should be judged. This also concludes our pursuit of answers to Questions One and Two. The current chapter found that the various approaches to PW, ‘genuine’ and ‘actualist’ are all capable of handling relevant nested modals, although GR permits the non-transitivity of cases where they are prohibited by AR. Thus, for Question One, T should illustrate but not intrinsically evaluate iterated modals. Regarding Question Two, CR and BR are strictly ruled out. It was found on conceptual grounds that the two are ill-equipped to articulate ideologies more broadly, since they cannot represent intuitive and ideologically-relevant possibilities related to qualitatively identical distinct individuals and, more so, contingent non-existents. In turn, PR and NR face difficult issues regarding inconsistencies and primitive modals that appear incomprehensibly vast and risk begging the question in favour of certain IMs. This is not a terminal problem for those last two theories, but it casts them in less favourable light for T. *However*, we also argued in Chapter IV that non-CT PR and NR support essentialist doctrines that T ought to reject. This downgrades PR and NR further as candidates for Question Two. Prior to a discussion of fictionalism and ACT, GR is then triumphant in its eminent capacity for modelling the semantics and conceptual resources needed for T.

Chapter VI

Question Three: Genuine Realism versus the Alternatives

Introduction

This final chapter is addressed to Question Three, on whether the foregoing discussion reveals anything about modal metaphysics more generally. We move then from the modal concerns of the ideology theorist to the ontological concerns of the philosopher. The previous chapters sought to establish the correct methodology for T (Question One) and the PW approach most accommodating to that methodology (Question Two). The discussion focused on conceptual and semantic issues. The difficult ontological question (Question Three) was bracketed off to this chapter. The justification for that dialectic was the prospect of fictionalism, which will be explored below. This was held up as an option so that we could postpone metaphysical issues until the end.

Now we address the metaphysics. The options are three: genuine realism with counterpart theory (GCT), fictionalist genuine realism with counterpart theory (FCT) or actualist counterpart theory (ACT). Why these options? The preceding chapters recommend the concepts and logic of CT, as articulated by David Lewis (1968, 1971, 1983b, 1986a; see also Hazen 1979, Divers 2002). Since Lewis takes these as an outgrowth of GR, that suggests the ontology of GR. However, Lewis's ontology is extremely unpopular (cf. Brogaard 2006, p. 77), despite his clever arguments. (I will provide more detail later on.) In any case, it would be worth considering alternatives, to see if Lewis-style CT can fit a more accepted ontology. As many commentators have noticed (e.g. Rosen 1990; Stalnaker 1987; Sider 2002; 2006; Paul 2006), CT does not automatically entail GR; there are alternatives. CT may fit some form of AR. This approach, however, risks resurrecting troubles related to essentialism, inconsistent worlds, primitive modality, poverty of possibilities, and so forth. However, that option will be explored *after* the fictionalist option. If FCT works, we can accept all the benefits of GR without the ontological costs. And this will be preferable to ACT, since FCT is a deflationary anti-realism, involving *no* ontological commitment to PWs of any kind, concrete or abstract.

In what follows, I outline some objections to GR *concreta* before moving to consideration of the fictionalist options, and then on to a discussion of ACT. I conclude that fictionalist GR *could* work significantly well for our purposes, although it produces complications. FCT is full of problems, but it offers some interesting considerations for ideology discourse. Recall that, in Chapter IV, we acknowledged the risk of an extreme form of relativism. If we add fictionalism to this account, our everyday beliefs are systematically false, which seems even worse. I consider some options for reducing these fictionalist difficulties. In the final sections, I acknowledge an actualist approach to CT, but conclude that it is generally

unsuccessful. By this stage, we have a choice between GR and FGR, which contain their own individual foibles. In conclusion, I lean toward GR. As before, this argument is not knockdown, and it is admitted that the fictionalist variant offers some worthwhile submissions for our understanding of mind-independent reality that appear to fit ideas found elsewhere in philosophy and in ideology theory, and suggests some further lines of enquiry. Ultimately, however, I take the overall thesis to supply additional reasons (to Lewis's) to think GR true.

Consider the following analyses:

'It is possible for there to be general welfare iff there is a possible world in which there is general welfare'

'I am free to marry whomever I choose iff I have many counterparts in other possible worlds who marry a variety of different people'

We resolved in previous chapters that biconditionals of that sort should allow only the explication of details for the purpose of decision-making by other standards. We also resolved that GCT is the best vehicle for that explication. In this chapter, the question is different: given the resolution to speak ideology in GR vernacular, how should the vernacular be taken, metaphysically speaking? If we have overriding reasons to take the language at face value, this suggests results for the metaphysics of modality: adopt GR simpliciter. Perhaps we should not accept these results, however. Below, I consider strong motivations to reject GR ontology, before exploring existing options for speaking GR without the metaphysics: fictionalism and actualist counterpart theory.

§VI.I The GR controversy

The previous chapters established that the semantics and conceptual resources of GR (under modification) are better suited to the goals of T. If we follow Lewis's cost-benefit methodology (and his assessment of the costs and benefits), this would add sufficient weight to accepting GR overall. If GR improves our comprehension and exploration of ideologies, it has even greater use, which adds to the reasons to think it true. Further, we also concluded in Chapter IV that 'ideology goes all the way down', that the modification to GR compels the inconstant context-dependence of the mereological constitution of objects. So, this would also recommend the acceptance of GR as a metaphysical theory overall. However, GR is highly controversial, some might say indefensible.

One questionable issue is Lewis's methodology. It remains possible for a theory to fulfil Lewis's criteria but turn out false. However, many actualist opponents to Lewis adopt his methodology. To way up the options, it would therefore be an acceptable strategy to explore whether Lewis fails on his own terms. This may happen in our context if the alternatives – a deflationary anti-realist fictionalism or one of the actualist variants – accommodate the methodological goals for T without the same ontological costs. In the previous chapters, it was established that non-CT variants of actualism cannot do this. It remains to be seen whether fictionalism or ACT can. Note that, since we have argued that ideology goes all the way down, a decision in favour of fictionalism or ACT in our context would recommend a decision in favour of them metaphysically *tout court*.

According to Lewis's utilitarian approach, the alternatives will prove less costly if, on balance, they have fewer theoretical problems, greater theoretical gains or fewer ontological costs (e.g. 1986a, pp. 3-5). How that balance is to be gauged, again, is debatable, and there is no space to explore that here (cf. Nolan 2015). With regard to theoretical problems, Lewis acknowledges a number of seemingly serious objections to GR. Briefly stated, these involve the complaint that non-actual existence is unintelligible and self-contradictory (1986a, pp. 97-101); that GR generates paradoxical worlds that are bigger than themselves (pp. 101-108); Benacerraf-style worries regarding knowledge of PWs (pp. 108-115); and that GR leads to scepticism and/or moral indifference (pp. 122-128). Lastly, Lewis acknowledges the severe ontological costs of GR, that prompt 'incredulous stares' from his colleagues (p. 133). Lewis provides a number of responses to these questions. Furthermore, there have been various other criticisms raised against GR, e.g. Kripke's (1981) 'Humphrey objection' and Fara and Williamson's more recent (2005) attack on CT. Kripke's objection was discussed in Chapter IV, and there is no space here to provide a sufficient discussion of Fara and Williamson. With regard to the other objections, there is not enough space to explore them in detail, but I will discuss some important responses.

To begin, for Lewis, the claim that 'Everything there (unrestrictedly) is actual' is certainly common sense. But then, so is the view that a possibility is an alternative to actual fact (1986a, pp. 97-101). Lewis can agree with the second but not the first. For him, both views are common-sensical, but neither are obviously analytic and both say something substantive (pp. 99-100). Either way, it is not unacceptable for a philosopher to reason a case for taking common words differently, and this, after all, is what Lewis's 1986a sets out to achieve (cf. Lewis 1971). So, that objection can be sensibly discarded.

The objection that GR generates paradoxical worlds, runs briefly as follows. Lewis's Principle of Recombination (1986a, pp. 86-92) allows that, for any set of parts in some PW, there is another PW with a recombination of those parts as compossibilities (provided they occupy separate space-time regions (or equivalents) and provided they do not create overlapping worlds) (pp. 102-104). If so, there is a PW that is a recombination of all the parts of all the PWs. Such a world would contain itself as a part, and so would be larger than itself: a contradiction (*ibid.*). This can be prevented only by way of a plausible bootstrapping technique. The Principle of Recombination would be restricted by some upper limit. Then there is a natural metaphysical limit to the size of PWs. However, since this limit is not a principle of logic, wherever the limit lies, it could have lied elsewhere. Then we face gratuitous primitive modality lying outside the analytic remit of GR (p. 103). Lewis responds: the thesis of GR just is that such a limit exists (*ibid.*). This might seem unsatisfactory, but note that, first, AR has to contend with a larger degree of modal primitivism, so they are companions in guilt, at the very least. Further, this style of response is already familiar in metaphysics. Therefore, it does not tell heavily against GR.

The complaint about scepticism or moral indifference can also be rejected as misconceived, since GR is meant to respect our common-sense modal intuitions (according to Lewis). Then whatever epistemic and moral commitments and worries we have and seek to pursue can be understood by way of GR and adjudicated by independent criteria (much like T) (pp. 123-128). Often, people see no wrong in morally privileging their friends and family. So there should be no wrong in morally privileging this-worldly individuals. But, in any case, GR allows for the articulation of a variety of moral outlooks.

Lewis also dismisses the Benacerraf-style complaint that we could not possibly know about causally disconnected PWs (or possibilities, if they are to be reductively analysed with PWs), since knowledge is a *causal* relation between knower and known. Similarly, Benacerraf offers a dilemma about mathematical knowledge (pp. 108-105; cf. Stalnaker 1996). On one horn of the dilemma, we accept a platonist ontological interpretation of face-value mathematics. Then how could we know about mathematical facts? But if mathematical objects are non-spatiotemporal and non-causal entities, we could know nothing about them. On the other horn, we adapt the language of mathematics to generate an ontology (say, nominalist,

instrumentalist, or whatever) with a more acceptable epistemology. But this is to impoverish the language of mathematics to quell philosophical worries. Lewis's response appeals to the credibility of mathematicians over philosophers (*op cit.*). Better to accept a questionable epistemology and metaphysics to accommodate a credible theoretical practice than to flatten the practice to cure philosophical anxieties. By analogy, then, things should go likewise with modality and PWs. Better to accept the rich variety of GR modal locutions, conceptual resources and their ontological interpretation than the alternatives.

There is a lot to say about this response, much of which would steer us off track. There are however a couple of things to note, especially since modal epistemology has been a recurring concern throughout this thesis. First, modal sentences are significantly dissimilar from mathematical expressions, and there are 'legitimate' philosophical questions we could ask about the extent of possibilities (more 'legitimate' than philosophical worries about the extent of numbers). These questions may well be answered by AR or some other competitor to GR (cf. Stalnaker *op cit.*). Second, it is a feature of Lewis's own methodology that we should accept adaptations to our practices and beliefs, within a certain region of enquiry, if that produces greater net theoretical virtue. This should hold for modal epistemology too. An epistemology that reduces our common modal locutions could feasibly be acceptable if, on balance, it is theoretically preferable (although one question is how that can be measured). And again, it seems this is a more negotiable affair than mathematics. The growing contemporary literature on modal epistemology would seem to bear this point out (cf. Williamson 2007, Vaidya 2011, Lowe 2013, Tahko 2015). Indeed, it is common philosophical practice to ask questions about the metaphysical *and* epistemological status of controversial, proposed facts. So then, a more instructive analogy than mathematics might be meta-ethics (cf. Mackie 1977), given the content under analysis. In any case, it should at least be noted that the GR epistemology adds to *both* the *epistemological* and *ontological* costs of GR. Accessibility relations and C-relations are meant to conceptually connect us to causally disconnected spatiotemporal regions. Like PWs, these are primitive. So, Lewis is asking us to buy into more mystery. Not only are we expected to accept a controversial metaphysical jungle, we are to presume controversial and magical ways of knowing about it too. Thus, I count this as a powerful objection to GR that should motivate enquiry into less epistemologically questionable theories.

Lewis takes the final objection, the incredulous stare (discussed in Chapter V), as the most serious (1986a, pp. 133-135). The objection is difficult to refute because it is more of an attitude than an argument, formed of declaratives. The postulation of infinite concrete PWs is ontologically profligate, offensive to common sense, thereby provoking incredulous stares. Lewis takes this reaction seriously, since appeals to common sense form an essential plank in his methodology (cf. Nolan 2015). Recall, however, that the methodology can also contest

common sense, but only if that produces sufficient net theoretical gain (Lewis exploits an analogy here with platonism about set theory (pp. 3-5)). Further, Lewis is insistent that a theory that departs too far and too often from common opinion is likely to be false (because it would issue in doublethink (1983a, p.x)). Certainly, the incredulous stare is powerful and common, and (anecdotally), one is likely to encounter it in conversation on the topic with others. Furthermore, the attitude could be expressed cognitively, e.g. by way of Occam's Razor. (Lewis has a response to that, however, by distinguishing forms of parsimony (1973, pp. 86-88).) I surmise that the incredulous stare would persist across ideological positions too. Possibly, we might counter it with strong additional reasons. A strong reason would be that alternative theories come up significantly short in other areas. But then we need to weigh up the alternatives. So we should count this as another powerful objection to GR that should motivate enquiry into less ontologically questionable theories.

Nonetheless (despite this and the above objections), it still remains to be seen that alternatives to Lewis fare any better. Lewisian GR continues to exert a powerful influence in presenting a challenge to contemporary modal philosophers. This hangs on the overall conceptual and semantic strengths of GR which we witness at play here, in the context of a search for T. Perhaps Lewis's challenge can be successfully answered. Or perhaps the incredulous reaction is akin to the Renaissance reaction to solar-centric astronomy, and the Incredulous are playing Bellarmine to Lewis's Galileo. Nonetheless, in light of the above consideration, the next two sections entertain Bellerminite responses to GR.

We can note at this point that, for the above reasons and more, (almost all) contemporary analytic philosophers reject GR (cf. Brogaard 2006, p. 77). The Divers of 2002 is a possible exception. Divers' conclusion in that book is that GR is stronger than the alternatives. But as Divers makes clear there, the conclusion results from rigorous comparisons with species of AR, but no anti-realist options. Thus, a stronger conclusion cannot be established while anti-realist alternatives have not been properly explored and the differences weighed up, which is Divers' current project.⁴⁸ All the same, GR is very far from orthodoxy in modal philosophy. Perhaps the above allusion to Bellarmine and Galileo demonstrates (if it demonstrates anything) that institutional incredulity is insufficient refutation of a theory alone (and ought to be a warning against the epistemology of scorn that sometimes accompanies philosophical discussion). But the Divers point is also valid: a strong position cannot be maintained without

⁴⁸In another paper, Divers articulates a form of modal agnosticism and raises the question whether we really require *de re* modal predication (2004). It should be clear from the previous chapters, that, due to the existence of ideology and of the mundane individuation and categorisation of objects, we cannot eliminate talk of modal properties.

sufficient exploration of the alternatives. Support for GR will not be well-motivated if better options are available.

Strengths of GR

The previous chapters offered comparisons with a number of competing theories, but a full elaboration of the possible differences would prove an impossibly gargantuan task, and would exceed the remit of this thesis. In what follows, I dedicate space to fictionalism, then to ACT.

Before proceeding with a discussion of modal fictionalism, it would be worth reminding the reader that, in answering Questions One and Two, we have argued for the superiority of GR (under modification) for T. To add to this, we can point out that many opponents to GR accept the semantic and conceptual strengths of that doctrine too.

Take, for example, Rosen:

...[I]n discussions of modal subtleties – discussions which can hardly be avoided nowadays – the language of possible worlds has become a nearly indispensable tool. For it permits the articulation of modal views with a clarity and vividness that cannot be achieved by other means – so much so that even philosophers who officially renounce the idiom often find themselves talking about possible worlds anyway when it becomes important to make a modal claim precise or a modal argument rigorous. There is a great risk of doublethink in such circumstances: asserting the existence of worlds at one moment while denying it another. (1990, p. 327-28)

And for Lewis, of course, this provides reasons to think GR (and not AR) true. It is notable that Rosen accepts this point without argument:

I will assume that Lewis is right to say that *if* there are entities fit to play the role of possible worlds in a general account of modality, they must be the robust, largely concrete objects the realist believes in. I will also suppose that Lewis has successfully blunted the more *philosophical* objections to modal realism, like the charge that it renders modal knowledge impossible or that it leads to paradoxes of various sorts. (p. 328)

Rosen proceeds to elaborate a form of modal fictionalism (discussed below). This would seem a reasonable approach. *If* Lewis's responses to the charges of paradox are successful, then the fictionalisation of GR would be preferable to the alternatives, since it is more powerful and applicable on other fronts.

Attempts to present an actualist version of CT bear this point out. Compare Paul (2006), or Sider (2006, p. 2):

[C]ounterpart theory is [...] theoretically virtuous; that is the best argument for it. i) Unlike identity, the counterpart relation need not be an equivalence relation. This flexibility is welcome when dealing with various modal paradoxes (Lewis 1968). ii) Bare-bones counterpart theory may be augmented by the claim that different counterpart relations, stressing different dimensions of similarity, count in different contexts. This context-sensitivity of *de re* modal predication matches our shifting *de re* modal intuitions, and also avoids certain other modal paradoxes (Lewis 1971; 1986, section 4.5). iii) Counterpart theory is consistent with a qualitative metaphysics of modality, according to which modality *de dicto* is more basic than modality *de re*—the most fundamental modal facts are purely qualitative, descriptive, general. For counterpart theory reduces *de re* modality to similarity and “intra-world” talk of possibilia (i.e., talk of possibilia and their features that is silent on the sorts of inter-world relations that would ground *de re* modality. Such talk may be taken in Lewisian fashion at face value, or reduced in the manner of the next section of this paper.) Anyone full of the reductionist spirit should welcome this feature of counterpart theory. [...]⁴⁹

Sufficient to observe, then, that the theoretical benefits of CT have been acknowledged by opponents to GR. This strengthens the arguments provided in previous chapters and also supplies reasons in support of GR in answering Question Three. Nonetheless, the above objections produce incentives to seek alternatives for GR. We wish to avail ourselves of the conceptual and semantic virtues GR talk provides. Perhaps, however, there are ways to interpret that talk to avoid the unwanted ontology. Modal fictionalism and actualist counterpart theory promise just that.

⁴⁹However, not long ago a serious semantic challenge to counterpart theory was mounted by Fara and Williamson (2005), relating to the 'actuality' operator. In his 2006, Sider attempts to defend counterpart theory against this challenge. However, Sider admits to the strength of a rebuttal from Williamson and has decided not to edit or publish the 2006 paper, apparently due to the strength of Williamson's challenge and rebuttal. I do not have space to discuss Fara and Williamson 2005 or the responses. However, I should point out that the debate is ongoing (see e.g. Rigoni and Thomason 2014) and that counterpart theory still overcomes a number of paradoxes and difficulties faced by alternatives. The argument in previous chapters also established that counterpart theory is preferable to the alternatives for the purpose of T. Nonetheless, I should acknowledge that further research would have to engage directly with this debate in context of T.

§VI.II Modal fictionalism

In this section, I discuss the prospects of adopting modal fictionalism as an interpretation of T. I will take for granted that the fictionalist account is of GCT. After all, GCT is theoretically stronger. Furthermore, if a fictionalist account of GCT is successful, this knocks out any motivation for pursuing ACT. There are some very compelling reasons to adopt fictionalism in our context. However, there are some apparent difficulties too. This section attempts to show how far fictionalism can be pushed as an interpretation for T, derives implications from doing so, and discusses some apposite objections. It is concluded that fictionalism might not be totally beyond defence but it raises so many criticisms and requires so many fixes that it brings the anti-GR incredulity driving it into question.

An account of modal fictionalism has been offered by a few writers (notably Rosen 1990, 1995; Menzies and Pettit 1994; Noonan 1994; Kim 2005; cf. Nolan 2016), but the seminal text is Rosen (1990). The primary impetus is of course the incredulous stare directed at GR (p. 328). Fictionalism removes ontological commitment to unactual concreta. We could add that, for any well-motivated modal metaphysics, the fictionalist option must be adequately explored and appraised (cf. Divers 2002, 2004; Paul 2006). Furthermore, it provides a solution to epistemological concerns, discussed above (Rosen 1990, pp. 339-40). Other fictionalisms have been offered as responses to similar metaphysical and epistemological worries in mathematics (Field 1980), science (van Fraassen 1980), ethics (Mackie 1977; Joyce 2005), regarding composite objects (Dorr 2005), fictions (Lewis 1978) and so forth (cf. Rosen 2005, p. 17-8).⁵⁰ The principle uniting them all is that a theory within some region of discourse 'does not have to be true to be good' (Kalderon 2005, p. 1ff). As Kalderon puts it: 'The suggestion common to each is that the aim of inquiry need not be truth, and that the acceptance of a ... theory need not involve belief in its content' (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, the fictionalist discourse should be taken at 'face value' as 'genuine representations of how things stand' (Rosen 2005, p. 14). In brief, a fictionalist about some matter has it that the matter is false, but we should accept it as *if* true, due to some other, non-factive criteria or norms. Acceptance, then does not come down to belief, but some other commitment whereby 'quasi-assertions' are offered in defence, without the attendant ontological commitments that face-value interpretation of the discourse usually brings. The fictionalist interprets the semantics of her discourse so as to permit use of declaratives without implying the existence of things the declaratives denote, thereby avoiding tricky metaphysical difficulties.

Fictionalism is standardly a form of deflationary anti-realism. The modal fictionalist is deflationary and anti-realist about the existence of PWs. (Note that modality, then, is analysed

⁵⁰A notable precursor is Vaihinger 1924

using PW discourse, and it is the PW discourse that is then fictionally deflated (cf. Nolan 2016.) The modal fictionalist allows talk of PW, but this is to be taken as a convenient *façon de parler* and nothing more (Rosen 1990, p. 328).

The Story Prefix

Rosen accepts the language, semantics and conceptual analyses of GR. Thus, a sentence expressing a possibility (P) is to be analysed as a sentence expressing a PW locution (P*).

P) Possibly there are turquoise sheep

is to be analysed by way of

P*) There are possible worlds in which there are turquoise sheep

Thus

1) P iff P*

(P) Possibly there are turquoise sheep iff (P*) there are possible worlds in which there are turquoise sheep.

(P) is a mundane modal sentence, to be analysed or explained by (P*). On a GR account, of course, (P*) is interpreted at face-value, is true and entails the existence of concrete possible worlds and individuals.⁵¹ However, for fictionalism, either (P*) is false, or (P*) is true but understood as elliptical for

FP*) According to GR, there are possible worlds in which there are turquoise sheep⁵²

‘According to GR...’ functions like a fiction or story prefix, much like ‘According to the Tolkien novels, hobbits have furry feet’. The prefix is non-factive, akin to the non-factive prefix used in

⁵¹By contrast, on an AR account, (P*) is interpreted at face-value, is true but entails the existence of PWs that are in turn composed of and reduced to materials in the actual world. As explained in the previous chapter, a PW for AR is either a maximally consistent set of states of affairs or propositions, a subset of all the sequences of combinations of basic properties and individuals, or a ‘world-nature’ structural property.

Hypothetically, a non-cognitivist approach would interpret (P*) as a paraphrase of some non-truth-apt proposition, such as an exclamation or imperative. Then there is no question of truth or the entailment of the existence of PWs. Other approaches involve versions of modalism or outright abstentionism, which reject analyses such as (1) in the first place.

⁵²Rosen and others use ‘According to PW...’, but since I have used ‘PW(s)’ liberally as a flexible abbreviation for possible world(s) throughout, this would strain the patience of the reader. Thus, I opt for ‘According to GR...’.

AR in the scope of 'There is a PW...'. Thus, it does not entail the existence of its sub-clause. For the fictionalist, then, the story prefix is either absent (then (P*) is false) or, more often, it is silent (and (P*) is true and understood as (FP*)) (Rosen 1990, p. 332). Thereby, we are never under any compulsion to accept the existence of PWs of any kind, 'genuine' or 'actualist', concrete or abstract.

The fictionalist wishes to continue talking about PWs, and wants the semantic and conceptual benefits of doing so, without the exorbitant metaphysical debt of GR. States Rosen (in a memorable and well-remembered statement that he might now regret!), 'As Russell might have said, the method has (as least) the advantages of theft over honest toil' (p. 335). Fictionalism recommends the following analysis of modal sentences such as (P):

2) P iff, according to GR, P

(*ibid.*)

Thus (according to Rosen 1990) the story prefix allows that we can accept all of the postulates of GR, with the caveat that these are true *according to* GR, conduct the same conceptual analyses of GR (which permits the reduction of modals, counterfactuals, properties, propositions, mental content and states of affairs to PWs) and provides the same inferential resources of CT, along with *de re* modal predication, the non-transitivity of counterpart relations, the inconstant context-dependence of essences and potentials and (presumably even) the reducibility of all facts to qualities (Lewis's celebrated doctrine of 'Humean supervenience' (Lewis 1986b, p. ix-xvii)) (Rosen 1990, p. 333-335). There is one exception: Rosen also proposes the inclusion of an encyclopaedia of possible facts. I will return to that last point below. Nonetheless, fictionalism, it is claimed, does not run up the ontological bill of GR. We require no more than the actual world to underpin truth *according to* Lewis's theories and books. Furthermore, fictionalism avoids GR's epistemological difficulties too. To read Lewis's books is a straightforward causal relationship between knower and known, and it is (relatively) uncontroversial how we achieve that.

Modal fictionalism has faced numerous challenges and difficulties over the years. I will not have space to cover them all here, but will focus on some of the more pertinent issues below. First, there are a number of questions related to the acceptability of GR within the fictionalist context and the implications for our relativistic conclusion (acknowledged in Chapter IV) that brings the discussion back into the purview of ideology theory.

Norms

For the fictionalist, the fictionalised discourse is good but not true (Rosen 2005, p. 15). So, we are to accept the discourse, but not because it is true. Further, the fictionalist is *committed* to that discourse and therefore willing to defend it (p. 21). So, the fictionalist has to appeal to some aim, norm or virtue other than truth.

For van Fraassen (1980), the aim of science is empirical adequacy (cf. Kalderon 2005). For Field (1980), mathematics has superb practical application and theoretical coherence, elegance and so forth (Kalderon *ibid.*). Our question is whether GR meets similar such virtues without being true. For Rosen (1990), it is assumed that GR wins out over competitors in terms of theoretical gains (as defended vigorously in Lewis 1986a). However, the context of the current discussion introduces the constraint whether GR meets similar such virtues without being true *for the purpose of analysing ideological modality* (T). It should be noted that a quest for T seems perfectly suited to such a question. After all, it seems odd to insist that a clear method for deciding between competing positions itself compels us to ontological conclusions.

Conveniently, the latter question has already been addressed in answering our Question One. To repeat, it was concluded that T should assist decision-making between competing ideological positions by representing the PW implications of ideological modals. T should represent a gap between (U)-visions and possibilities, should allow for context-dependent and inconstant *de re* modal predications, and should accommodate nested modal sentences, such as 'It is physically possible to acquire social possibilities and capacities you do not current possess'. Furthermore, T should represent the widest range of possibilities for this purpose and not arbitrarily constrain possibilities in advance of analysis. Lastly, T should allow the application of independent criteria of assessment to appraise the various ideological positions. All of these methodological goals *already* provide a means to accept GR independent of the truth of GR.⁵³ Thus, GR is good for T independent of GR's truth.

However, note that there is a difference between the before and after stages of decision-making. GR is good for T since it fulfils the decision-making role of T. But there is also a question of where to stand once the decision-making process has terminated. Let's say T has been carried out and we have settled on a particular ideological position. Do we then claim that the ideological position is true and that whatever PWs support that position exist? But this is ruled out by the fictionalist approach. Then the question is what norms or goals to settle upon in the post-decision stage. The answer has already been supplied: whatever independent criteria have been plugged into T for evaluating ideologies.⁵⁴ Thus, GR is good

⁵³At this stage, this wouldn't rule out the assumption of truth behind any independent criteria of assessment, since they wouldn't assert the truth of GR (and it is GR that has been fictionalised). However, I raise some issues with that idea below.

⁵⁴ See n. 53, above

for T pre-decision and the ideology accepted post-decision is good due to whatever criteria we adopt in utilising T.

It is worth noting that the literature on fictionalism also distinguishes between hermeneutic and revolutionary approaches. On a hermeneutic fictionalist reading, *really* fictionalism is the right way to interpret what we have already been doing. Thus, for van Fraassen (1980), empirical adequacy, predictability and so forth is all that scientists really care about. The truth of unobservable theoretical scientific entities is an idle philosophical question. Truth wasn't at issue to begin with. On a revolutionary fictionalist reading, fictionalism is the approach we do not take, but should. Thus, for Field (1980), mathematicians might seem to assert the existence of platonic abstract entities. And they should continue to do so. But they *should* not presume to take these assertions literally. *Really*, what matters is application, coherence, elegance and so forth. That is how we ought to take things, even if we currently do not. (cf. Kalderon 2005.)

Now, it would seem that a fictionalist GR for T is something of a mixture. I submit people would readily insist an analysis of competing ideologies using PWs already partakes in fiction of some kind. I suspect a kind of incredulity and resistance to the idea that we should proceed from a discussion about politics to one about metaphysics. So fictionalism appears extremely well-suited to the task. That applies to the pre-decision stage. However, the post-decision stage has somewhat revolutionary consequences. Then, we are to say that an ideology cannot be true, even if it can be good and better than alternatives. Since I also argued myself into the corner of admitting that ideology goes all the way down, I have to explore the implications of this under a fictionalised reading.

Relativism

Attributions of essence and potential are central to ideologies. Attributions of essence and potential are also central to our understanding and perception of mundane objects. Such attributions are context-dependent and inconstant. That generates the (in my view, unwanted) conclusion that ideologies go all the way down, since then there is nothing in principle to distinguish ideological opinions from everyday, mundane perception. The latter is as negotiable as the former. This seems quite undesirable, since it opens the door to wholesale relativism, and it is seemingly counterintuitive and inconsistent, since everyday perception is putatively very unlike ideologies – as identified in Chapter II. However, we already concluded that there is nothing in principle to distinguish the uncontroversial essences and potentials of mundane objects from the controversial essences and potentials of human nature, advanced by ideologies. This was a consequence of adopting Lewisian anti-essentialism and CT, but adapting that theory to locate C-relations within the mereological composition of complex objects.

As discussed in Chapter IV, a solution to this problem can be sought in T's provision for independent criteria of assessment. Certainly, we cannot allow that essences and potentials are constant features of mind-independent reality. Still less are they guaranteed by some remarkable human gift of intuition. Essences and potentials are downstream of some prior set of context-dependent background groupings that determine them. However, nothing rules out the possibility that some background groupings guarantee greater verisimilitude than others. So, there is latitude to counter relativism with the possibility of contexts or theories with greater warrant than alternatives. This idea corresponds well with many issues and concerns within epistemology and the application of abductive reasoning to questions of truth, objectivity and mind-independence (cf. Russell 1912, Ch. 2; Vogel 1990; Campbell and Cassam 2014). Then, the practicality of our everyday perceptions, consensus and so forth, may contribute towards our criteria for assessment, and might even reintroduce the distinction between ideologies and everyday thought or bring ideologies into line with the former. Metaphysically, there is a cleanliness to this approach, since it promises to accommodate many intuitions about the external world, and attributions of essence and potential, but without a controversial commitment to essentialism.

The problem in the present context is that verisimilitude is off the cards for a fictionalist (if we adopt the ideology-all-the-way-down modification). Pre-decision, GR might be good, and best, for T without being true; post-decision, some ideology might be good or best, by way of applying T, plus some additional norms. But what we arrive at cannot be true, since we have now placed *all* our eggs in the fictionalist basket. If (hypothetically) we build in norms that allow for judgements of mind-independence and constancy, we at the same time cannot speak of objectivity or truth. *Everything* is fictional.

Is there are solution to this problem? In some sense, yes. For the fictionalist, some fictions are signally better than others and compel our acceptance. Then fictionalism does not imply that just anything goes, as the 'everything is fictional' slogan might misleadingly suggest. It does imply, however, either that human epistemic powers are exceptionally frail and unsatisfactory, or that conceptions of objectivity and truth are wrongheaded to begin with. How then are we to understand our best theories about what there is when we are in principle forbidden from talking about what there is?

A clue might be offered by Walton (1993), and his notion of 'prop-oriented make-believe'. Walton's proper concern is literary imagination and fiction, but his writing on the matter might be instructive for our purposes. For Walton, make-believe can be content-oriented or prop-oriented. The former is more common to our understanding of make-believe, involving the use of props to (e.g. a rag doll or toy car (p. 65)) in service of some fictional scenario or game. The latter, by contrast, involves the use of make-believe to understand or interact with certain 'props'. Thus, we might say Sicily is the island off the tip of the 'boot' of

Italy, or we might distinguish the cloud that looks like a face, so as to point those things out to companions. In these cases, we lack the conceptual and linguistic resources we might have had were we cartographers or meteorologists. Instead, we make do with make-believe.

The point could be pressed further by suggesting that, on a fictionalism that goes all the way down, *all* our descriptions should be treated this way. But this doesn't mean anything goes, since some fictions are better than others. In fact, it might be that certain circumstances secure the adequacy of certain fictions. Walton:

[T]o say 'That pipe is male' is a colourful way (a slightly off-colour way) of saying that a pipe is designed to fit inside another pipe, that it is threaded on the outside. The speaker implies a certain sort of game of make-believe in which being threaded on the outside makes it fictional that a pipe is male. She goes through the motions, at least, of fictionally asserting that the pipe is male, and doing so she, in effect, claims it to be fictional that the pipe is male, i.e. she claims it is threaded on the outside. The assertion amounts to the claim that certain circumstances obtain, namely, the circumstances that would make it fictional that she speaks truly if, fictionally, she asserts the literal truth of what she says. (1993, p. 70)

The termination of T might allow us to assert that certain circumstances obtain that would make it fictional that we speak truly if, fictionally, we assert the literal truth of what we say. In this case, of course, it would never be possible to assert the literal truth, since we are committed to talk of essences and potentials along with the commitment that there are no such things. Then, there is something anomalous beyond our (quasi-)assertions that secures their adequacy that we cannot quite get at.

This raises the question (that cannot be addressed here), whether such circumstances are external or internal. We might, for example, be compelled to entertain some fiction because we cannot but think a certain way. Perhaps we cannot but think that people have personal identities, for example, or that objects have essential identity conditions. For a realist, that is unsatisfactory, since the irrevocability of our beliefs is no guarantee of the veracity of those beliefs (cf. Stroud 2011). Such questions are not unique to this approach, however, but continuing topics of philosophical debate.

An interesting suggestion that results from the above is that, if we construe ideologies as features of the socio-political world, the fictionalist offers some insight into their underpinnings. To view things thus is to approach ideology from a different perspective from that pursued hitherto, i.e. observing the circulation of ideologies amongst mass publics rather than looking to decide between them. Fictionalism accommodates actualism. On this account (usually) a fiction is just some contingent and empirical feature of the actual world (although

this can be debated, cf. Kim 2005, Nolan 2016, Divers 1999). Then, if ideologies involve modals that are underpinned by fictions, stories or narratives of some kind, then the latter ought to be physically locatable in the actual world, in existing institutions and practices. Louis Althusser's (1971) discussion of the material nature of ideologies would speak to these insights, and so too would Freeden's notion of 'cultural adjacency' (1996). An ideology is then a fiction developed and promulgated by manifestos, parties, power structures, law courts, museums, schools, perhaps even naming practices and other linguistic conventions (as in Althusser *ibid.*). This, however, is an interesting aside that departs from the main discussion.

Thus concludes the overview of a fictionalist approach to T. It should be noted that fictionalism can be made to fit T, and has some considerable benefits. It escapes the objections to AR provided in previous chapters and allows us to utilise GR for T without the explosive hypostatisation of infinite concrete PWs. It provides more acceptable epistemological and ontological consequences. Also, fictionalism sits easily in the context of T, since it enables us to keep discussion of political ideas and reasons separate from talk of metaphysics. We have noted that the adoption of fictionalism would also bring many consequences, first in shifting acceptance criteria from truth to the methodological goals for T and, second, in fictionalising all our (ideological and pre-ideological) attributions of essence and potential. These are interesting consequences that might offend some epistemological realists and modal intuitionists, but they are not fatal flaws for the theory.

Issues

However, since its inception, modal fictionalism has encountered various objections. The price, it would seem, of avoiding the ontology of GR is high in terms of the theoretical clean-up work involved. There is insufficient space to cover some of these objections (e.g. Brock 1993, Rosen 1993, Hale 1995, Kim 2005) and their responses (Noonan 1994, Rosen 1995, Divers 1999, Kim 2005). However, several objections are of particular note in our context: the fiction is incomplete (Rosen 1990, Brogaard 2006, Nolan 2016); it relies on primitive modality (*ibid.*); and it cannot deliver PW semantics (Divers 1995, 1999). I discuss these in turn.

Rosen (1990) identifies the following incompleteness issue with fictionalism (pp. 341-44ff; cf. Brogaard 2006, pp. 83-85). To begin, we can only say that P is true according to GR if 'According to GR, P' is true. But the actual theory of GR may be silent on a number of modal facts. For factualist GR, of course, the modal facts are just whatever is true in the PWs. The theory does not lay them out explicitly. Thus, Rosen submits an encyclopaedia of non-modal propositions, added to the postulates of FGR, to guarantee adequate analyses of the modal facts (1990). The (infinitary) contents of the encyclopaedia allow the modal facts to be articulated by the relevant non-modal propositions. Of course, the encyclopaedia, like any

story, may still be silent on a number of points that we take to be modal fact. Likewise, the Tolkien novels might be inexplicit about the physics of Middle Earth, but we might suppose that gravity, or something like the gravity on actual Earth, operates there. However, it was noted above that Lewis bootstraps his way out of a paradox of larger-than-self worlds by stipulating an upper bound to logical space. Lewis cannot state this limit exactly, so then fictionalist GR cannot state the limit in the encyclopaedia. The resulting problem is that both ‘According to GR, there is a universe containing k non-overlapping physical objects’ (where k is a specific number) and ‘According to GR, no universe contains k physical objects’ (Rosen 1990, p. 342) are false. However, without the story prefix, both statements are contradictories. Then fictionalism has the unwanted consequence of violating normal standards of logic. Since we want T for semantic purposes, this is undesirable. Things are scarcely better if the latter expressions are treated as truth-value-less. However, since this issue does not obviously bear directly upon issues of ideology, it is apparently moot.

An additional but related worry is that the fiction must rely upon primitive modality. The modal fictionalist would want to say that it is possible that P because, according to GR, there are PWs in which P. Another way to phrase this is: ‘If [GR] were true then P would be true; If we suppose [GR], P follows; It would be impossible for [GR] to be true without P being true as well.’ (Rosen 1990, p. 344). The fictionalist account therefore relies on primitive modality, which Rosen identifies as problematic since it (1) reduces the analytic reach of fictionalism to less than that of GR and (2) relies on a particularly odd form of primitivism. Regarding (2): a fiction primitive seems very unlike any other kind of primitive, e.g. negation, universal quantification or what have you (p. 347). (This is compounded by the concern, acknowledged in Kim 2005, that GR as a theory is contingent and temporal, so any fictionalised PW locution prior to GR’s formulation – say, 1986 – is false, when it is true after 1986.) Briefly, Rosen’s response here is the following. (1) Adopt a timid form of fictionalism that views the theory as only *illuminating* (and not reducing) modal claims. ‘All [we] ever wanted was licence to move back and forth between modal claims and claims about worlds’ (Rosen 1990 p. 354). In context of T, this seems quite plausible and acceptable. Metaphysically, this accommodates actualism but requires the existence of primitive modal facts too. (2) According to Rosen, GR is a companion in guilt, since she too has trouble analysing fictions concerning more than just the actual world. There is no space to explore this response, but it strikes me as technically erroneous.⁵⁵ In any case, Divers (1999) provides a response to his (1995) semantic objection, which covers this problem (discussed below).

⁵⁵Rosen hypothesises a novel, *This Lonely World*, according to which there is only one world, and all that is actual is necessary. For Rosen, GR could not analyse the content of this fiction. The usual analysis, following Lewis (1978), is to represent the content with sets of worlds. It could not use the set containing the actual world, because it would then represent more than the content of the book. The book, of course, does not describe all

Divers 1995 presents a formidable challenge: fictionalism cannot deliver PW semantics, and so fictionalism is unable to provide all the benefits of GR, as promised by Rosen (1990). This is extremely worrisome from our perspective, since the justification of fictionalism is that it accommodates the GR semantics wanted for T. A benefit of GR is that it offers *extensional* analyses of modal locutions (note, however, that Nolan 2016 finds Divers' stress on this point over-strong). Thus, for any intuitively valid argument expressed in modal terms,

3) 'P₁, ..., P_n: so C'

(p. 84)

there is a GR interpretation of the argument,

4) 'P*₁, ..., P*_n: so C*'

(*ibid.*).

The analysis is extensional if the corresponding premises in the GR interpretation have the same truth-values prior to the interpretation. So, the GR interpretation is valid too. One way to convert this into a fictional analysis ('the direct strategy') is to interpret (3) as:

5) 'According to GR, P*₁, ...; According to GR, P*_n: so According to GR, C*'

(*ibid.*)

But the story prefix introduces an intensional context. If we are fictionalist, all premises in (4) are false (pp. 83ff). Further, the context of (5) is opaque, analogous to 'According to Steve, P₁, ...; According to Steve, P_n: so C'. Note then that, where a set of non-fictionalised premises can be true and generate a valid conclusion, a set of fictionalised premises can be true without

the actual facts (Rosen 1990, p. 346). The analysis could also not use the set of all lonely worlds either, since GR has 'no reason to believe in lonely worlds, if indeed [s]he can make any sense of the idea' (*ibid.*).

Rosen continues: 'I suppose a lonely world would have to be a world relative to which no others are possible. Presumably, however, any notion of a world relative possibility that might be introduced into a realist treatment would rely heavily on facts about similarity of worlds. The lonely worlds would then be worlds not relevantly similar to any others. Recombination guarantees, however, that for any world there are worlds very much like it in any respect that could possibly matter' (p. 346, n. 26). This strikes me as technically erroneous since it overlooks Lewis's provision for content, belief and flawed belief using accessibility relations over doxastic worlds (Lewis 1986a, pp. 27-51) (discussed in Chapter III, above). The content of *This Lonely World* could be analysed as a set of doxastic worlds accessed by incomplete accessibility relations culminating in a 'belief box' and construed as if of one world. Many elements may well be drawn from the actual world, but presumably not the entire actual world and not entirely the actual world. The alternative option is to impute a logical omniscience to Lewis's proposal that he actually explicitly rejects (*ibid.* p. 34).

generating valid fictionalised conclusions. Then, we just do not have the semantics granting significant theoretical benefits to GR. This is exactly what we had hoped for for T.

Another option is to take an 'indirect approach' (p. 86) and convert (3) into (4), assess the validity of the target argument by those means then translate it into (5), purified of the GR ontology. This appears worse, however, since for the fictionalist the propositions of (4) are systematically false. Then, notes Divers, we have traded an intensional semantics for an extensional non-semantics (p. 86)! This will not do.

However, the opacity of story-prefixed contexts can be overridden by insisting that the sentences of GR are consistent and that GR is governed by the principle of epistemic closure. Then, if P and Q are true in GR, and P and Q imply R, then GR implies R. Then, 'According to GR...' is not opaque in the same way that 'According to Steve...' is opaque (unless Steve is omniscient, of course). On this reading, then, we can produce valid inferences using (5). The difference, however, contra (3), is that inferences within (5) can never be sound, since *all* of the prefixed propositions in (5) are false, by the fictionalist's lights. Then fictionalism is tantamount to an error-theory and still does not produce the same kind of semantics as GR (p. 88ff). Perhaps this is acceptable in the context of T. We would then have to say that *all* ideologies are false, but some are more desirable than others.

One way out of this problem, presented by Divers in (1999), is to introduce a biconditional, governed by a primitive necessity operator:

6) Necessarily (According to GR, P iff necessarily (if GR then P))

If we take (6) as true, then the propositions within (5) can be true *and* governed by epistemic closure. This also removes the difficulty of incompleteness and an obscure story primitive (mentioned above), since the theory then falls back on a primitive necessity, which we would commonly take to be less odd. Of course, this still requires the use of an encyclopaedia and the adoption of a timid fictionalism, since the modals covered by the theory are less comprehensive.

Thus concludes the discussion of salient objections to FCT. In response to Question Three, it appears possible to articulate T with fictionalism and avoid the ontological costs of GR. However, there are still costs. First, our understanding of ideological (and mundane) modals must be radically altered to fit the fictionalist's agenda. Second, we require the postulation of an encyclopaedia and primitive modality. Third, we must opt for a 'timid fictionalism' that falls short of a full reductive analysis of modals. This creates an impression of fictionalism as a derelict structure, held up with makeshift buttresses. Note that the central incentive for this entire enterprise is incredulity towards concrete possibilities. In the face of this raft of

preventative measures, it might lead us to question the need for such incredulity in the first place, which, I submit, ought to have less clout in context of ideology analysis in any case. Thus, fictionalism is an option, but it comes at a cost. The alternative is GR, which, shy of the ontology, appears cleaner and clearer.

§VI.III Actualist counterpart theory

ACT will not detain us long, since the details are less complex. As acknowledged by Lewis in (1986a, pp. 237-39), Stalnaker (1987), Sider (2002, 2006), Paul (2006), Brogaard (2006) and others, the actualist is at liberty to use this-worldly surrogates to articulate CT (thereby avoiding the ontological costs of GR). However, the approaches previously discussed in Chapter V would not be sufficient. PR and NR would still face the problem of ruling out inconsistencies with an unfathomable plethora of primitives that may beg the question in favour of certain IMs (e.g. on match of origins and the extent of human potentials) (Lewis 1986a (pp. 142-65); Divers 2002 (pp. 181-95)) and BR and CR would still face the problem of descriptive power (e.g. of qualitatively indistinct possibilities and contingent non-existents). Further, ACT would rely on primitive *de dicto* modality. However, a response to these problems has been proposed by Sider (*op cit.*) (cf. Paul *op cit.* and Brogaard *op cit.*). For Sider, the issues can be sidestepped by adopting an 'holistic ersatzism', as opposed to a 'localistic ersatzism', that generates the entire realm of logical space in one go, the 'ersatz pluriverse' (Sider 2002, Brogaard 2006).

The Ersatz Pluriverse

Sider (among others) recognises the descriptive, conceptual and semantic benefits of GR over alternatives but acknowledges, also, an allergic incredulity toward GR's ontological consequences (2002; 2006). Sider's (2002) 'ersatz pluriverse' proposal generates CT and the wanted resources and logic without the unwanted ontology. It respects actualism. The ersatz pluriverse is either an infinitary sentence or Kripke-style model that describes or represents the set of all PWs in one go (pp. 21-28). By contrast with alternative actualisms (discussed thus far), which reduce PWs 'entity-for-entity' (p. 9) - as linguistic constructs, complex properties, recombinations of basic individuals and properties or what have you. The ersatz pluriverse reduces all PWs and properties, individuals, facts (etc) therein in one fell swoop to a single large sentence (or model) that describes (or represents) them. (For the purpose of explication, I will focus entirely on the 'linguistic version' (*ibid.*.)

For Sider, the pluriverse sentence looks somewhat like the following:

THERE ARE worlds w_1, w_2, \dots and THERE ARE properties and relations $P_1, P_2 \dots$ that are distinct from the following actual properties and relations: \dots , and THERE ARE possible individuals x_1, x_2, \dots that are distinct from the following actual individuals: \dots , SUCH THAT: $\dots w_1 \dots$ and $\dots w_2 \dots$ and \dots (p. 9)

At the end of the pluriverse sentence, for each PW, there are conjunctive sentences with open formulas. These are complete conjunctions that describe entire worlds containing individuals,

properties and relations. The sentence is bound by basic principles of logic. Similar to fictionalism, the sentence is false, and governed by an 'According to...' prefix. However, Sider insists this is not identical to the fictionalist's prefix, since the pluriverse prefix should be understood in terms of logical implication (p. 10). The sentence excludes logical inconsistencies. But it cannot exclude (on its own) married bachelors, circle squares or non-logical metaphysical absolutes, such as balls that are entirely and exclusively red and green all over (p. 17). Thus, the sentence also presupposes a prior *modal language* with modal operators that *presuppose*, in turn 'real live modal facts' (*ibid.*). The modal language is governed by necessity and possibility operators and the possibilist language is governed by quantifiers over PWs (*ibid.*). Then, the PWs just are those PWs described by the pluriverse sentence *and* are realistic. They are realistic if they accord with the modal language, expressing the modal facts. Thus, the pluriverse sentence assists us in fully reducing PWs but not modals.

For Sider, the result of this ingenious device is that we can accommodate actualism but also maintain the theoretical benefits of GR. (Henceforth I shall use 'EP' for Sider's position, and bear in mind that this is an example of ACT.) Thus, contra PR and NR, consistency is guaranteed by way of agreement with the modal facts, which themselves are taken as apparent and primitive, so EP can boast that it sidesteps the problem of innumerable modal primitives, stipulated for the purpose of precluding inconsistencies (pp. 8ff). Contra BR and CR, EP can handle descriptions of qualitatively identical but distinct individuals and contingent non-existents. There are different individuals in worlds with two-way eternal recurrence if the pluriverse sentence describes worlds this way (and it accords with the modal facts). There are worlds in which counterparts of actually childless Richard have sons, and those sons in turn have counterparts who are philosophers. (I will return to the point about counterparts below.) This allows us to comprehend the modal language sentence 'Richard could have had a son he doesn't actually have, and that son would contingently not have been a philosopher' (!). Further, this modal fact guarantees that the possibilist statement is true in the pluriverse sentence. EP is also more akin to BR and CR in virtue of the primitives it postulates, but closer to PR and NR in terms of its expressive power (*ibid.*). Further, it obviates worries about fictionalism, e.g. incompleteness and the contingency of the theory. EP is not incomplete because the sentence is a complete description (*ibid.*). Further, EP is not a seemingly contingent and temporal entity. There seem to be fewer issues related to how we can know if we construe the sentence linguistically (although we can raise similar Benacerraf-style objections if we construe the pluriverse as an abstract non-linguistic entity). Admittedly, the sentence requires primitive modality, but this involves *de dicto* modals. *De re* modals, by contrast are reduced to counterparts, generated by the pluriverse sentence (*ibid.* and 2006).

EP generates counterparts by including sentences in which there are two or more worlds that contain individuals that are similar in relevant respects. Thus, *de re* modals are generated. Then, the homogeneity issue noted in Chapter V with other species of AR are seemingly circumvented. Further, since EP claims to contain CT, we can accommodate the norms and provide answers to the relativism problem that are equivalent (or close) to those for GR. Therefore, EP does not compel us to the somewhat tortuous treatment recommended above for FCT (2002, pp. 35ff).

Issues

A number of issues can be raised for EP, but not all can be appraised here. A number are identified in Sider (2002), Brogaard (2006) and Nolan (2016). One prominent problem, troublesome from our perspective, is Sider's insistence upon modal fact as underpinning realistic pluriverse sentence fragments (pp. 12-17). Recall that, for Sider, a modal fact is understood as expressible within the modal language, which is independent of the possibilist language (*ibid.*). The principal desideratum for T is the analysis of IMs. But EP is only capable of analysing PW, not straightforwardly modal locutions. Indeed, the modal language (expressing the modal facts) underpins the reality (or not) of EP sentence fragments (*ibid.*). By contrast, GCT permits the elaboration of IMs and their analysis by way of (1) independent criteria of assessment and (2) general standards of reasonability (non-contradiction, consistency and so forth). EP could still function as an interpretation of T by allowing for (1). How, though, could it produce (2)? On the GR interpretation of CT, the counterparts are concrete otherworldly individuals. They are already out there in logical space, ready to play semantic roles for the purpose of exploring *de re* modal judgements and inferences (Lewis using this type of language in 1986a). These offer the flexibility for articulating different ideological positions (e.g. on human essence and potential) and analysis by way of (1), but also the means to rule out contradictory *de re* judgements (and thereby (2)). For Lewis 'Not anything goes, but a great deal does' (1986a, p. 8). By contrast, EP has to rely on our understanding of IM and use of (2) by reference back to the modal language. But the purpose of T was precisely to analyse this language, using PWs and their contents. Seemingly, this undermines the purpose of the project.

To be fairer to EP, we could always take the IM 'facts' as those expressed in the modal language of this or that ideology and utilise EP to spell out what they would look like in terms of PWs. Again, akin to our proposals for AR in Chapter V, the theory would articulate ideologies by *constructing* PWs *with* ideologies, rather than seeking out the PWs in which they hold. They would provide a picture book for illustrating ideologies to which we bring our independent criteria. *However*, any contradictions produced within the theory would not strictly contradict the modal facts, since we have assumed that the ideology under analysis produces the modal

facts. Perhaps, as one solution, we could compare the ideology thus presented with our (more acceptable) intuitions, and consider any clash as suggesting a conflict between IM and the modal facts. That seems a rather promising application of the theory for T.

Unfortunately, this comes to grief. Note that, for Sider, the modal facts are solely *de dicto* (and we get at the modal facts via the modal language) (2002, p. 30). *De re* modals, by contrast, are reducible to the pluriverse sentence. The *de re* modals will be determined by counterparts, in turn determined by fragments of the EP. And, recall, fragments of the EP are realistic only when they correspond with the modal language (pp. 12ff). Since the modal language is solely *de dicto* and we want (as Sider claims to establish) a CT that suitably separates *de re* and *dicto* modals (thereby denying the Barcan Formula) we would require a modal language that guarantees the reality of fragments of EP that describe counterparts. How could this be achieved?

On the Lewisian picture, counterparts result from the following postulates:

- P1. Nothing is in anything except a world
- P2. Nothing is in two worlds
- P3. Whatever is a counterpart is in a world
- P4. Whatever has a counterpart is in a world
- P5. Nothing is a counterpart of anything else in its world
- P6. Anything in a world is a counterpart of itself
- P7. Some world contains all and only actual things
- P8. Something is actual

(Lewis 1968, p. 27, cited in Brogaard 2006, p. 86)

These postulates are about what exists simpliciter. They are irreducible *sui generis*. But, as Brogaard very perceptively observes,

If Sider's pluriverse surrogate is to have the same descriptive power as Lewis' pluriverse, it too must satisfy some such postulates. But it is not clear that it does. Take P1. The ersatz might propose that all realistic pluriverse sentences logically entail [P1] ... because P1 specifies a fact about realistic proxy pluriverses. [...] Except for P8, however, Lewis's postulates are not translatable into the modal language. So, not all the pluriverse sentences that respect the independent modal truths will logically entail Lewis's postulates. (*ibid.*)

Of course, there is nothing to stop the ersatzer from stipulating Lewis's CT postulates. But this would look decidedly ad hoc and in need of explanation, since they do not follow from the EP or from the modal language that guarantees realistic fragments of EP. Thus, if EP wishes to produce the wanted CT semantics, she requires some other device, and it is currently unclear what that might be. Note, that by contrast, fictionalism (as Brogaard 2006 argues, pp. 86ff) is not guilty on this score, since it takes the CT postulates within GR as the (fictive) modal discourse to be defended as *if* true.

Conclusion

We have noted that GR has encountered a number of objections, many of which receive robust responses from Lewis (1986a). A strong objection relates to the epistemology, but Lewis dismisses it rather summarily. Another is GR's ontological profligacy, which provokes the incredulous stare and drives so much of AR and fictionalism. If fictionalist CT succeeds, by contrast, we can have all the benefits and none of the costs. This would cover the epistemological costs too, since then there are no problems about how to know genuine worlds: just read Lewis! However, the fictionalist has to concede a number of theoretical costs too, especially regarding the full reduction of modals. The fictionalist has to postulate an encyclopaedia and modal primitives. In context of T, fictionalism would also issue some peculiar consequences with respect to decision-making and decision termination, where comprehension of the whole world of objects and persons is assessed by non-cognitive criteria. Furthermore, Divers (1995) raises seemingly forbidding semantic problems for the fictionalist, although, as Divers (1999) later explains, this can be surmounted using additional modal primitives. That approach might not be unacceptable, but the volume of correctives makes fictionalism seem untidy and should lead us to question the incredulity animating the theory. EP, by contrast, promises an ingenious actualist theory that underpins a CT by sidestepping the costs. This ultimately fails, however, since the proposed metaphysics does not generate the wanted principles for producing counterparts, and in turn *de re* modals.

I have argued throughout the thesis that, for the purpose of a possible worlds analysis of ideological modals (T) we want a theory that permits the articulation of various ideological positions to be adjudicated by independent criteria (Question One). CT is by far best placed for this (Question Two). We can now issue a verdict for Question Three. In lieu of some clever device to solve the above issue, EP fails as an interpretation of T. Since the other AR theories cannot accommodate the full semantics of CT, AR fails *tout court* as an interpretation of T. Fictionalism is not totally out of the question, but it requires many fixes to prevent the flood of concrete possibilia threatened by full-blooded GR. Perhaps this is acceptable to the reader. If so, then fictionalism is a strong candidate for Question Three. If not, then GR succeeds. If GR succeeds here, it would add significant weight to the scales in favour of GR as a metaphysical

theory overall. The dramatic conclusion is that either to analyse ideology or to hold an ideological position commits one to the existence of concrete possibilia.

We are left with a couple of options: fictionalism or GR. Another option, of course, is to continue exploring alternatives in the interests of a well-motivated, intellectually virtuous and sufficiently-informed modal metaphysics. A further suggestion is to ask whether the ongoing difficulties of modal philosophy reside in a wholesale lack of credulity toward GR that is in need of reform.

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Appendix

Proposed Feasibility Criteria for (U)-possibilities

The following appendix elaborates on some proposed sources of feasibility criteria for (U)-possibilities, as touched on in Chapter III, by glossing some contributions from Ruth Levitas, Ernst Bloch and David Leopold, and considers T's capacity for those criteria. It is strongly indicated that T is well-placed to advance such suggestions.

Ruth Levitas

In her analysis of utopian works and theories, Levitas (1990) deploys an informative distinction between *form*, *content* and *function*. A utopia could be literary, a blue-print, a set of desires and values or an intentional community (*form*) (cf. Levitas 2007, 2013; Sargent 2010, 2013; Leopold 2007, 2012). Different characteristics of a good society are envisaged (*content*). Further, utopias can serve different ends (*function*) (e.g. compensation, criticism or change (p. 208)). For Levitas, any account of utopia that insufficiently recognises these distinctions and settles too heavily on one or two over the other(s) risks deep limitations. Levitas maintains that

narrow definitions in terms of content or form or function are all undesirable... [A]ny definition must be able to incorporate a wide range of forms, functions and contents; ... therefore a broad definition is essential. This will necessarily leave the boundaries of utopia vague but while this may be problematic, it is greatly less so than the problems which arise from more restrictive definitions. (1990, p. 207)

Among such restrictions, Levitas counts inadequate treatments of primary and secondary sources, approaches and questions.

These worries risk distracting us toward utopianism as a (speculatively) isolated region of study. By contrast, our interest is in the modal features of ideologies and the methodological principles for establishing a PW analysis (T). We have identified (U)-possibilities as a methodological question for the analysis of IM. Levitas's focus differs from ours. However, the prospect of an *analysis* of utopias is a requirement for T. This suggests that T should be able to incorporate Levitas's criteria (if Levitas is right). Furthermore, a *critique* of utopias offers an independent source for which to evaluate ideologies, the independent norms of evaluation, hypothesised in the thesis. This should not be embedded within T, if it is to be purely explicatory, but T ought to provide the space and means to accommodate such critique. So,

if a critique of utopias and utopianism uses Levitas's criteria, T must have the capacity for those criteria.

The discussion in Chapter III, that proposes the (1)-(3) propositions as constitutive of (U), could cover all of Levitas's *forms* of utopia, except intentional communities (which are not relevant for T), and possibly all types of *content*, since it sketches out a very broad but suitably vague outline. So far, however, my discussion has presupposed the *function* of (U)-possibilities as programmatic, cognitive and deliberative. It has also assumed that (U)-possibilities relate to the generation of deontic modals. However, Levitas identifies some important distinctions of function. Utopias might be distracting, compensatory, anticipatory, or transformative (*ibid.*). T, then, ought to provide resources to accommodate this. And the available PW semantics suggest that it can very plausibly do so. PWs offer the resources to conceptualise modal opinions, mental and linguistic content, etc. There is nothing to *exclude* their being placed in the service of several functions. Furthermore, the prospect of non-alethic worlds, especially of the conative kinds - with a person's desires analysed as ranges of worlds in which their desires are realised - promises informative cognitive content. Thus, given *any* of the PW approaches, T offers outstanding capacity for incorporating Levitas's criteria.

In later work (2007 and 2013), Levitas reconceives utopianism as a *method*, her 'imaginary reconstitution of society' or 'IROS'. The method involves three phases, *archaeological*, the analysis of existing utopian visions within various cultural and political forms; *ontological*, the investigation of the very people, processes and material assumptions built into utopian visions; and *architectural*, the holistic construction of new visions of a society for the purpose of discussion and debate (*ibid.*). This agrees with a similar proposal by Frederick Jameson (2005). Again, it is quite apparent that the PW options all provide means to frame such methods for T, so long as it permits the widest range of possibilities and features.

To repeat a point made in Chapter I, above: it should be noted that Levitas (1990, pp. 201-205) does argue that PW is in fact insufficient for the pursuit of utopias. As I explain in Chapter I, first, not all utopias are intentionally achievable, for Levitas, so are not 'possible' (p. 203). Second, they are not all coherent systems, so cannot form a world. My response above was that this does not succeed as an objection of the PW analysis here proposed. To begin, 'possible' needed imply 'physically possible' or 'actualisable', as Levitas appears to suggest. PWs cover the whole range of logical possibilities, with all 'cases' of possibility therein. Third, we have already conceded above that the analysis will have to accommodate a distinction between conceivability and possibility. And in Chapter III, I explain how all PW approaches permit this (by talk of inconsistency, 'doublethink', accessibility and counterpart relations, etc.).

A feasibility test could examine internal coherence, value, desirability, and experience. The three latter notions would constitute extrinsic criteria, whereas coherence is a general standard of reasonableness, which ought to be intrinsically expressible within T. Further, since

(at least) many utopias do claim (U)-possibility status (the conceptualisation of ideal physical social possibilities) we know they can never fully succeed, but some versions might prove more preferable. An assessment of preference should include tests for internal coherence, since an optimal possible state of affairs (i.e. PW) is maximally consistent and is either a maximally consistent state of affairs or sentences (as in AR) or a concrete PW that is accurately describable by a maximally consistent set of sentences (as in GR). Furthermore, we can debate *proximity* of worlds, in terms of their verisimilitude to the natural laws of the actual world (there is space for this in Lewis (e.g. 1986a, pp. 20-27) and it is not in principle ruled out by AR worlds either (see Chapter V)).

Ernst Bloch

In Bloch's work (1986), we find an informative distinction between *cold* and *warm* streams of utopianism: the 'cold' analysis of utopian visions and the 'warm' exploration of desires and values (p. 209). This adds to Levitas's comments about function. The idea is also mirrored, as Levitas observes, in Miguel Abensour and EP Thompson's construal of the utopian function as 'the education of desire', as in Morris's *News from Nowhere* (Levitas 1990, pp. 130-150). Utopias operate not only to express values - i.e. what a world looks like were those values realised - but they also enact, develop and explore *actual* experiences and desires, a sense of what things might be *like*.

Again, many of these considerations risk distracting us beyond the (U)-possibilities elaborated above, for utopian visions needn't be physically similar to our own, or even coherent to fulfil the functions suggested above. Nonetheless, an analysis ought to state where and how a divergence from (1)-(3) can be tolerated or where and how a vision purporting (1)-(3) rejected. This, as already established, cannot derive from the sheer fact of (U)-conceptions, but from alternative criteria. We just need a method permitting the expression of such criteria (i.e. T).

Nonetheless, T has great potential to frame all of the above by way of 'non-alethic worlds': morally ideal worlds, conative worlds, doxastic worlds, and so forth. Further, the very intuitive notion of a 'world' (or sets of worlds) provides the conceptual space for the exploration of desires, values and experiences. Again, all PW approaches can make this happen.

Bloch proposes a further distinction: abstract and concrete utopias (1986, p. 157). Abstract utopias, for Bloch, are unachievable fantasies, distracting or compensatory visions that stand no chance of realisation and therefore bode little or no positive use. Concrete utopias, by contrast, contain features of the actual world and are continuous with it. Thus, we can assess a utopia's proximity to actual facts and natural laws. Clearly, the PW approaches all provide means to advance these considerations for T. However, again, they cannot derive from *within* T, or from generalizable standards, since proximity is a matter of degree and of choice. As

Lewis acknowledges (1986a, pp. 24-5), a theory can be similar under one set of conditions and dissimilar under another. So then, criteria of verisimilitude must be extrinsic to T.

David Leopold

There are parallels to the above idea, e.g. in Goodwin and Taylor (2009), in their notion of a 'lateral possibility' and in some recent (but admittedly brief) suggestions by David Leopold (2007, 2012). For Leopold, we might helpfully construe utopias as components of a larger compass of competing visions. That would assist evaluation by way of comparative analysis (2007, pp. 234). Further, we can stipulate conditions of 'feasibility' (i.e. accuracy to human nature), 'accessibility' (i.e. proximity to actual physical, historical and social conditions) and 'desirability' (2012, pp. 29-33). Once again, our means for judging such things originate outside T, but the latter can nonetheless provide useful analyses.

We can note that Leopold's 'desirable' utopias (moral or conative worlds) are non-alethic (*ibid.*). By contrast, his 'feasible' utopias are (at least *prima facie*) alethic, since they purport to refer to human nature. Human nature usually connotes human essence and/or potential. (This can be complicated by theories of alienated labour – which on some conceptions appear to amount to non-alethic necessity.) If human essence is something humans always have, in virtue of what they are and regardless of circumstances, then it is a property of all human beings in any PW in which they exist - and the actual world is a member. An exception might be alienated labour, as suggested above. But if human potential is something all human beings possess, in virtue of what they are regardless of circumstances, this again is true for all human beings in every PW, with ours as a member. This adds in details about further accessible worlds, since 'potential' is a *de re* modal term (explored in Chapter IV). If everyone has the potential, e.g. to act rationally, then there are accessible PWs in which they (or counterparts of them) act rationally. For every human in every PW, they have counterparts in other PWs who act rationally.

Leopold also lists 'accessible' utopias (accessibility as a criterion of utopias) (*ibid.*). This can be viewed as alethic or non-alethic, depending on the features emphasised. A utopia is 'accessible', on Leopold's description, if it occurs in a world with the same physical laws as ours, i.e. is physically possible. It also appears to be historically accessible, in that an accessible world has to share the same history as us (up to a point). However, accessible utopias also need some degree of change (they are not Panglossian) and so cannot be *socially* accessible. The actual social and political world has to change. Nonetheless, the thought is that change is possible (physically, historically and plausibly), so *some* social elements already exist (or are replicated) in the actual world. Accessible utopias are within our reach, so some (but not all) actual social elements must be present, e.g. the underlying conditions for social organisation or economic production. So, then there is an implicit idea of

proximity. Accessible utopias (or utopias exhibiting accessibility) are historically and physically alethic, but not socially alethic. Nonetheless, they are socially proximate, in that only certain aspects of the actual social world (institutions, policy, laws, economic arrangements, etc.) need to change to *make one of those worlds alethic*. Implicit here is the idea that closing a gap between the actual world and a utopia is a non-alethic concept – a central feature of motivation and action-orientation (as noted in Adams (1989, pp. 89-115)).

Leopold recommends the construction of utopias with balanced combinations of feasibility, accessibility and desirability. He warns against overly-constraining desirable worlds with accessible or feasible worlds. After all, desirability might help us decide between accessible worlds in terms of feasibilities. In any case, it is clear that Leopold's suggestions are all powerfully compatible with all PW candidates for T.

Whether one accepts Levitas's, Bloch's or Leopold's criteria is a matter of choice and not a direct concern of this thesis. Nonetheless, the gloss provided in this appendix indicates that all PW approaches fare well in their capacity to incorporate and advance those criteria for T. The remaining thesis argues that GR or fictionalist GR are eminently best-placed for purposes such as these, and reckons the comparative strength of GR overall.