Saul Kripke: *Naming and Necessity*, **Lecture I**
[Pp. 30-60]

§ Proper Names
___ We will use the term 'name' so that it does not include definite descriptions, but only those things which in ordinary language would be called 'proper names.' If we want a common term to cover names and descriptions, we may use the term 'designator.'

§ The Case of Moses [Wittgenstein]

"Consider this example. If one says "Moses did not exist," this may mean various things. ... Have I decided how much must be proved false for me to give up my proposition as false? Has the name "Moses" got a fixed and unequivocal use for me in all possible cases?"

§ Giving the Meaning vs. Fixing the Reference:

Q: What is the function of those descriptions associated with a proper name?

[A]. The descriptions associated with the name *give the meaning* of the name itself:

e.g. 'Moses' *means* {the man called 'Moses' (by us); the man who led the Hebrews out of Egypt; the man who received the Ten Commandments from God,….}

[B]. The descriptions associated with the name *fix (determine) the referent* of the name:

e.g. When we use the name 'Moses,' we *refer to* the man who led the Hebrews out of Egypt; the man who received the Ten Commandments from God,….

Example: Moses doesn't exist.

Under [A]:
    (i)   "Moses" *means the same* "the man who did such and such".
    (ii)   " Moses did not exist" = "The man who did such and such did not exist" or "that no one person did such and such."

Under [B]:
    (i)   'Moses' refers to the man who did such and such.
    (ii)   "Moses did not exist" = ? (the set of descriptions do not refer?)

Q: How would a description theorist analyze this statement?

§ A Priority vs. Necessity

* [A priori]
___ an epistemological notion, meaning something that *can* be known independently of any experience; or something that a person may believe to be true on the basis of a priori evidence.

* [Necessity]
___a metaphysical notion, meaning something that might never have been false. We ask whether something might have been true, or might have been false. Well, if something is false, it's obviously not necessarily true. If it is true, might it have been otherwise? Is it possible that, in this respect, the world should have been different from the way it is? If the answer is "no," then this fact about the world is a necessary one. If the answer is "yes," then this fact about the world is a contingent one.

The terms 'necessary' and '*a priori*', as applied to statements, are *not* obviously synonyms. ___ (So what is necessary is not necessarily *a priori*; what is contingent is not necessarily a posteori.) [Cf. Pp. 34-9]

Q: **Could Nixon have lost the election in 1968?**

§ Transworld Identity (Identity across Possible Worlds)
___ **How do we talk about Nixon in other possible worlds?**
___ **The questioner: "**Suppose we have someone, Nixon, and there is another possible world where there is no one with all the properties Nixon has in the actual world. Which one of these other people, if any, is Nixon? Surely you must give some criterion of identity here!" (p. 42)

§ Possible Worlds

Q1: What is a possible world?
Q2: What is possible in a possible world?
Q3: When would we lose our identity? When are we *not* who we are in this actual world? [suppose you have different parents? suppose you had different gender? suppose you have different physical appearance? suppose you had a different personality?... Are these our essential properties?]

* In another possible world, how do we locate Nixon?
An intuitive test:
___ Although someone other than the U.S. President in 1970 might have been the U.S. President in 1970 (e.g. Humphrey might have), no one other than Nixon might have been Nixon. ... Although the man (Nixon) might not have been the President, it is not the case that he might not have been Nixon (though he might not have been called "Nixon").

If someone identifies necessity with a prioricity, and thinks that objects are named by means of uniquely identifying properties, he may think that it is the properties used to identify the object

which, being known about it a priori, must be used to identify it in all possible worlds, to find out which object is Nixon....
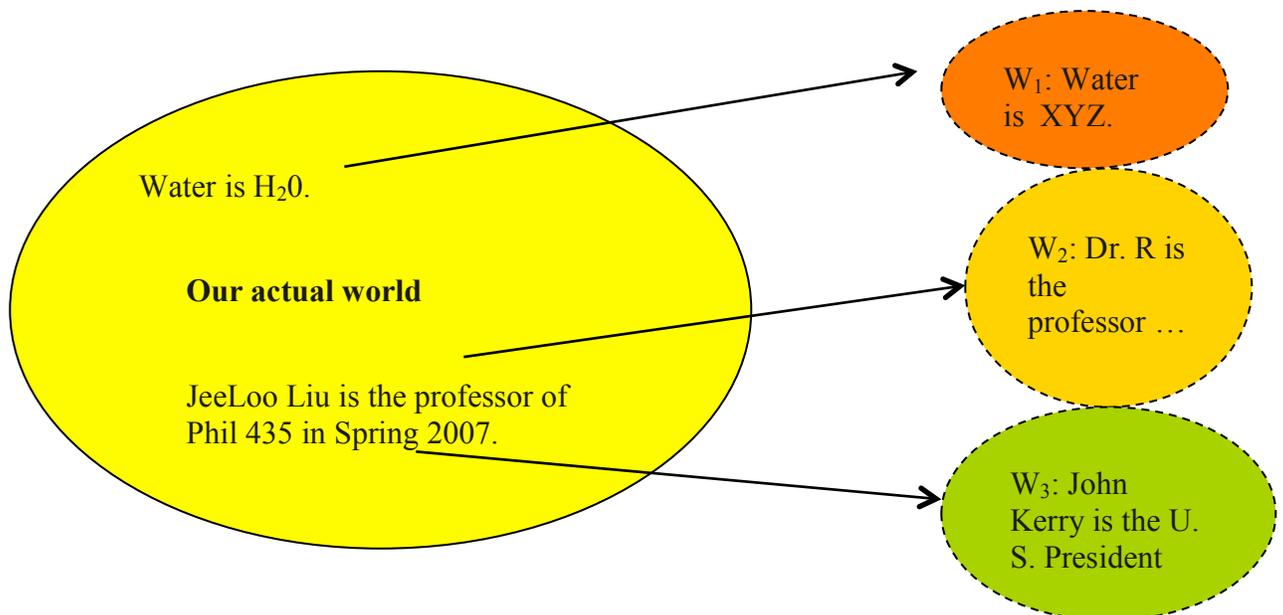
Kripke's criticism of this approach:
___ What seems to be more objectionable is that this depends on the wrong way of looking at what a possible world is. One thinks, in this picture, of a possible world as if it were like a foreign country. One looks upon it as an observer. Maybe Nixon has moved to the other country and maybe he hasn't, but one is given only qualities. One can observe all his qualities, but one doesn't observe that someone is Nixon. (p. 43)
___ **A possible world isn't a distant country that we are coming across, or viewing through a telescope. A possible world is given by the descriptive conditions we associate with it.** What do we mean when we say 'In some other possible world I would not have given this lecture today?' We just imagine the situation where I didn't decide to give this lecture or decided to give it on some other day. Of course, we don't imagine everything that is true or false, but only those things relevant to my giving the lecture. (p. 44)

Two standard conceptions:

View One: A possible world is simply a set of counterfactual conditions build on our world *conceptually* (in our imagination); it does not really exist (or subsist) as a real thing. Possible worlds are *stipulated*, not *discovered*. (Saul Kripke)

Water is H_2O.

Our actual world

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W_1: Water is XYZ.

W_2: Dr. R is the professor …

W_3: John Kerry is the U. S. President

View Two: A possible world is a whole world that differs from our actual world in some respects; it is just as real as the actual world. (David Lewis)

W_1: **our world (taken as actual by us)**

Water is H_2O.

W_2: **a parallel world (taken as actual by their residents)**

Water is XYZ.

W_3: **a parallel world (taken as actual by their residents)**

Water is XYZ.

W_4: **a parallel world (taken as actual by their residents)**

Water is H_2O.

§ Rigid Designator vs. Accidental Designator vs. Strong Designator

[Rigid designator]
___ Let's call something a 'rigid designator' if in every possible world it designates the same object, a 'nonrigid' or 'accidental designator' if that is not the case.
___ Of course we don't require that the objects exist in all possible worlds. A rigid designator of a necessary existent can be called *strongly rigid*. Q: Is 'God' a strongly rigid designator? What, if anything, is?

Kripke's claim: Proper names are rigid designators. Definite descriptions are non-rigid designators.

e.g. 'George W. Bush'

| W_1 | W_2 | W_3 |

e.g. 'the present President of the U.S.'
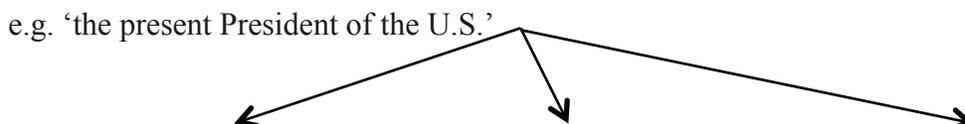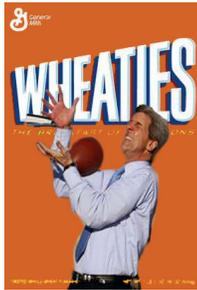
W₁   **W₂**   **W₃**

§ Back to Transworld Identity

Q: How do we talk about Nixon in other possible worlds?
Kripke's answer:
___ It is because we can refer (rigidly) to Nixon, and stipulate that we are speaking of what might have happened to *him* (under certain circumstances), that "transworld identifications" are unproblematic in such cases. (p. 49)
___ (We do not set up a set of identifying conditions and look for anyone who satisfies these conditions in other possible worlds.)

Some properties of an object may be essential to it, in that it could not have failed to have them. But these properties are not used to identify the object in another possible world, for such an identification is not needed. We begin with the objects, which we *have*, and can identify, in the actual world. We can then ask whether certain things might have been true of the object. (p. 53)

§ The Puzzle about Stick S (Pp. 54-6)

Wittgenstein:
___ 'There is one thing of which one can say neither that it is one meter long nor that it is not one meter long, and that is the standard meter in Paris. But this is, of course, not to ascribe any extraordinary property to it, but only to mark its peculiar role in the language game of measuring with a meter rule.'

Kripke:
___ 'I think he must be wrong. If the stick is a stick, for example, 39.37 inches ling, why isn't it one meter long? Anyway, let's suppose that he is wrong and that the stick is one meter long. Part of the problem which is bothering Wittgenstein is, of course, that this stick serves as a standard of length and so we can't attribute length to it.'

Q: Is the statement 'Stick S is one meter long' a necessary truth?

Kripke:

___ Of course its length might vary in time. We could make the definition more precise by stipulating that one meter is to be the length of S at a fixed time t_0. Is it then a necessary truth that stick S is one meter long at time t_0?

___ Even though he uses this to fix the reference of his standard of length, a meter, he can still say, 'if heat had been applied to this stick S at t_0, then at t_0 stick S would not have been one meter long.' **Well, can he do this?**

___ (Kripke's answer comes from his theory of 'rigid designator') 'One meter' designates rigidly a certain length in all possible worlds, while 'the length of S at t_0' does not designate anything rigidly.

Kripke: For someone who has fixed the metric system by reference to stick S, the statement 'Stick S is one meter long at t_0' is a contingent *a priori* truth.

Q: **What about the statement 'Hesperus is Phosphorus"?**