

PROPOSITIONS AND ATTITUDES

EDITED BY
NATHAN SALMON
AND
SCOTT SOAMES

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

1988

INTRODUCTION

NATHAN SALMON

SCOTT SOAMES

THE concept of a *proposition* is important in several areas of philosophy, and central to the philosophy of language. What is a proposition? Some features of propositions seem to be essential to the very concept: If you utter the words 'Snow is white' and a French speaker utters the words 'La neige est blanche', there is some sense in which both of you say the same thing despite your having used different words. This thing that both of you said is a proposition: the proposition that snow is white. When uttering or writing a declarative sentence (in a given context) one asserts (or records) a piece of information, which is the semantic information content of the sentence (in the context). Since they are the contents of declarative sentences—and what one asserts in uttering declarative sentences—propositions are the sorts of things that are true or false. But making true or false assertions is not the only thing we do with propositions. We also bear cognitive attitudes toward them. Propositions are what we believe, disbelieve, or suspend judgement about. When you fear that you will fail or hope that you will succeed, when you venture a guess or feel certain about something, the object of your attitude is a proposition. That is what propositions are.

The readings collected in this volume investigate many different philosophical issues concerning the nature of propositions and the attitudes we bear to them. Although each of the readings stands on its own as a self-contained unit, there are a number of interconnections between them. In the remainder of this Introduction we shall present one line of thought connecting them all. While not attempting to deal with all of the significant issues addressed in individual selections, this line of thought illustrates one way of approaching the collection as a whole.

It has often been observed that the content of a sentence must

be determined in some manner by its grammatical constituents and the roles they play in the sentence—otherwise we could not understand what information is expressed in new sentences seen or heard for the first time. It is apparent that each grammatical constituent of a sentence (or at least each typical one) makes some contribution of its own to securing the content of the sentence. We may call the contribution made by an expression its 'content'. The content of a sentence is thus a function of the separate contents of its grammatical constituents and the manner in which they are combined in constructing the sentence, in the sense that the following principle of Compositionality obtains:¹

If *S* and *S'* are sentences that are grammatically constructed in the same way from corresponding constituents having the same content, then *S* and *S'* have the same content.

This semantic principle accounts for the fact that the English words 'Snow is white' and their word-for-word French translation 'La neige est blanche' form grammatical units having the same content. The principle also has the important consequence that any two expressions of a single language that share the same content (for example, 'lawyer' and 'attorney') are interchangeable within a sentence without altering its content, and hence without altering its truth value.

Some expressions in natural language have the special property that (when they are used in the normal way) they stand for, or *refer to* (denote, designate), some particular person, place, or thing—like the expressions 'Bertrand Russell' (proper name), 'he' (demonstrative pronoun), and 'the author of *Waverley*' (definite description). One idea that naturally springs to mind is that the content of a referring expression is its referent (what it refers to). This has often been called 'the naïve theory'. This theory is especially compelling in the case of at least one sort of referring expression: free individual variables occurring in an open sentence—for example, the occurrence of '*x*' in '*x* is pretty'. Once the city of London is assigned as the referent (value) of '*x*', there is nothing else for the variable to contribute to the content of '*x* is pretty', under this assignment. The naïve theory is also especially compelling in the case of certain uses of the pronouns 'he', 'she', and 'it'—which seem to function in some contexts in the same way as variables of formal logic. The naïve theory simply extends these observations concerning variables and pronouns to all referring expressions.²

It is well-known, however, that this extension, in combination with Compositionality, leads to puzzles and difficulties involving substitutions of certain coreferential expressions, especially proper names and definite descriptions. One of the most famous of these puzzles was introduced by Gottlob Frege and discussed independently by Bertrand Russell. We shall consider Russell's example:

(1) Scott is the author of *Waverley*.

The content of this sentence is a proposition that King George IV was at one time not certain about, since (as a matter of historical fact) he was not certain whether Scott wrote *Waverley*. Nevertheless (1) is true. Therefore, the expressions 'Scott' and 'the author of *Waverley*' have the same referent. This conflicts with the naïve theory. For according to that theory in conjunction with Compositionality, the name 'Scott' may be substituted for the definite description 'the author of *Waverley*' in (1) without altering its content. Thus (1) should have the same content as

(2) Scott is Scott

But King George was, at the time in question, fully certain that Scott is Scott. Since King George was certain about this without being certain that Scott is the author of *Waverley*, the sentences (1) and (2) differ in content, contrary to the naïve theory.

In his classic article 'On Denoting' (*Mind* 1905), Russell presented an elegant solution to this substitutivity puzzle. He claimed that, despite appearances, sentence (1) is not really an identity statement and the phrase 'the author of *Waverley*' is not really a referring expression. According to Russell, the semantic function of a description—whether indefinite ('some author', 'an author', 'no author') or definite ('the author of *Waverley*')—is not to contribute a constituent to propositions at all. Instead, sentences containing descriptions are convenient abbreviations for more complex sentences lacking them.

For example, sentence (1) is treated as an abbreviation of

(3) There is an individual x such that x and one else wrote *Waverley*, and Scott = x .

This sentence is true if and only if for some value of the variable ' x ' the proposition expressed by the following is true:

(4) x and no one else wrote *Waverley*, and Scott = x .

Thus, according to Russell, (1) expresses (a proposition trivially equivalent to) the proposition directly concerning Scott that he and no one else wrote *Waverley*. Although Scott is a constituent of this proposition, he is contributed by the name 'Scott' rather than by the definite description 'the author of *Waverley*', which has been "broken up" in (3). Since these expressions do not make the same contribution to the propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur, substitution of one for the other does not preserve the proposition expressed.

Russell distinguished descriptions ("denoting phrases") from what he called 'logically proper names' or 'names in the strict logical sense'. A *logically proper name* is a genuine referring expression whose contribution to the propositions expressed by sentences containing it is precisely its referent. (In more recent terminology, due to David Kaplan, such expressions are often called 'directly referential'.) In illustrating Russell's theory of descriptions above, we treated the name 'Scott' and the variable 'x' in (4) as logically proper names. Russell's theory analyses the definite-description operator (or definite article) 'the' as eliminable in favour of quantifiers, connectives, and the identity predicate—thereby eliminating definite descriptions. Variables remain as logically proper names, in the sense that, under any assignment of a value to a variable, the variable serves as a logically proper name of its assigned value.

In his essay 'A Remark Concerning Quine's Paradox About Modality' (see Chapter 4), Alonzo Church presents a strengthened substitutivity puzzle in which definite descriptions are replaced by variables. This twist on the Frege–Russell substitutivity puzzle yields an interesting paradox, to which Russell's theory of descriptions is not directly applicable. Church's paradox concerns belief. Church notes that it is at least very likely that, throughout his lifetime, George IV did not believe anyone to be not identical with himself. That is, for every value of the 'x' the following is true (with respect to any time):

(5) George IV does not believe that $x \neq x$.

We are supposing that variables are logically proper names. By Compositionality, then, the following is also true whenever the variables 'x' and 'y' are assigned the same value:

(6) George IV does not believe that $x \neq y$.

Therefore, for all values of 'x' and 'y' (whether they are the same or not) the following is true:

(7) If George IV believes that $x \neq y$, then $x \neq y$.

But this seems to attribute to King George the incredible power to make individuals distinct merely by believing them distinct. Such attribution seems to be falsified in Russell's example if we imagine that, at some appropriate time, King George believed of the author of *Waverley* and Scott that the former is not the latter. By a simple extension of Church's paradoxical derivation one may derive that King George has an even more majestic power: the power to make individuals distinct by proclamation. For if King George never says of anything that it is not identical with itself, then by an argument exactly analogous to Church's, for every value of 'x' and 'y' the following is true:

(8) If George IV says that $x \neq y$, then $x \neq y$.

Surely, no one has such power.

The problem can be illustrated using a slight modification of Russell's example. Let us suppose that at a book-signing ceremony given by "the author of *Waverley*", a cleverly disguised Scott autographs King George's copy of *Waverley*. King George, being fooled by Scott's disguise, concludes that *Waverley* was written by someone other than Scott. He sincerely declares,

(9) He is not Scott,

pointing to the disguised author. According to the naïve theory, King George's utterance has the same content as

(10) Scott is not Scott.

Yet King George surely disbelieves, and would vigorously deny, that Scott is not himself. Because of this, Church would maintain that sentences (9) and (10) differ in content every bit as much as sentences (1) and (2). But Church's argument makes the situation considerably worse than before. For if (7) and (8) are true, then it would seem that King George would have to be right when he utters (9). Moreover, Russell's theory of descriptions cannot be directly applied (as it was in the case of (1) and (2)) to solve Church's paradox.³

In constructing this paradox we assumed that the demonstrative

pronoun 'he' and the ordinary proper name 'Scott', as used by King George, are logically proper names (in Russell's sense), and hence that the proposition expressed by King George's assertive utterance of (9) is the same as the proposition expressed by ' $x \neq y$ ' when ' x ' and ' y ' are both assigned Scott as their value. One possible response to the paradox is to reject this assumption in favour of the view that one or both of the terms in (9) are disguised definite descriptions. This is the view taken by Russell in 'Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description' (see Chapter 1).⁴ There he maintains the principle that in order to apprehend a proposition (and hence in order to believe it) one must bear a very special epistemic relation, which he called 'acquaintance', to each of the proposition's constituents. According to Russell, the only things we can bear this relation to are things whose identity and distinctness we cannot be mistaken about—things like our own sense experiences, as well as abstract objects like properties and relations. Given this, Russell's "principle of acquaintance" precludes the possibility of King George's believing any proposition in which Scott occurs directly as a constituent. Moreover, if the values of ' x ' and ' y ' in (7) are things George is acquainted with, Russell would insist that they are distinct whenever they are believed distinct, in which case (7) is indeed true. On the other hand, if one or both are things King George is not acquainted with, then Russell would insist that (6) is automatically true (since King George cannot apprehend any proposition directly concerning such things); in which case (7) is true by virtue of having a false antecedent, and hence is harmless.

Although Russell's principle of acquaintance appears to provide a possible solution to Church's paradox about belief, it does so at the heavy cost of severely restricting what one can believe. The principle renders propositions directly concerning the objects around us (many of which are of vital importance in our lives) cognitively inaccessible; they cannot be believed, disbelieved, or even apprehended. Worse, the principle fails to resolve all versions of the paradox. Even if King George cannot make a mistake about the identity of things he is acquainted with, he can knowingly deny true identity statements concerning them. Thus, a version of the paradox involving (8) remains. If King George never says of any object of his acquaintance that it is distinct from itself, then his saying of any such objects that they are distinct guarantees that they are distinct.

In fact, the paradox appears to remain in the case of assertions concerning other objects as well. When King George utters (9), does he not make an assertion directly concerning Scott? Suppose a friend of yours says to you

(11) You are a native Californian.

Russell would claim that the word 'you' in (11) abbreviates some definite description, such as 'the person I am addressing'. On Russell's analysis, then, what your friend asserted in uttering (11) is that there is an individual x such that he is addressing x and only x , and x is a native Californian. But, as David Kaplan has argued, this cannot be right. What your friend said is a proposition that would have been true even if he had never existed and had never addressed anyone, as long as you had been born in California.

Kaplan (see Chapter 5) emphasizes that sentences containing indexicals—context-sensitive expressions like 'you', 'I', and 'he'—express different propositions in different contexts of use. The proposition expressed in a given context may be true in some circumstances and false in others. For example, the proposition expressed by (11), when addressed to a person A in a given context, is true in a given circumstance if and only if A is born in California in that circumstance. On Kaplan's view, this proposition directly concerns A , since 'you' functions as a logically proper name. Likewise, on Kaplan's view, the indexical words 'I', 'he', 'she', 'this', and 'that', when used in the ordinary way, are logically proper names (i.e. directly referential).⁵

Kaplan points out that indexical sentences having different meanings can nevertheless express the same proposition when uttered in different but suitably related contexts. For example, you can assert what your friend asserted when he uttered (11) by saying.

(12) I am a native Californian.

Although these indexical sentences differ in meaning, the proposition expressed by (11) in your friend's context is the same as the proposition expressed by (12) in yours. Facts like these indicate the need to distinguish the meanings of sentences from the propositions they express. The meaning of an expression (sentence) may be thought of as a rule that specifies a content (proposition) for any possible context. Kaplan calls this rule the 'character' of the expression.

John Perry applies this account to issues involving belief in his contribution to this volume (see Chapter 6). By analogy to Kaplan's distinction between the content and the character of a sentence, Perry draws a distinction between the proposition that someone believes and his *belief state* in virtue of which he believes this proposition. Perry holds that when your friend sincerely utters (11) while addressing you, and you sincerely utter (12), you and your friend believe the same proposition in virtue of being in different belief states. Similarly, everyone who sincerely utters (12) will be in the same belief state, although each person in this state believes a different proposition.

On Kaplan's account of indexicals, King George says something directly concerning Scott when he utters (9), by virtue of his use of the demonstrative pronoun 'he'. According to Kaplan and Perry, King George also believes this proposition directly concerning Scott. Both versions of Church's paradox thus remain on this account—provided that the name 'Scott' is also a logically proper name.

Are ordinary proper names logically proper, or are they descriptive in content as Frege and Russell claimed? The latter view has been subjected to devastating criticism, most notably by Saul Kripke in *Naming and Necessity*.⁶ In his contribution to this collection (see Chapter 7), Kripke challenges objections to the former view that are based on substitutivity problems of the sort generated by (9) and (10).⁷ In the course of doing this, Kripke demonstrates that difficulties involving the use of ordinary proper names in specifying someone's beliefs arise whether one treats such names as logically proper, views them as essentially descriptive, or makes no explicit decision at all about their content. Indeed he shows that such difficulties can be generated independently of standard substitutivity principles. Kripke concludes that one should not draw any morals about the contents of names or the truth of substitutivity principles from the existence of substitutivity puzzles.

Kripke's examples suggest that the source of our substitutivity puzzles does not lie in the claim that coreferential proper names, indexicals (relative to contexts), and variables (relative to assignments of values) have the same content. Further support for this suggestion is provided by the fact that analogous substitutivity puzzles arise whenever there are different expressions having the same content. Suppose that the words 'lawyer' and 'attorney' are

exact synonyms, and hence have the same content. The conjunction of this assumption with Compositionality yields the result that the sentences 'Lawyers are lawyers' and 'Attorneys are lawyers' express the same proposition. Many, however, question this conclusion, on the grounds that it is possible to assert and believe the former proposition while denying and disbelieving the latter.

In 1950 Benson Mates gave this problem an interesting twist. Consider the following sentences:

- (13) Whoever believes (asserts) that lawyers are wealthy believes (asserts) that lawyers are wealthy.
- (14) Whoever believes (asserts) that lawyers are wealthy believes (asserts) that attorneys are wealthy.

The truth of (13) is beyond doubt. What about (14)? Imagine that Vladimir is under the misimpression that 'attorney' means *law student*. Vladimir believes that all lawyers are wealthy, but that not all law students are. Does he believe that attorneys are wealthy? Many theorists, such as Church, would insist that he does. Others disagree.⁸ They agree that Vladimir believes that lawyers are wealthy, but deny that he believes that attorneys are. It would seem, then, that they doubt the content of (14) without doubting that of (13), and that sentences (13) and (14) therefore express different propositions. But how can they, since they differ only in the substitution of one synonym for another?

In his classic 1954 article on identity of belief (see Chapter 9) Church uses standard practices of translation to give a powerful argument that (13) and (14) cannot differ in content (in English). (These translation practices play a similar role in the central argument in Kripke's contribution.) Hilary Putnam makes an alternative proposal in his contribution (Chapter 8). According to him, (13) and (14) have different contents—even though they are grammatically constructed in the same way from corresponding constituents with the same content. The difference in the contents of (13) and (14) is attributed to a difference in logical structure, arising from the fact that (13) contains two occurrences of a single constituent, 'lawyer', where (14) contains occurrences of different constituents. Putnam appeals to this notion of logical structure in rejecting the original Compositionality principle formulated above, and replacing it with the following more restrictive principle:⁹

If S and S' are sentences that have the same logical structure and their corresponding constituents have the same content, then S and S' have the same content.

The effect of this replacement is not limited to examples of the sort Putnam had in mind, like (13) and (14), but extends to the original puzzle involving (1) and (2), and to all of the versions of Church's paradox that we have discussed.¹⁰ In particular, it allows one to maintain that (5) is true for every value of ' x ', even though (6) is false when Scott is the value of both ' x ' and ' y '. Putnam's proposal thus blocks Church's derivation of the paradoxical (7) from (5) by restricting substitutions to those that preserve logical structure. As a result, Putnam's proposal allows one to maintain the thesis that, if x and y are the same individual, someone can deny and disbelieve that $x = y$ without thereby denying or disbelieving that $x = x$.

This thesis raises a difficult question that we have been holding in abeyance and that we must now address: What does King George assert, and believe, when he utters (9)? If his utterance does not have the same content as (10), then what exactly does he assert (believe)? Is it obvious that he does not assert (believe) that Scott is not Scott?

A number of theorists would insist (or are otherwise committed to the claim) that even if the expressions 'he' and 'Scott' in his utterance of (9) are logically proper names, King George still does not have the contradictory belief that Scott is not Scott. For if he had that belief, it would seem that he should also believe that someone is not himself. Surely King George does not have this belief; no one does. This is the position taken by Mark Richard.¹¹ In his contribution to this collection (see Chapter 10) Richard develops an account of belief ascriptions containing logically proper names that is similar in outline to Putnam's treatment of (13) and (14) above.¹²

By contrast, we maintain that when King George sincerely utters (9), he does in fact assert and believe that Scott is not Scott—even though he would not assent to (10). Thus, we hold that (5) is false, when Scott is assigned as the value of ' x '. An analysis of belief (and assertion) ascriptions leading to this result is given by Soames in his contributed article (see Chapter 11)—an account whose treatment of ascriptions containing logically proper names is broadly similar to Church's treatment of (13) and (14). Soames insists that although King George asserts and believes that

Scott is not Scott, he does not assert or believe that someone is distinct from himself. Soames uses this distinction between what King George asserts (believes) and what he does not assert (believe) to undermine a popular conception of semantic content according to which the content (i.e. proposition) expressed by a sentence in a context is something like the set of circumstances with respect to which the sentence, as used in the context, is true. Soames proposes to replace this conception with one in which classical Russellian propositions are semantic contents of sentences. These Russellian propositions determine, but are not determined by, the circumstances in which the sentences are true. This conception of the contents of sentences agrees with Russell regarding the objects of propositional attitudes, while departing from him in allowing that we frequently assert and believe propositions directly concerning individuals with whom we are not acquainted, in Russell's special sense.

In his contributed article (see Chapter 12), Salmon attempts to take the sting out of our claim that when King George sincerely utters (9), what he asserts and believes is precisely that Scott is not Scott, and that (5) is therefore false under the assignment of Scott to 'x'. Drawing a distinction between the proposition that Scott is not Scott and the proposition that Scott is not self-identical, Salmon argues that although King George asserts and believes the former in uttering (9), he does not thereby assert or believe the latter. In fact, Salmon argues, it is very likely that for every *x*, King George does not assert or believe that *x* is not self-identical—a fact that can easily mislead one into thinking that (5) is always true.

If King George believes that Scott is not Scott, as we maintain, why then does he not assent to (10) instead of vigorously dissenting from it? In answering this question we appeal to a distinction similar to Perry's between belief states and their contents in a context. In particular, Salmon argues that although King George fully understands both (9) and (10), when he hears or sees (10) he recognizes its content as a logical impossibility, and rejects it, but when he sincerely utters (and understands) (9) he takes its content in a completely different way, failing to recognize it as the very same contradictory proposition that is expressed by (10). Thus, his sincere utterance of (9) and his rejection of (10) indicate, respectively, his belief and his disbelief of one and the same proposition.

Notes

1. A more discriminating formulation of Compositionality is needed for languages whose sentences involve devices like quotation marks, which induce expressions occurring in their scope not to contribute what they customarily contribute to the contents of sentences. The general intent of the principle is clear enough for the present purpose, since we shall not be concerned in this Introduction with sentences involving quotation marks or similar devices.
2. For further elaboration of the naive theory (and some appropriate modifications), see Nathan Salmon, 'Reference and Information Content: Names and Descriptions', in D. Gabbay and F. Guenther (eds.), *Handbook of Philosophical Logic, iv. Topics in the Philosophy of Language* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, forthcoming); and his *Frege's Puzzle* (MIT Press/Bradford Books, 1986), 16–43. In the excerpt included in this volume from his 1904 correspondence with Bertrand Russell (ch. 3), Gottlob Frege rejects the view that the content of a proper name is simply its referent. In his contributed article 'Thoughts' (ch. 2), he offers a rival account of the contents of sentences containing proper names or other referring expressions.
3. Church himself suggests that the paradox provides a strong reason for rejecting treatments of quantifying-in which take variables to be logically proper names and which preserve the standard laws of logic.
4. In this paper, published in 1911, Russell adopts the view that ordinary proper names and demonstrative pronouns, when used to refer to other persons or external objects, are disguised definite descriptions. This view runs counter to the main drift of the excerpt from Russell's 1904 correspondence with Frege.
5. See 'Demonstratives' in J. Almog, J. Perry, and H. Wettstein (eds.), *Themes from Kaplan* (Oxford University Press, 1988). This view of indexicals contrasts with that given by Frege in 'Thoughts'. For a criticism of Frege's view see John Perry, 'Frege on Demonstratives', *The Philosophical Review* 86 (1977), 474–97.
6. Harvard University Press and Basil Blackwell, 1980 (originally published 1972). See also his 'Identity and Necessity', in M. Munitz (ed.), *Identity and Individuation* (New York University Press, 1971), 135–64, also in S. Schwartz (ed.), *Naming, Necessity, and Natural Kinds* (Cornell University Press, 1977), 66–101; Keith Donnellan, 'Proper Names and Identifying Descriptions', in D. Davidson and G. Harman (eds.), *Semantics of Natural Language* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1972), 356–79, and 'Speaking of Nothing', *The Philosophical Review* 83 (1974), 3–32, also in Schwartz, pp. 216–44; Frederic Fitch, 'The Problem of The Morning Star and the Evening Star', *Philosophy of Science* 16 (1949), 137–41; David Kaplan 'Demonstratives', in J. Almog, J. Perry, and H. Wettstein (eds.), *Themes from Kaplan* (1988); Ruth Barcan Marcus, 'Modalities and Intensional Languages', *Synthese* 13 (1961), 303–22, and 'Discussion of the Paper by Ruth B. Marcus' (with Quine, Kripke, McCarthy, and Follesdal), *Synthese* 14 (1962), 132–43; Hilary Putnam, 'Is Semantics Possible?' in H. E. Kiefer and M. Munitz (eds.), *Language, Belief, and Metaphysics* (State University of New York Press, 1970), 50–63, also in Schwartz, pp. 102–118, 'Meaning and Reference', *Journal of Philosophy* 70 (1973), 699–711, also in Schwartz, pp. 119–132, and 'The Meaning of "Meaning"', in K. Gunderson (ed.), *Language, Mind, and Knowledge* (University of Minnesota Press, 1975), 131–93, also in Putnam's *Philosophical Papers, ii. Mind, Language and Reality*

- (Cambridge University Press, 1975), 215–71; Nathan Salmon, *Reference and Essence* (Princeton University Press and Basil Blackwell, 1981), Part I; and Arthur Smullyan, Review of Quine's 'The Problem of Interpreting Modal Logic', *The Journal of Symbolic Logic* 12 (1947), 139–41.
7. Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle*, provides further arguments along these lines, as well as arguments favouring and elaborating the doctrine that ordinary proper names (and other simple referring expressions) are logically proper names.
 8. See e.g. Tyler Burge, 'Belief and Synonymy', *Journal of Philosophy* 75 (1978), 119–38.
 9. Church's translation argument (see ch. 9) was intended, at least in part, as an objection to this proposal of Putnam's.
 10. Putnam's proposal, however, does not provide solutions to all Mates-type puzzles. Suppose Mary fully understands both 'lawyer' and 'attorney' (recognizing them as exact synonyms), and expresses her conclusions concerning Vladimir's doxastic state by saying "Vladimir believes that all lawyers are wealthy but he does not believe that all attorneys are wealthy. On the contrary, he believes that not all attorneys are wealthy". It would seem, then, that the sentences 'Vladimir believes that lawyers are wealthy' and 'Vladimir believes that attorneys are wealthy' express different propositions, since Mary believes one and disbelieves the other. Both the original Compositionality principle and Putnam's substitute preclude this. Instead, Putnam would likely claim that Mary believes that Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy, and conclude from this that she also believes that Vladimir believes attorneys are wealthy, since on Putnam's proposal, these propositions concerning what Vladimir believes are the very same.

Nevertheless, according to Putnam, Mary disbelieves that if Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy, then he believes attorneys are wealthy. He would likely claim, therefore, that she also disbelieves the stronger, conjunctive proposition that: Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy, and he believes attorneys are wealthy. Thus Putnam attributes to Mary the apparently illogical position of believing a proposition (that Vladimir believes lawyers, i.e. attorneys, are wealthy) while disbelieving the conjunction formed from this proposition and itself, and even disbelieving the conditional formed from this proposition together with itself.

On the basis of Mary's remarks Putnam would likely claim further that Mary believes that Vladimir does not believe attorneys are wealthy, and that she also believes (the conjunctive proposition) that: Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy and he does not believe attorneys are wealthy. Thus on Putnam's account, Mary believes both a proposition and its negation, and even believes the conjunction of this proposition and its negation. In light of these apparently harsh verdicts about Mary, the fact that Putnam's proposal postulates a distinction between the content of (13) and that of (14) no longer seems a significant improvement over original Compositionality. Even the original principle allows that Mary may (inconsistently) believe the content of (13) while disbelieving that of (14).

For further criticism of Putnam's proposal, see Israel Scheffler, 'On Synonymy and Indirect Discourse', *Philosophy of Science* 22 (1955), 39–44, at p. 42 n. 7; Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle*, pp. 164–5, n. 4. See also Scott Soames, 'Substitutivity', in J. J. Thomson (ed.), *On Being and Saying: Essays for Richard Cartwright* (MIT Press, 1987), where Putnam's proposal, and

extensions of it to deal with standard substitutivity puzzles involving singular terms, are discussed and criticized at length.

By contrast to Putnam, Church would insist that Mary ('whatever she herself may tell us') does not doubt that if Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy, then he believes attorneys are wealthy. Church would likely claim further that Mary does not doubt that Vladimir believes attorneys are wealthy. What Mary really doubts, Church maintains, is something linguistic, for example, that the sentence 'Vladimir believes that attorneys are wealthy' is true in English. (In the final footnote to his contributed article, Kripke expresses sympathy for something like Church's position.)

This conclusion, however, is questionable. Suppose that Mary is trained in semantics, and knows to distinguish the content of any English sentence *S* from the separate proposition that *S* is true in English. Nevertheless, she maintains her conclusions concerning Vladimir. In particular, she correctly understands the sentence 'Vladimir believes that attorneys are wealthy' to express (in English) that Vladimir believes attorneys, i.e. lawyers, are wealthy (rather than something linguistic); but she sincerely dissents from this sentence (as a sentence of English) because of her (mistaken) philosophical views about the objects of belief or the truth conditions of belief ascriptions. (Cf. n. 8, above. Burge may be in a similar state.) Under these circumstances, Mary's sincere dissent seems to indicate a doubt (however confused) that Vladimir believes attorneys (i.e. lawyers) are wealthy—in addition to her linguistic doubt that the sentence 'Vladimir believes that attorneys are wealthy' is true in English, and in addition to her correct belief that Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy. See Section IX of Soames, 'Substitutivity', for further criticism of Church along these lines. (These considerations do not affect Church's primary argument—which we endorse—that the sentences 'Mary doubts that Vladimir believes attorneys are wealthy' and 'Mary doubts that Vladimir believes lawyers are wealthy' cannot differ in truth value in English if 'lawyer' and 'attorney' are synonyms.)

This interesting dispute between Church and Putnam is now over three decades old. The views they advocated then need not represent their current positions on these issues.

11. See also Ruth Barcan Marcus, 'A Proposed Solution to a Puzzle About Belief' in P. French, T. Uehling, and H. Wettstein (eds.), *Midwest Studies in Philosophy, vi: The Foundations of Analytic Philosophy* (University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 501–10, esp. at p. 505, and her 'Rationality and Believing the Impossible', *Journal of Philosophy* 80 (1983), 321–38, esp. p. 330. (Marcus argues here for the much stronger claim—which Richard rejects—that one cannot believe any necessary falsehood.) Other recent theories similarly committed to denying that King George has the contradictory belief that Scott is not Scott are given in David Lewis, 'What Puzzling Pierre Does not Believe', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 59 (1981), 283–9; and Robert Stalnaker, *Inquiry* (MIT Press/Bradford Books, 1984), at pp. 72–99, esp. at p. 85. The major criticism given in Soames's contributed article (ch. 11) applies to some extent to both of these theories.
12. One significant difference between Putnam and Richard is that Richard's analysis sanctions
 - (i) If *c* believes that . . . *a* . . . *a* . . ., then *c* believes that . . . *a* . . . *b* . . .

but not

(ii) If c believes that . . . a . . . b . . . , then c believes that . . . a . . . a . . .

where a and b are expressions having the same content, while Putnam's fails to sanction either. In subsequent work both Richard (in 'Quantification and Leibniz's Law', *The Philosophical Review* 96 (1987), 555–78) and David Kaplan (in 'Word, Object, and Belief', unpublished lectures) have explored Putnam-like analyses that reject both (i) and (ii). These analyses are discussed in Soames, 'Substitutivity'.