

CONTENTS

Preface		xiii
Part I	Introduction	1
	Section 1	Generic definitions and basic modal realism 1
	Section 2	Metaphysical versus logical possibility? 6
	Section 3	S5 13
	Section 4	Eight views of possibility 17
	4.1	Parmenides, Leslie, and Rescher 17
	4.2	Leucippus, Democritus, Meinong, Lewis, and Aristotle 23
	4.3	The linguistic view 27
	4.4	A Platonic primitive modality view 28
	4.5	Aristotle again and branching 30
	4.6	Leibniz 31
	4.7	Modal irrealism 32
	4.8	Conventionalism 34
Part II	Applications and pseudo-applications	39
	Section 1	Modality 39
	1.1	Box and diamond 39
	1.2	The global nature of modal claims 40
	1.3	Supervenience 40
	1.4	Transworld comparison 41
	Section 2	Counterfactuals and causality 42
	2.1	Lewis's account of counterfactuals and counterexamples 42
	2.2	A fix and the coat thief problem 45
	2.3	Causation and the order of time 47
	2.3.1	The basic argument 47
	2.3.2	Taking the direction of time as primitive 49

	2.3.3	Deriving the direction of time from increase of entropy	49
	2.3.4	The openness or unreality of the future	51
Section 3		Propositions	52
	3.1	Unstructured propositions	52
	3.2	Structured propositions	54
Section 4		Properties	60
Section 5		Overall assessment	61
Part III		The Lewisian ontology of extreme modal realism	63
Section 1		The Lewisian account of possible worlds	63
Section 2		Identity vs. counterpart theory	66
	2.1	Arguments for counterpart theory	66
	2.2	Arguments for identity theory	69
	2.2.1	General arguments	69
	2.2.2	Attributions of ability	70
	2.3	Conclusions about identity and counterpart versions of basic EMR	75
Section 3		Indiscernible worlds?	75
Section 4		Lewis's arguments for his ontology	81
Section 5		Objections to Lewis's indexical account of actuality	82
	5.1	Common sense	82
	5.2	Is "the actual world" indexical?	84
	5.3	Substitution	86
Section 6		The possibility of spatio-temporally unrelated co-actual entities	88
Section 7		Cardinality and the "set" of all possible worlds	91
	7.1	Introduction	91
	7.2	There is no set of all possible worlds	92
	7.3	Lewis's proviso	95
	7.4	What should Lewis do about the cardinality problem?	96
Section 8		Ethical issues	97
	8.1	The ethical objection	97
	8.2	The indexicality of morality	98
	8.3	Ethical problems for counterpartist EMR	100
	8.3.1	A transworld counterfactual	100
	8.3.2	The first case: saving a life	101

	8.3.3	The second case: self-torture	105
	8.3.4	Forking	106
	8.3.5	The need for some consequentialistic considerations in ethics	107
Section 9		Induction and actuality	110
	9.1	Introduction	110
	9.2	Neutral ground	112
	9.3	The Humean argument and a reply Lewis cannot give	114
	9.4	Conclusions and a formalization	117
Section 10		The epistemological objection	119
Section 11		Explaining the actual in terms of the necessary	122
Section 12		A final assessment of EMR	123
Part IV		Platonic ersatz ontologies	125
	Section 1	The general strategy	125
		1.1 A cheap ersatzism	127
	Section 2	Linguistic approaches	130
		2.1 The basic idea	130
		2.2 Objection from alien properties	132
		2.3 Primitive modality	134
		2.4 The arbitrariness objection	135
		2.5 Mathematical constructions	136
		2.6 Combinatorialism and Armstrong	137
		2.7 Fictionalist approaches	139
		2.7.1 Strong fictionalism	139
		2.7.2 Timid factionalism	141
		2.7.3 Sider's pluriverse	147
	Section 3	Platonism	155
		3.1 Platonic approaches to modality	155
		3.2 What are propositions?	155
		3.3 Objections to Platonic Ersatzism	158
		3.3.1 The set-theoretic objection	158
		3.3.2 Alien properties	159
		3.3.3 How do propositions represent?	159
		3.3.4 The unmet extended Parmenidean challenge	162
		3.3.5 Actuality and possibility	165
		3.3.6 Powers	171

	3.4	Avoiding grounding?	172
	Section 4	Conclusions	176
Part V	Sketches towards a Spinozistic–Tractarian account of modality		179
	Section 1	Asserting, naming, and infallibility	179
	Section 2	Spinoza	181
	Section 3	A radical theory of modality	188
	Section 4	Costs	192
	Section 5	The Less Radical Theory	202
Part VI	Aristotelian–Leibnizian ontology		205
	Section 1	Leibniz’s approach	205
	1.1	Leibniz’s argument for the existence of God and the explanation of the nature of abstracta	205
	1.2	How propositions and possible worlds represent	208
	1.3	The Parmenidean challenge revisited and an assessment of the Leibnizian approach	210
	Section 2	Aristotelian possibility and causality	211
	2.1	Proximate matter, proximate cause, and Parmenides	211
	2.2	The basic Aristotelian view	213
	2.3	Global possibilities: a difficulty	216
	2.4	A direct argument for a necessary being	217
	2.5	S5, the Principle of Sufficient Reason, and the cosmological argument	218
	2.6	The Aristotelian–Leibnizian view	221
	2.7	Branching and other modalities	223
	2.8	Indeterminism	223
	Section 3	Combining with the Spinozistic–Tractarian view	224
	Section 4	Ordinary alethic modal talk	226
	Section 5	The Principle of Sufficient Reason	228
	5.1	From the PSR to the Aristotelian view of modality	228
	5.2	The van Inwagen objection	230

Section 6	Ontology and implications	235
6.1	Natures and other necessitators	235
6.2	Dispositions	239
6.3	Shoemaker's powers	241
6.4	Explanation	243
6.5	Reduction	244
6.6	Some assembly required?	248
6.7	How we know what is possible	251
6.8	The structure of the space of possibilities	252
Section 7	The main challenges to Lewisian and Platonic ontologies can be resolved	254
7.1	Primitive modality	254
7.2	Transworld identity	255
7.2.1	Identity option 1: haecceities	255
7.2.2	Identity option 2: the identity of indiscernibles and a causal-historical account of identity	256
7.2.3	Identity option 3: divine ideas as differing between worlds	260
7.2.4	Conclusions about identity	262
7.3	Attributions of ability	262
7.4	No set of all possible worlds	263
7.5	The ethical objection	263
7.6	Inductive reasoning	264
7.7	Explaining with necessity	265
Section 8	Objections to the Aristotelian–Leibnizian view	265
8.1	Primitive causal modality	265
8.2	Evil and the apparent compatibility of all things	266
8.3	Is God omnipotent if logical possibility is defined in terms of his power?	267
8.4	The wrong way around?	269
8.5	Necessary being	270
8.6	Obscurity	273
8.7	Creaturely free will	274
8.8	Divine simplicity	274
8.9	Incompatible powers	276

Part VII	Final conclusions	279
Section 1	Cost–benefit arguments for the Aristotelian–Leibnizian ontology of possible worlds	279
1.1	Modality	279
1.2	Explanation of what propositions are	279
1.3	Not a completely new ontology	280
1.4	Connection with theistic arguments for the existence of God	281
Section 2	Choosing between accounts of possibility	282
Appendix:	the \diamond^* operator and S4	285
Bibliography and	Futher Reading	289
Index		297