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Moderate Anti-Haecceitism

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In this paper I will propose an answer to the problem of individual identity that avoids both extreme haecceitism, the view that the individuality of a thing is primitive and independent of qualitative features, and extreme anti-haecceitism, or the view that a thing's individuality consists in nothing over and above its having certain qualities. My proposal avoids extreme anti-haecceitism by acknowledging that the uniqueness of a given individual is not reducible to the uniqueness of the set of qualities it exemplifies; yet my position is a variety of anti-haecceitism because it denies that thisnesses are metaphysically primitive and unanalyzable. This view may be called *moderate anti-haecceitism*.

A few words about terminology are in order before getting down to issues. The term "haecceitas" was used by Duns Scotus (1266-1308) for the singularity in virtue of which a particular may be referred to as a "this." The labels, "haecceitism" and "anti-haecceitism," are reported by David Kaplan (1975) to have been suggested by Robert M. Adams. As Kaplan (1975) and Adams (1979) use this language, a haecceity is a primitive non-qualitative property of an object, that of being identical to the object. I will use the term "thisness" in a neutral way for the property of being identical with a given individual, regardless of whether this property is primitive or not, and regardless of whether it is qualitative or not. A property or relation is *primitive* if it is not analyzable, or explicable in terms of other relations or properties. The term *property* will be used in a very broad sense. In general, the true predication of a subject will be taken to indicate that the entity designated by the subject has a property that corresponds to the predicate. A number of techniques could be introduced in order to avoid paradoxes of self-predication, but nothing in what follows will turn on which of these is employed; no theory of properties will be presented. Adams (1979) distinguishes qualitative from non-qualitative properties. Purely qualitative properties, according to Adams, are those that could be expressed in a language "without the aid of such refer-

ential devices as proper names, proper adjectives and verbs (such as 'Leibnizian' and 'pegasizes'), indexical expressions, and referential uses of definite descriptions."¹ This distinction will be uncritically accepted here, and qualitative properties will be called *qualities*. The claim that no two individuals share all the same qualities will be called the thesis of the *Identity of Indiscernibles*.²

The view that non-qualitative thisnesses are metaphysically primitive is asserted by Adams (1979). In this paper I will argue that Adams' assertion regarding the primitiveness of thisness is not well supported, and furthermore that we have good reason to reject it. Although I accept the thesis that thisnesses cannot be reduced to sets of qualities, I will show that the property of being identical with a given individual may be exhaustively explicated in terms of general principles pertaining to spatio-temporal relations, causal connections, and essential properties. Where such principles provide no answer to questions of identity, these questions must be decided by convention, or left unanswered. For some possible cases, there are no facts of the matter which determine identity conditions.

Haecceitism

According to Adams, the primitiveness of thisnesses follows from the falsity of the Identity of Indiscernibles. While this claim will be disputed, its converse is certainly true. If the thesis of the Identity of Indiscernibles were correct, haecceitism would be false. According to the haecceitist, the thisness of an object cannot be analyzed as the possession of some set of qualitative properties. But if indiscernibles were necessarily identical, identity could be analyzed in terms of indiscernibility.

It might be objected that even one who accepts the Identity of Indiscernibles could maintain that thisnesses are primitive for the sake of explaining transworld identities. Thisnesses may be primitive relative to one set of conditions, but not primitive relative to others. Even if one is convinced that intraworld identity conditions are not primitive, one may still uphold haecceitism because of the problem of interworld identity conditions. However, two arguments convince me that one who accepts the Identity of Indiscernibles should reject haecceitism, even for trans-

¹ Adams (1979), pp. 7-9. Cf. also Kaplan (1975).

² The expression, "the identity of indiscernibles," has been applied to a variety of claims. There is the trivial claim that if *a* and *b* have all their properties in common, including such properties as *being identical to a*, then *a* and *b* are identical. On the other hand, the term "indiscernibility" would most accurately be used to indicate an epistemic issue. It would be implausible to hold that simply because we can discern no difference between *a* and *b*, that there really is no such difference. In this paper, following Adams (1979), objects are said to be indiscernible if and only if they share all their qualitative properties.

world identity. First, the qualities of individuals may be relativized to possible worlds. If Q is a quality, so is the property of having Q at w . If it is objected that by relativizing qualities to worlds essential use is made of terms that refer to individual worlds, the worlds may be specified by purely qualitative descriptions, provided the worlds themselves are not qualitatively indiscernible. None of the arguments against the Identity of Indiscernibles apply to the case of entire worlds, and later we will find further reasons for accepting the Identity of Indiscernibles with respect to worlds. For discernible worlds, transworld identity questions could be answered without reference to haecceities by considering the world relativized qualities of individuals. The identity of a at w with b at w' holds if and only if, for all qualities Q , a has Q at w if and only if b has Q at w and a has Q at w' if and only if b does, too. It may be difficult to determine whether a has Q at w' , but this is a question of whether an individual has a certain qualitative property; it need not call for the introduction of haecceities.

According to another argument given by Adams, if conditions for identity with a given individual in a world can be analyzed in purely qualitative terms, then due to the generality of the analysis, alternative circumstances could be described in which the identity would hold, and these alternatives could then be correlated with possible worlds in which such conditions do hold. This procedure may not suffice to decide the truth of identity claims in all possible cases, but in such cases it would be natural to view such claims as being without truth-value, so transworld identity would be undefined in some cases. So, while it is consistent to hold the position that the Identity of Indiscernibles is true even though transworld identity relations are primitive, such a position is implausible.³

Attempts to undermine the Identity of Indiscernibles generally propose that there are possible counterexamples to this thesis. The example given by Max Black (1952) of a world that contains nothing but two spheres is the most famous of its kind. If such a world is possible, then the difference between the two spheres would have to lie in something other than their qualitative properties, for by hypothesis, the two spheres have exactly the same qualitative properties. One might propose that it is the matter of the spheres which distinguishes them, or one might hold that there is a special unanalyzable element, a primitive thisness, a haecceity, which distinguishes them.

A very ingenious defense of the Identity of Indiscernibles has been constructed by Ian Hacking (1975). Hacking argues that the counterexamples to the Identity of Indiscernibles are descriptions of situations that

³ Cf. Adams (1979), pp. 21-22.

could equally well be described as situations in which there were no indiscernibles. The Max Black world may be described as a world in which there are two indiscernible globes in Euclidean space, or it may just as well be described as a world in which there is one globe in a non-Euclidean space that turns back upon itself. Hacking does not claim that either of these descriptions is superior to the other, but the mere availability of the one globe description takes the punch out of Max Black's counterexample. There is no need to admit that there is a non-qualitative element to thisness, for the distinctness of the two indiscernible globes is a feature of the way we describe them, not a feature of the globes themselves.

A number of rejoinders could be made to Hacking's argument. A point overlooked by both Hacking and Adams is that there is a qualitative difference between a globe with an indiscernible twin and a globe in a tightly curved space. In the two-globe world, each globe has the property of facing a globe from one side and not facing a globe from the opposite side. In Hacking's one-globe world, the one globe faces its own opposite side because of the curvature of space, but then it will lack an opposite side that faces nothing. This problem could be overcome by allowing sufficient oddities in the nature of the space in the one-globe world.

Adams discusses two types of response to Hacking, one of which has to do with the issue of whether a geometry can be fixed; the other of which is the "argument from near indiscernibles." First, if one accepts an absolute theory of spacetime, Hacking's descriptions would not apply to the same realities. But Hacking admits that if a difference between the geometries of different worlds is taken to be a difference in the worlds, and not merely in the way the worlds are described, his point cannot be established. Adams modifies this point with the suggestion that we need not accept an absolute theory of spacetime to grant an objective difference between Euclidean and non-Euclidean measures of distance. We could distinguish the worlds by claiming that in only one of them is a globe x number of Euclidean feet from a globe. Still, Adams grants that one who holds a relational view of geometry might not buy this.

On the other hand, suppose we accept Hacking's contention that it is a matter of convention whether we describe the Max Black world as having one or two globes in non-Euclidean or Euclidean space. Then at least relative to one way of describing the world, the Identity of Indiscernibles fails. Hacking concludes that no special feature distinguishes the globes, since their difference is a matter of convention. But granting that it is a matter of linguistic choice whether there are one or two globes, relative to the description in which there are two globes, the difference between them cannot be explained in qualitative terms alone. Within the system used for

describing the world as two-globed, some explanation of the difference between the globes is needed.

Adams' second rejoinder is independent of the issues of measurement and geometry. Adams asks us to suppose that there is a world populated by two globes which are indiscernible except for a blemish on one globe. The blemish is an accidental feature of the globe that has it, but it is enough to distinguish the globes on anyone's theory of individuality. Since the blemish is accidental, it should be possible for the two globes to exist without either of them having a blemish. It doesn't seem reasonable to hold that the absence of the blemish should make a difference in the number of globes in the world. Hence, since it is possible for there to be near indiscernibles, it is possible for there to be numerically distinct indiscernibles, and thus the counterexamples to the claim of the Identity of Indiscernibles stand.

Adams draws two important conclusions from his rejection of the Identity of Indiscernibles. First, he claims that since there can be numerically distinct indiscernibles, it follows that intraworld identity conditions are non-qualitative and metaphysically primitive. Secondly, Adams asserts that if the Identity of Indiscernibles is rejected, there is no way of analyzing transworld identity and non-identity in terms of more basic relations.

It is certainly true that the possibility of numerically distinct indiscernibles warrants the conclusion that thisnesses are non-qualitative, in the sense that there is no general one-to-one correspondence between thisnesses and sets of qualities. But to say that thisnesses are non-qualitative does not amount to the assertion that thisnesses are metaphysically primitive. There have been a number of theories of individuation that have denied that thisnesses are either qualitative or *sui generis*.⁴ Aquinas, for example, thought that the principle of individuation for material substances was "designated matter," that is, matter that is considered as under determinate dimensions. Some philosophers, who make a distinction between essence and existence, hold that the principle of individuation of individual substances is their existence or act of existence. A few medieval authors argue that individuality is the result of the action of a natural agent or cause. Among contemporary philosophers the view is common that material objects are individuated by their spatio-temporal locations. Each of these views has its own difficulties, and one may want to argue that ultimately each admits of individuals for which the principle of individuation is unanalyzable, but this point needs argument. It will not do simply to assert that the non-qualitative nature of thisnesses implies their metaphysical primitiveness.

⁴ Cf. Gracia (1984), pp. 39ff.

Adams does not directly establish the primitiveness of thisness from his refutation of the Identity of Indiscernibles, rather he infers it from a fundamental difference between the two globe universe and the one globe universe. Adams writes,

The most obvious and fundamental difference between Black's imaginary Euclidean (or gently Riemannian) two-globe universe and its tightly curved one-globe counter-part seems to be that in one of them there are two iron globes, and in the other only one. Why can't that be a difference between possible realities in its own right? Indeed I think it is extremely plausible to regard it so.⁵

From this insight, Adams infers that the thisnesses of the two globes are metaphysically primitive. Instead, we might take it to be a primitive qualitative feature of the universe that in it is spatial separation between spheres, and then allow the truth of identity claims to be determined on the basis of this qualitative feature of the universe. The qualitative form of the universe determines that there are non-identical globes in the world. Adams' procedure is the reverse. He would explain the fact that two objects occupy the universe by appeal to the fact that the objects have different primitive thisnesses, that is, the non-identity determines that the universe is two-globed. Continuing from the above passage, Adams writes,

To give this answer, of course, is to hold that the thisnesses of the two globes are metaphysically primitive. The function of the imaginary spatiotemporal world here is not to show how individual distinctness can be explained by spatiotemporal relations; no such explanation is needed if thisnesses are metaphysically primitive. The imaginary world simply provides an example in which it seems intuitively that two individuals would be distinct although it is clear they would have all the same suchnesses.

The intuitions reported here by Adams are not peculiar to him. For example, Jorge Gracia offers the following comment regarding the view that spatio-temporal location individuates:

Things seem to occupy space and be in time after they are already constituted in their individuality. That is, their individuality seems logically and metaphysically prior to their temporality and spatial location. It is I who is (*sic*) here now, and my being here now seems somewhat dependent on me, not vice versa.⁶

Gracia also notes that Abelard used an argument similar to this. While an appeal to intuitions cannot be avoided in arguments on such issues as these, intuitions about metaphysical priority do not seem to be very weighty. Indeed, there is good reason to believe the metaphysical priorities are the reverse of what Adams and Gracia intuit them to be. Meta-

⁵ Adams (1979), p. 16.

⁶ Gracia (1984), p. 41.

physical primitiveness (at least as Adams understands it⁷) is a function of explanation or analysis. If *p* is used to explain *q*, or if *p* is used in the analysis of *q*, then *p* is metaphysically prior to *q*. The order of explanation reflects the order of being. As a general principle of explanation, we seek to explain what is not well understood by what is more adequately understood. The exemplification of qualitative properties is more readily understood than the exemplification of non-qualitative properties. It is a qualitative feature of Black's world that it is occupied by two globes. On the other hand, the supposed primitive thisnesses of the globes are non-qualitative properties. Hence, given a choice between explaining the difference in thisnesses by appeal to the quality of the universe in which distinct locations are occupied, and explaining the fact that distinct locations are occupied by appeal to the exemplification of different thisnesses, we should opt for the former. Thus, the occupation of different locations is metaphysically prior to the possession of different thisnesses.

The truth of haecceitism requires that (1) the property of being identical to a given individual is not simply a matter of exemplifying a certain set of qualities, i.e., thisnesses are non-qualitative; and (2) thisnesses are primitive. Extreme and moderate haecceitism differ over the extent to which thisnesses are primitive. The extreme haecceitist holds that there are no qualitative restraints on the truth of identity claims, except for the non-identity of discernibles; so, thisnesses are completely primitive. Moderate haecceitism allows essentialist principles to explain the failure of some identity claims, but maintains that in cases where such principles do not suffice to determine the truth value of an identity claim, the truth of the claim is determined by inexplicable metaphysical fact; so thisnesses are partially primitive. Counterexamples to the Identity of Indiscernibles are taken by the moderate haecceitist to show that the failure of at least some identity claims is due to brute metaphysical fact.

Anti-Haecceitism

The form of anti-haecceitism which I favor is not a version of the bundle theory; it does not seek the explanation of the difference between indiscernibles through appeal to a difference in the components of the individuals. It does not attempt to define identity by means of a correlation between thisnesses and sets of properties. Rather, the difference between indiscernibles is analyzed in terms of a purely qualitative feature of the

⁷ Adams (1979), p. 20: "When we ask about the primitiveness of a kind of identity, we typically want to know, about a certain range of cases, whether the belonging of two properties to a single subject can be explained as consisting in other, more basic relations obtaining between distinct subjects of the same or related properties."

universe in which the indiscernibles exist, namely, that there is spatio-temporal separation between the areas at which the purely qualitative properties of the indiscernibles are exemplified. To elaborate on this point, consider the Max Black world, w_b , in which Castor and Pollux share the same purely qualitative properties. Let F be defined as follows:

$Fx =_{df}$ There is a location l and an object y such that x occupies l and y does not occupy l .

The property F is a qualitative property exemplified by both Castor and Pollux. An object has the property F whether or not it bears any relation to any specific individual. The definition of F makes no use of indexicals, proper names or definite descriptions. Reference to locations and individuals is general. Unlike other accounts which explain nonidentity in terms of difference in location, there is no appeal in this proposal to antecedently defined thisnesses of individual locations. The fact that w_b is a world in which there is an x such that Fx is a qualitative feature of that world. From this fact one may derive that in w_b there is an x and a y such that x is not identical to y . That there is a difference between the thisness of Castor and the thisness of Pollux is thus analyzed not by reducing a thisness to a bundle of other properties and finding a member of one bundle which is not a member of the other; rather the difference in thisnesses is due to the exemplification of a qualitative property, F , in the world in which Castor and Pollux exist.

General conditions for the identity of material objects can be given in purely qualitative terms:

$x = y$ if and only if

- (i) for all qualities Q , Qx if and only if Qy , and
- (ii) for all locations l , x occupies l if and only if y occupies l .

The moderate anti-haecceitism defended here allows that (1) thisnesses are non-qualitative, but denies (2) that thisnesses are primitive. Black's counterexample to the Identity of Indiscernibles is explained with reference to a qualitative feature of the area in which the indiscernibles are located. The failure of condition (ii) is described in purely qualitative terms. Hence, contrary to the haecceitist, the example of Castor and Pollux does not require us to accept the primitiveness of the thisnesses of the two globes.

The fact that counterexamples to the Identity of Indiscernibles do not force us to accept the primitiveness of thisnesses does not of itself justify the assertion that identity and diversity are never primitive. But by defus-

ing such counter-examples, the way to such an assertion is cleared of the major obstacle facing any opponent of primitive thisness.

Since it accounts for identity in purely qualitative terms, moderate anti-haecceitism is free from the epistemological liabilities of haecceitism. This criticism of haecceitism is similar to the kind of objection which frequently has been raised against the view that 'bare particulars' distinguish individuals, although there are important differences. Bare particulars are taken by those who posit them to be propertyless entities that are the ultimate subjects of predication and that confer individuality on the substances with which they are associated. Critics of bare particulars have argued that the notion of a propertyless subject of predication is absurd, and that such qualityless entities would be essentially inconceivable.⁸ The haecceities posited by Adams are different enough from bare particulars to make these criticisms inapplicable to his views. Haecceities are not qualitative, but this does not mean that they are qualityless. Adams explicitly distinguishes his haecceities from bare particulars. Nevertheless, like bare particulars, primitive thisnesses are epistemologically suspect. Their obscurity may not give us reason to deny that haecceities exist, but it does give us reason to deny that they are metaphysically primitive. The importance of this denial is made clear by a consideration of the problem of transworld identity.

Before addressing the problem of transworld identity, it is important to distinguish two kinds of questions involved in the problems of individuality.⁹ First, there is the question of what distinguishes one individual from another.

- (1.0) What distinguishes a given individual from all other individuals?

This question can be further specified with regard to temporal and counterfactual differences.

- (1.1) What distinguishes a given individual at a given time from all other individuals which exist at that time?

⁸ Anscombe (1953) quips, "The idea that what changes must be something that doesn't change precisely because it is what changes is very like the idea that what has predicates must be something without predicates just because it is what has the predicates. . . .", p. 83.

⁹ These kinds of questions correspond roughly to what Gracia (1984) refers to as the problems of *distinction* and *identity*. Gracia distinguishes six clusters of problems traditionally discussed with respect to individuality. Castañeda (1975) refers to the problem of what constitutes the individuality of all individuals as the problem of 'individuation'. I will not be concerned with this problem, but with questions which bear on the truth of identity claims.

- (1.2) What distinguishes a given individual in a given world from all other individuals which exist at that world?

The issues raised by these questions may be said to constitute the problem of *distinction*.

Secondly, we may ask what unifies a given individual. In asking this question we want to know what makes something a single individual, instead of parts of different individuals, or a group of individuals. This question may take a number of forms. We may, for example, ask what makes a given location the location of a single individual, or why a set of properties is instantiated by a single individual.¹⁰

- (2.0) Why is a given set of properties instantiated by a single individual?

Again, this question may be specified with regard to temporal and modal differences.

- (2.1) What makes a given set of properties which are exemplified at time t and another set of properties which are exemplified at time t' sets of properties whose members are exemplified by a single individual?
- (2.2) What makes a given set of properties exemplified at a world w and a set of properties exemplified at w' sets whose members are exemplified by a single individual?

Question (2.1) raises the problem of *persistence*. The problem raised by question (2.2) has become known as the problem of *transworld identity*.

Adams is careful to point out that belief in primitive thisnesses is compatible with the belief that the relation of identity through time is not primitive. We might be able to analyze the persistence of one of Black's globes through time in terms of spatio-temporal continuity or causal connections between globe stages. But the distinctness of those stages from the corresponding stages of another globe would be analyzable. In other words, an appeal to primitive thisnesses in order to answer question (1.1)

¹⁰ This second group of questions may be called questions of *identity*, although this appellation may be misleading. As pointed out by Baruch Brody (1980), if our question were merely, "Under what conditions is a identical to b ?" we could give an easy answer: coinstantiation of all properties. It is a logical truth that a has all the same properties (qualitative and non-qualitative) as does b , if and only if a is identical to b . This answer is not found satisfying by those concerned with the problems of individuality because the questions they seek to answer are whether there is some principle which can explain how identity claims are to be judged and whether properties are coinstantiated by an individual. Often this question is misstated as the question of finding conditions for identity. The formulation of the questions given here is an attempt to avoid this confusion.

does not carry a commitment to appeal to primitive thisnesses in order to answer question (2.1). With respect to transworld identity the situation is different. Adams argues that if we accept primitive thisnesses we will have good reason to suppose that identity relations across worlds also are primitive. We are asked to consider cases in which two possible worlds which are qualitatively indistinguishable differ with respect to the identities of the individuals which exist in those worlds. If there are primitive thisnesses, there would be a difference between a world in which one of Black's globes, Castor, exists, and a world in which only the other globe, Pollux, exists. It is not clear that this counts in favor of Adams' view. Certainly, if we accept that there is an unanalyzable non-qualitative and essential property of Castor, then a world with only Castor would be different from a world with only Pollux. If, however, we reject the primitiveness of thisnesses, it will appear that the haecceitist imagines a difference where there is none. By accepting primitive thisnesses, one is committed to metaphysical differences which are not only without empirical content, but are without any possible empirical content.

To require that propositions have possible empirical content is not to revert to a criterion of verifiability or to some form of reductionism. The requirement of possible empirical content I have in mind is much weaker than that. A claim is verifiable only if there is some observational procedure which could be used to determine whether or not the claim is true, at least to some level of statistical tolerance. For a claim to have possible empirical content, on the other hand, we do not require any development of scientific theory by which observational results could be correlated with the truth value of the claim, nor is it required that in all possible worlds the truth of the claim should have some observable result, but merely that there is some possible world, w , in which the claim is true such that in every world, w' , which is empirically indiscernible from w , the claim is also true. Claims that a qualitatively described individual has a certain haecceity are without possible empirical content.

In order to appreciate the epistemological liabilities of haecceitism (even moderate haecceitism) we need not consider issues concerning observation. Qualitative indiscernibility may be used to define equivalence classes on the set of all possible worlds. Call these equivalence classes quality classes. With the possible exception of statements which make use of proper names, indexicals, or referential uses of definite descriptions, every statement true in one possible world in a quality class will be true of all the other worlds in that class. Let us say that a proposition has possible qualitative content if and only if there is some quality class such that the proposition has the same truth value in all members of

that quality class. All contingent statements which ascribe a haecceity to an individual are without possible qualitative content. For any possible world in which a haecceity is exemplified, there is a qualitatively indiscernible world in which that haecceity is replaced by another.

The above criticism is not based on reductionist principles. Robert C. Stalnaker (1984) distinguishes between traditional reductionism and liberal reductionism. According to traditional varieties of reductionism, it is possible to replace problematic statements by semantically equivalent statements which do not employ the problematic vocabulary of the statements to be reduced. The liberal reductionist makes no claim about the expressive capacity of a preferred vocabulary, but merely makes the holistic claim that "possible worlds which are indiscernible with respect to the unproblematic statements must be indiscernible with respect to the problematic ones as well."¹¹ To require identity claims to have possible qualitative content is not to demand the reducibility of identity claims in either the traditional or the liberal senses of reductionism. It is not required that all qualitatively indiscernible worlds agree on the truth values of identity claims, but merely that for any identity claim there should be some set of indiscernible worlds in all the members of which that claim has the same truth value.

Although Kaplan (1975) has described an extreme form of anti-haecceitism which is thoroughly anti-essentialist, and denies the very notion of transworld identity, there is no reason why a moderate form of anti-haecceitism should not accept essentialist principles, such as the principle that whatever is possibly human is human in every possible world in which it exists. Indeed, to accept such principles is to hold that transworld identities are not totally inexplicable in terms of other more basic relations. Where questions of transworld identity cannot be answered on the basis of essentialist principles, the moderate anti-haecceitist will deny that the identity relation is defined, or will claim that the relation is to be defined conventionally.

Part of the problem of transworld identity depends upon whether one takes a realist position with regard to possible worlds. An anti-haecceitist who is a realist about possible worlds will hold a strong version of the Identity of Indiscernibles as applied to worlds. All quality classes of possible worlds are singletons. On this view, there is no difference between a world in which only Castor exists and a world in which only Pollux exists. Qualitatively, the worlds are the same, and there are no spatio-temporal conditions in terms of which the diversity of qualitatively indiscernible worlds could be established. How would such a view handle the assertion

¹¹ Stalnaker (1984), p. 154.

that since Castor and Pollux are not identical in w_b , is it possible that one exists but not the other? From the anti-haecceitist's perspective, this really amounts to nothing more than the fact that the one-globe world could be described as a world with Castor and not Pollux. This is not due to the facts of the situation, but to the conventional use of names.

The empiricism which motivates many anti-haecceitists also underlies skepticism about the reality of possible worlds. Philosophers who are not realists about possible worlds, if they are willing to countenance possible worlds at all, may regard them as logical constructions. On the logical construction view of possible worlds, worries about transworld identity are misplaced. It is not as if we are presented with different possible worlds and we must determine whether an individual in one world is identical to an individual in another. Rather, we begin with a modal claim, such as the claim that it is possible for Castor to exist without Pollux. We consider the qualitative properties of Castor. If we are essentialists, we may construct the set of possible worlds in which Castor exists as follows. Begin with all the propositions which ascribe to Castor its essential properties. Extend this set of propositions to maximal consistency, and identify each such maximal consistent set with a possible world. Here the thisness of Castor is not primitive, rather it is in part analyzable in terms of whatever principles of essentialism are adopted, and in part it is an artifact (as Kaplan uses the term) of our construction of possible worlds.

The difference between moderate haecceitism and moderate anti-haecceitism on the issue of the metaphysical status of thisnesses is reflected in differences in the ways in which proponents of the two positions will view essentialism. In the moderate haecceitist view, essentialism is true because thisnesses do not violate essentialist strictures. The property of being a bird is an essential property, according to this theory, because there is no possible entity which is a bird in one possible world and something else in another. On the moderate anti-haecceitist picture, the fact that certain properties are essential follows from taxonomic principles together with an appraisal of counterfactual claims. Since no bird could have been or could become anything but a bird, it is reasonable to adopt the policy of treating the property of being a bird as essential.¹² It is inferred from the essentiality of a given property that no thisness which has such a property in one world will lack it in another. Hence, for the moderate anti-haecceitist, essentiality is prior to thisness, while for the moderate haecceitist, the order is reversed.

¹² Essentialism is given an epistemological foundation based on a theory of scientific explanation in Brody (1980).

The relation between essentialism and haecceitism poses an important problem for the moderate haecceitist. According to the moderate haecceitist, essential properties place qualitative limits on thisnesses. These qualitative limits describe certain conditions which claims of transworld identity must fulfill if they are true. But no matter how narrowly one draws the conditions for belonging to an *infima species*, it remains possible for distinct individuals to fulfill such conditions. Witness Castor and Pollux. In the attempt to support moderate anti-haecceitism, I have argued that an account may be given of the difference between indiscernible material objects in terms of the qualitative features of the world in which they exist. Even if the moderate haecceitist grants that the possibility of indiscernible non-identicals does not entail the truth of his position, he may appeal to cases of indiscernibility across worlds. I have argued in favor of the indeterminacy of identity conditions for such cases on the grounds that to suppose otherwise raises serious epistemological problems. But the haecceitist has another argument: each of us has direct access to his or her own thisness.¹³

We can imagine that there might be a world qualitatively indiscernible from this one but from which we are absent. In place of us would be people who were qualitatively indiscernible from us both physically and psychologically. The difference between this world of *Doppelgänger* and our world is of the utmost importance. In the *Doppelgänger* world, we simply don't exist. The fact that in this world I do exist, the haecceitist will continue, is obviously not a matter of convention, and thus haecceitism is vindicated.

There are several problems with this line of argument. First, note that although the claim that I might be replaced with a *Doppelgänger* may have some intuitive plausibility, the intuition does not generalize to material objects. We do not have an intuition that the world could be just like this one except for the identity of the doorknob to my closet. Even if the moderate haecceitist is right about persons, one might still maintain an anti-haecceitist position with regard to material objects. Recall that Aquinas also held there to be different identity conditions for material and spiritual beings. If moderate anti-haecceitism provides a correct account of material objects, then the question of whether persons have primitive thisnesses turns out to depend more on issues concerning the mind-body

¹³ In a comment on an earlier draft of this paper, Michael Loux has suggested that the direct access which each of us has to our own haecceities suffices to vindicate a haecceitist theory of individuality in epistemology and the philosophy of mind. What I will refer to as the *Doppelgänger* argument is suggested by Nagel (1986) where it is argued that indexical reference to the self indicates a fact which is not equivalent to any set of objective facts about the world. Cf. Nagel (1986), pp. 54-66.

problem and the nature of the self than on general questions concerning the nature of identity.¹⁴

Suppose that the haecceitist is right about persons. Then no degree of qualitative similarity to me in another possible world guarantees that it is really I who exist in that world. If someone exactly like me in all qualitative respects could have existed instead of me, how do I know that something like this has not happened in the past? How do I know that the person who was typing this a minute ago was *me*? Direct awareness of my haecceity won't answer these questions, because I have direct awareness only in the specious present. By hypothesis, no amount of qualitative evidence can guarantee that the person who used to be sitting here remains. Adams argues that one may consistently hold that transworld identity is primitive, but that the transtemporal aspect of identity is analyzable in terms of causal and other qualitative criteria.¹⁵ But consistency is not sufficient here. If it is possible for me not to have existed at all in a world indiscernible from this one, I have no reason to believe that a qualitative account of persistence is true. If, as the anti-haecceitist asserts, identity conditions are generally based on qualitative criteria or are left undefined, then any account of persistence must be made in qualitative terms.¹⁶ The anti-haecceitist holds that there just isn't anything more to identity than certain qualitative relationships. But without such a general view of identity relations as at least supervenient on qualitative relations, it is difficult to see how the skeptic about persistence is to be answered. An account of identity which baldly claims that transworld identity is primitive while the transtemporal aspect of identity is not would seem *ad hoc*.

An extension of the above argument can be given against the combination of haecceitism with essentialism. If the haecceitist is unable to answer the skeptic about persistence, haecceitism will offer no reason for denying that we live in a temporally atomistic world in which the sets of haecceities which exist at any two moments will fail to intersect. But if there is no reason to believe that any object at one time is identical with an object at another, on what grounds could essentialist claims be supported? Of course, moderate haecceitism is consistent, but given that identity conditions are not determined (or conventional) according to qualitative criteria, there seems little reason for regarding essentialist claims as true. If there are possible worlds indiscernible from this one in which I don't exist,

¹⁴ Norman Malcolm offers a Wittgensteinian criticism of the intuitions underlying the *Doppelgänger* argument in Armstrong and Malcolm (1984), pp. 45-66.

¹⁵ Cf. Adams (1979), pp. 20-21.

¹⁶ An account of persistence of the sort I have in mind is presented in Hirsch (1982).

why shouldn't it be the case that I don't exist in any other possible world? Since haecceitism provides no answer to this question, it can provide no foundation upon which essentialist claims may be based.

If there are true *de re* necessities, for example that I am necessarily human, then thisnesses will attach to some sets of properties but not others. Such necessities cannot be analytic, if thisnesses are primitive, since the essential properties are qualitative and there is no analytic relation between a non-qualitative entity and a quality. Adams submits that *de re* necessities are synthetic, and that the necessity of my being a person is to be explained by the fact that I am a person and that there are necessary conditions of transworld identity which follow analytically from the concept or property of being a person. But why should a haecceity restrict itself in accordance with the limits imposed through analysis of a qualitative concept or property? Why aren't thisnesses like spatial locations which are occupied at one time by a person and at another by a gust of wind? The moderate anti-haecceitist may utilize the fact that qualitative properties impose qualitative limits on the individuals which instantiate them in the analysis of thisness. Essentialism may be a part of the anti-haecceitist account of what it is to be an individual because, according to anti-haecceitism, there is no prior fact of the matter to which the account must conform.

While there is no inconsistency in moderate haecceitism, it is difficult to see what theoretical underpinning could be given to essentialism in a haecceitist metaphysics. Simply to bring the positions together in order to save our intuitions would make the theory *ad hoc*. This criticism provides some indication of the kind of problems which face the proponent of the *Doppelgänger* argument. If the intuitions to which appeal is made in this argument are correct, they may form the basis of skeptical doubts about persistence and counterfactual truth. In addition to the problems of skepticism, there remains the difficulty that claims about the possibility of a *Doppelgänger* are without possible qualitative content. To point out such problems does not constitute a refutation of moderate haecceitism, but it does lend credence to the anti-haecceitist claim that any intuition we may have about the possibility of a *Doppelgänger* is illusory.

Conclusion

In this paper moderate anti-haecceitism has been defended from attacks based on two kinds of counterexamples to the Identity of Indiscernibles. First, it was shown how an anti-haecceitist account can be given of qualitatively indiscernible material objects within a world. To admit the possibility of qualitative indiscernibles does not compel one to postulate that there are identity claims the truth values of which are independent of all

qualitative conditions. Secondly, it was shown that there is reason to deny there is any metaphysical difference between transworld indiscernibles. Thisnesses are to be explained with reference to features of the spacetime manifold, to causal connections, and to essential attributes. The facts that things occupy different locations, play roles in causal nexus, and have essential properties are facts which are metaphysically prior to facts of identity and help to explain why individuals are the individuals they are. To reverse this order of priority, as the haecceitist does, places him in an awkward position: he must explain why different locations are occupied and why various qualities of individuals are essential by appeal to a haecceity which, by virtue of its primitiveness, is unsuited to explain anything. The position advocated here is a moderate anti-haecceitism, moderate because it allows that there may be differences between individuals which do not exhibit different qualities, yet *anti*-haecceitist because it denies that thisnesses are metaphysically primitive.

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