



DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

SEMINAR

Haecceitism vs. Humeanism

Sam Cowling
Denison University

Abstract:

Haecceitism and Humeanism are controversial theses about necessity and possibility. According to haecceitism, there are qualitatively indiscernible possible worlds that differ only with respect to which individuals exist and which qualitative roles they occupy. According to Humeanism, there are no necessary connections between distinct entities or, as Humeans sometimes put it, reality admits of “free recombination” so any entities can co-exist or fail to co-exist with one another. This paper introduces a puzzle that results from the combination of haecceitism and Humeanism. This puzzle revolves around the free recombination of non-qualitative properties like *being Socrates*. After considering several responses to this puzzle ranging from modal realism to a commitment to a “cosmic thisness,” I defend a broadly Quinean solution, which dispenses with non-qualitative properties like *being Socrates* in favour of primitive theoretical ideology, but seeks to preserve a commitment to both haecceitism and Humeanism.

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For inquiries: **Jennifer Nado**
nado@hku.hk

Room 10.27
Run Run Shaw Tower
Centennial Campus
University of Hong Kong



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THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG