STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO INDIVIDUATION

The bundle theory is a theory about the internal constitution of individuals. It asserts that individuals are entirely composed of universals. Typically, bundle theorists augment their theory with a *constitutional approach to individuation* entailing the thesis 'no two individuals can share all their constituents' (CIT). But then the bundle theory runs afoul of Black's duplication case—a world containing two indiscernible spheres. Here I propose and defend a new version of the bundle theory that denies 'CIT', and which instead conjoins it with a *structural approach to individuation*, according to which individuals are positions in structures and are distinguished by distance relations they bear to the other positions in the structure.

This never version accommodates Black's world. But it faces a number of difficulties. First: there is the objection from the triplication case. Consider the 'three-spheres world'—a world containing three indiscernible spheres, arranged as the vertices of an equilateral triangle. Since distance relations are dyadic, this version must fail to distinguish the *three-spheres world* from *Black's world*. In response to this objection, I maintain that we must construe distance relations as irreducibly polyadic. Then these two worlds will be distinguished by appealing to a triadic relation—R^3—that three things enter mutually. Aren't all polyadic relations in principle reducible to dyadic relations? I won't deny that. But I will aim lower and argue that R^3 cannot be reduced to dyadic relations that obliterate the distinction between the *three-spheres world* and *Black's world*.

Secondly, there is an objection grounding the diversity of bundles by invoking the distance relations they bear to one another. Here is the objection. It is the nature of universals to be capable of repetition: they are the kind of items that can be repeated in many different places. But bundles are entirely composed of universals, and thus do not have any constituent other than universals. This suggests that bundles too, just like universals that compose them, must be capable of repetition and that they too must be able to be distant from themselves. So unless there is a reason for claiming that bundles should not be thought of like universals in this respect, being separated by distance cannot be for grounding the diversity of bundles. Now this objection would be valid if bundles were mereological sums of universals. But the bundle theory does not need to take bundles to be mereological compositions. I will argue that bundles are in fact *sui generis* compositions of universals, brought together with the help of the bundle theorists' primitive 'compresence'. Therefore, we are not obliged to maintain that bundles, just like universals, can be repeated in different places, and this allows us to account for their diversity in terms of distance relations.

Thirdly, it has often been argued that distance relations cannot solve the problem of individuation because, by their very nature, they presuppose the diversity of the things that enter into such relations. Fraser MacBride puts this objection in the following way. Suppose that x is separated by distance from y; "[x and y] must be numerically diverse 'before' the [distance] relation can even obtain; if they are not individuated independently of the obtaining of [this] relation then there is no item available for the relation in question to obtain between" (2006: 66.) So, according to such an objection, the obtaining of distance relations presupposes the whole framework of already-individuated substances. Against this objection, I would like to point out that Bertrand Russell and Edwin Allaire are the only writers who present arguments for this claim. But when we look to their arguments carefully, we can see that Russell and Allaire can only argue for the result that distance relations presuppose numerical diversity by way of arguing that relations as such cannot provide a sufficient ground for diversity and not the other way around. Therefore, contrary to Russell and Allaire, it should be granted that the diversity of bundles might well be grounded in the distance relations that they bear to each other.