# PERSONAL IDENTITY

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# C O N T E N T S

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# C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that the subject matter of this Dissertation entitled Personal Identity is the record of work done by Mr.K.L.Biakchungnunga and that the contents of this Dissertation did not form the basis of the award of any previous degree to him, or to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else, and that the Dissertation has not been submitted by him for any research degree in any other University.

In habit and character Mr.K.L.Biakchungnunga is a fit and proper person for the degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil).

( M.M.AGRAWAL )
Supervisor.

# A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

This Dissertation is an attempt to give down-to-earth answers to the age-long questions of Personal Identity, a crucial subject of discussions in philosophical Literature. In carrying out this work, I am indebted to the Directorate of Higher & Technical Education, the Government of Mizoram for the financial assistance under the scheme of Mizoram Research Fellowship, without which I would not have reached this far in my academic career.

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(K. L. BIAKCHUNGNUNGA)

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

# CHAPTER I

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

Problems of personal identity arise when someone thinks about the social roles he plays. "Well, now I am a lecturer, I have to go through the motions of being quite strict, well-behaved and integrated, but really I am happy-go-lucky, lenient and understanding." The doubts about statements of this sort are about the extent to which it is possible to detach a person's self from his public behaviour in social contexts. If 'that is not the real me' What is?

Similar problems arise when we think about our existence over a long period. Should I when starting a job be interested in the pension scheme? We might argue that the man of twenty five has nothing much in common with the man of sixty of the distant future. Yes, that's true. But it will still be me, won't it? One problem is seeing what this reply means, and deciding how much force it has.

When pressed about what it is that makes someone the same person over time, people usually give one of two answers, or some combination of them. The first answer cites various kinds of mental continuity: the man of sixty remembers a fair amount of his past, including events before he was twenty five, and some of his beliefs, attitudes, and preferences

have stayed constant over time. The second answer cites various kinds of physical continuity: the man at the later stage is recognizably an older version of the man at the earlier stage. More fundamentally, his body has traced out a single and continuous path through space and time.

There has been much philosophical debate about the relative importance of physical and mental factors for personal identity. Real cases that have presented difficulties include people who, after a car crash have suffered total amnesia and radical changes of personality. Do we, relying on observable physical criteria, say that we still have the same person, or do we, using the mental criteria, say that we now have a different person in the same body? The decision here is relevant to how we assess the plight of the man in Kafka's Metamorphosis who could be controversially described as waking up one morning in the body of an insect. It is also relevant to traditional views about personal survival of bodily death (relevant not directly to their truth, but to the prior question of whether such views are even intelligible).

Personal Identity is important because it is the ground on which accountablity of a person rests.[1] For example, in order to hold a person responsible for a crime committed, It is necessary that he be the same person as the one who committed the act. A person cannot simply be held responsible, be

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1. Vibha Chaturvedi: "The Problem of Personal Identity" Ajanta Publications (India). Jawahar Nagar. Delhi. 1988. p. 2.

punished or rewarded for some actions unless he is the same person who did the actions.

We all make plans for the future and it is on the basis of personal identity that we make plans and expectations.[2] When I make plans for the future, it assumes that I would be the same person till then. For example, when I invest my money for the future, I do it because I assume or believe that the person who would get the benefits of the investments would be none other than myself, the very same person who had invested the money. Personal Identity is very important as far as our lives here on earth is concerned, it has very much to do with our rights, responsibilities, hopes and aspirations.

According to our ordinary notion, Self is a simple substance and it is not divisible, it is an entity which owns this body and all the experiences of a person. Thies ordinary notion of the self is now shaken by Science-fictions and other hypothetical suggestions. Say for instance, Teleclone Mark IV.[3] This is a fictitious Machine quite similar to Television. We can see what is happening on the other side of the world on the Television screen. Now in the case of Teleclone, instead of the pictures, the real person will be produced. Suppose now I am in the planet Mars and the Space-craft by which I landed on

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2. Ibid., p.2.

3. Douglas R.Hofstadter & Daniel C.Dennett "The Mind's I" Bantam Books. 666 Fifth Avenue. New York. p.4.

Mars has been destroyed beyond recovery. That means, I will never ever return to Earth.

But there is hope. In the communication compartment of the disabled craft, I find a Teleclone Mark IV Teleporter and instructions for its use. I turn the teleporter on, tune its beam to the Teleclone receiver on Earth, and then step into the sending chamber, the teleporter will swiftly and painlessly dismantle my body, producing molecule-by-molecule blueprint to be beamed to earth, where the receiver, its reservoirs well stocked with requisite atoms, will almost instantaneously produce, from the beamed instructions - me! Whisked back to earth at the speed of light, into the arms of my loved ones.

Now there can be a serious debate as to the identity of the person on Mars and the one produced just now on earth. Am I really the same person who left this earth three or four years ago? or am I a brand new human being, only several hours old, in spite of my memories - or apparent memories - of days and years before that? Did the person who went to Mars three years ago recently die on Mars, dismantled and destoyed in the Chamber of a Teleclone Mark IV?

Now I am here sitting in my room. I am alive. I am conscious of my surroundings, I see a book lying on my left side, I see a chair on my right side and I see so many things

in front of me . My hand is now moving touching the things in the room. How do I know they are my hands? Silly question, you may say. They are fastened to my arms, to my body. How do I know this is my body? I control it. Do I own it? In a sense I do. I often say , my body, my hand, my legs, my mind, my emotions, etc. I know what's going on inside me, the feelings, the pains, and the anger, I am aware of them vividly. But there is the 'Me' which has them or rather which claims to have them. It is this 'I' and 'Me' the strange entity that seems to indwell my body which has been the subject of philosophical discussion for many centuries and till today, no conclusive answer could be given in philosophical literature.

Problems of personal identity are raised by cases where a single body seems to be 'inhabited' by several different personalities. How many people or minds are we dealing with, one or several? The same question arises in interpreting the fascinating work of Sperry and others on animals and people where the connections between the two serebral hemispheres have been cut. If your brain were transplanted into another body, it seems that you would go with it. But are you a brain? We never say, "I am a brain", instead we say, "I have a brain". Often we talk about smart people being brains, but we don't mean it literally. We mean they have good brains. The case of brain-bisection as dramatized by David Wiggins[4] has shaken the

4. David Wiggins, 'Identity and Spatio-Temporal Continuity'. Basil Blackwell. Oxford. 1967.

ordinary notion of the self. The two hemispheres of a person's brain are divided into two and each hemisphere is housed in new and different body. When the resulting people wake up, which one of the two is the original person since we have now two people having the same memories of the original person? Is survival without Identity possible? Is brain division tanta - mount to division of the self?

The idea that What you are is not simply a living body or a living brain but also a soul or a spirit seems to many people to be unscientific, in spite of its ancient tradition. Science they might say, teaches us no such things as souls. We don't believe in leprechauns and ghosts any more, thanks to Science, and the suspect idea of a soul inhabiting a body - the 'ghost in the machine' - will itself soon give up the ghost. But not all versions of the idea that you are something distinct from your purely physical body are so vulnerable to ridicule and refutation. But some versions actually flourish in the garden of Science.[5]

We must not suppose that science teaches us that every thing anyone would ever want to take seriously is identifiable as a collection of particles moving about in space and time. Some people may think it is just common sense or just good scientific thinking to suppose you are nothing but a

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5. Douglas R.Hofstadter.,Op.cit., p.6.

particular living, physical organism - a moving mound of atoms, but in fact, this idea exhibits a lack of scientific imagination, not hard-headed sophistication. One doesn't have to believe in ghosts to believe in selves that have an identity that transcends any particular living body.[6]

We all undergo a lot of changes both psychologically and physically. Our physical looks and appearances change, our likes and dislikes, our beliefs and attitudes, personality and character undergo changes. For this reason, metaphorically we often say, "You are not the same person" thus meaning the changes are overwhelming. Yet we talk of a person remaining the same throughout the changes. The question is - what makes a person the same over a period of time? What makes me me, and what makes you you? What does personal identity actually consist in, and what are the principles behind reidentification of persons? This is the problem of Personal Identity.

What makes you you, and what are your boundaries? Part of the answer seems obvious - You are a center of consciousness. But what in the world is consciousness? Consciousness is both the most obvious and the most mysterious feature of our minds. On the other hand, what could be more certain or manifest to each of us that he or she is a subject of experience, an enjoyer of perceptions and sensations, a sufferer

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6. Ibid., p.7.

of pain, an entertainer of ideas, and a conscious deliberator? On the other hand, what in the world can consciousness be? How can living physical bodies in the physical world produce such a phenomenon? Science has revealed the secrets of many initially mysterious natural phenomena - magnetism, photosynthesis, digestion, even reproduction - but consciousness seems utterly unlike these. There is not even agreement about what a theory of consciousness would be like. Some have gone so far as to deny that there is any real thing for the term 'Consciousness' to name.7

Our ordinary concept of consciousness seems to be anchored to two separable sets of considerabion that can be captured roughly by the phrases "from the inside" and "from the outside"[8] From the inside, our own consciousness seems obvious and pervasive: we know that much goes on around us and even inside our own bodies of which we are entirely unaware or unconscious, but nothing could be more intimately known to us than those things of which we are, individually, conscious. Those things of which I am conscious, and the ways in which I am conscious of them, determine "What it is like to be me".

I know in a way no other could know what it is like to be me. From the inside, consciousness seems to be all-

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7. Ibid., p.8.
8. Ibid., p.8,9.

or-nothing phenomenon - an inner light that is either on or off. We grant that we are sometimes drowsy or inattentive, or asleep, and on occasion we even enjoy abnormally heightened consciousness, but when we are conscious, that we are conscious is not a fact that admits of degrees. There is a perspective, then, from which consciousness seems to be a feature that sunders the universe into two strikingly different kinds of thing: those that have it and those that do not. Those that have it are subjects, beings to whom things can be one way or another, beings it is like something to be. It is not like anything at all to be a brick or a pocket calculator or an apple. These things have insides, but not the right sort of insides - no inner life, no point of view. It is certainly like something to be (something I know 'from the inside') and almost certainly like something to be you (for you have told me, most convincingly, that it is the same with you), and probably like something to be a dog or a dolphin (if only they could tell us!), and may be even like something to be a Spider.[9]

On the other hand, when we consider about the existence of others, we consider them perforce 'from the outside'.[10] Various observable features and their visible actions and behaviours strike us as relevant to the question of their consciousness. For example, they react appropriately to events

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9. Ibid., p.9.
10. Ibid., p.9.

within the scope of their senses, they recognise things, avoid painful circumstances, learn, plan and solve problems. These various 'outside' indicators are more or less reliable signs or symptoms of the presence of that whatever-it-is each conscious subject knows from the inside. Since they behave and react towards the things in just the way we do, then we come to the conclusion that they have the same thing we have, namely, consciousness. But the question arises: How could this be confirmed? This is the notorious 'Problems of other minds'.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Who am I? Am I a body? Am I a brain? Do I have the so called spirit or soul? Is there life after death? These are some of the questions that have been dealt with by the philosophers ever since Plato's day, and different theories have been formulated by philosophers to solve the problems given by such questions. Till today, the debate is still going on because new theories and science-fictions have come into the scene shattering the former beliefs and theories put forward by the philosophers.

The question of Personal Identity has also been a subject of controversial debate for philosophers. Some philosophers maintain that Personal Identity consists in the identity of the spiritual substance. Philosophers like Descartes, Berkeley and Butler advocate that identity of a person consists in the identity of his soul. Descartes and Berkeley have

not discussed the question of identity of persons but we can say that such a view would be in agreement with their philosophical system.[11] In his dissertation 'Of Personal Identity'[12] Joseph Butler says that it is obvious that each man continues to be the same person throughout his existence. He distinguishes between two senses of 'sameness'. In the first sense, 'sameness' does not involve the idea of similarity but in the second sense it does. According to Butler, the first sense does not admit of degree whereas the second sense does. Butler is here distinguishing between 'numerical' and 'qualitative' identity. A question about a person's identity is a question about his numerical identity.[13] He equates person with substance or thinking being.

Similar views are expressed by Thomas Reid.[14] According to Reid also, personal identity consists in the identity of thinking substance. He says that a person is something indivisible. "A part of a person" Reid says, is a "manifest absurdity". For example, a man loses his estate, or health or strength, or some part of the body, for instance, leg or arm,

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11. Vibha Chaturvedi, Op.cit., p.32.
12. Joseph Butler, 'Of Personal Identity', Analogy of Religion Ed. W.E.Gladstone. Oxford University Press. 1896.
13. Vibha Chaturvedi., Op.cit., p.33.
14. Thomas Reid, Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man Ed.B.A.Brody, M.I.T. Press. England. pp.340-'41.

He is still the same person as he was before. His amputated arm or leg is not a part of him. If it were, it should be entitled to a share in his estate which is absurd. Reid says that the identity of a person consists in the uninterrupted or continued existence of the indivisible thing which he calls self.[15]

David Hume is the forerunner of the phenomenalistic view of self. According to this view, the existence of a persistent self is denied. Philosophers like Hume and James define self as a series of experiences.[16] Other philosophers like B.Russell,[17] H.P.Grice[18] and A.J.Ayer[19] define it as a logical construction out of experiences. By self is a logical construction out of experiences it means, all the statements about self are translatable, without a remainder, into statements about experiences.

Recently, psychological continuity has been widely regarded as the criterion, that is, as providing both a necessary and a sufficient condition of personal identity. Psychological continuity includes similarity of character and personality traits and memories of one's past actions and experiences. Philosophers like Grice and Russell emphasised the impor-

15. Vibha Chaturvedi, Op.cit p.35.
16. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature. Ed.A.D.Lindsay. J.M.Dent Sons Ltd. London. 1911.
17. Bertrand Russell,'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism' Logic and Knowledge, Ed. R.C.Marsh.Allen & Unwin.London.56.
18. H.P.Grice 'Personal Identity' Mind.Vol.50. 1941.
19. A.J.Ayer,The Concept of a Person. Macmillan.London.1963.

tance of memory in the context of personal identity. The view that memory is the sole criterion of personal identity can be traced back to John Locke.[20] Even though he did not actually use the word 'criterion' however, it is clear that he takes memory as both necessary and a sufficient condition of personal identity. The credit can be attributed to him as the philosopher who for the first time posed the problem of personal identity. Allison[21] mentions two reasons which could have driven Locke to the problem of personal identity. First, Locke's opposition to dualistic philosophy of Descartes and especially the notion of substance. Secondly, his recognition of the ethical significance of personal identity.

Philosophers like Antony Flew[22] and H.E.Allison[23] take the view that the word 'identity' is systematically ambiguous and has different meaning when applied to different kind of things. J.L.Mackie[24] on the other hand, thinks that what Locke means is that the requirements for the identity of a certain thing depend upon what kind of thing it is. That means, the criterion of identity is different for different kinds of things. It is now clear that for Locke, the condition

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20. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Ed. A.D. Fraser. Clarendon Press. Oxford. 1984.
21. H.E.Allison: 'Locke's Theory of Personal Identity - A re-examination'- Locke On Human Understanding. OUP.
22. Antony Flew, Locke and the Problem of Personal Identity Readings in the Philosophy of Religion.Prentice Hall.1974.
23. H.E.Allison, Op.cit.
24. JL Mackie,Problems from Locke.Clarendon Press.Oxford.1976.

determining the identity of a thing vary according to the kind of thing in question.

The identity of person, unlike the identity of man, Locke says, consists in the sameness of consciousness. Locke like Descartes believes that consciousness necessarily entails self-consciousness. Whenever we think or feel or meditate, we know we are doing this. Locke's view is that it is by this self-consciousness that each of us considers himself as one persistent thinking thing. Hence this self-consciousness constitutes the essence of person and it is the identity of this consciousness that constitutes personal identity. As far as this consciousness can be extended backwards, it constitutes the same person.[25]

As a rival to the psychological continuity criterion, bodily-identity has been put forward in the philosophical literature on the problem of personal identity. In this case, bodily-identity is defined in terms of the spatio-temporal continuity of the body and not its similarity. Philosophers like A.J.Ayer,[26] Terence Penelhum[27] and Bernard Williams[28] attach greater importance to spatio-temporal continuity than psychological continuity criterion. As mentioned earlier, Ayer

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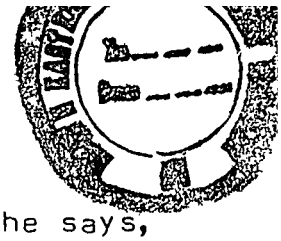
25. Vibha Chaturvedi, Op.cit, p.57.
26. A.J.Ayer, Op.cit, p.116.
27. Terence Penelhum 'Personal Identity' Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.Ed.Paul Edwards. p.101.
28. Bernard Williams, 'Personal Identity and Individuation' Problems of the Self. Cambridge University Press.1973.p.115



advocates that self is a series of experiences, but he says, the experiences are not owned by a pure ego. They belong to one self in virtue of their causal dependence upon the body by which a person is identified. Hence Identity of the self depends upon identity of the body. Penelhum like Ayer also regards bodily-identity as both necessary and a sufficient condition of personal identity, while Bernard Williams regards it as a necessary condition of it.

A major difficulty for spatio-temporal continuity criterion arises from the supposed cases of a person's survival after bodily death. In many religions, perhaps, in almost all religions the belief in immortality is expressed in various forms - it is the pivot, we can say, round which almost all the religious teachings revolve. Various arguments have been advanced to support the doctrine of survival. But philosophers argue that the possibility of such survival is certainly not logically self-contradictory. For example, P.F.Strawson[29] and Armstrong[30] admit the possibility of disembodied existence even though they are critic of Cartesian dualism and materialist respectively. If disembodied existence or survival after bodily death is logically consistent then there is a difficulty for spatio-temporal continuity criterion, because then this possibility cannot be ruled out _apriori_. But if bodily-identity is

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29. P.F.Strawson, _Individuals_. Methuen. London. 1959. p.115.
30. D.M.Armstrong, A Materialist Theory of Mind.1968. p.19.

a necessary condition of personal identity then it becomes self-contradictory to say that persons survive bodily death.

We find that none of the criteria proposed by different philosophers are able to provide a clear and definite answer in all the cases. Some philosophers have taken psychological continuity, specially, memory to be both a necessary and a sufficient condition of personal identity, while some other philosophers consider Bodily-identity to be a necessary condition of personal identity, but only few regard it to be a sufficient condition also. There are another group of philosophers who emphasises the identity of brain in the context of personal identity because it is the seat of memory and other psychological capacities of a person. What these difficulties are, whether they can be removed and if so, how. These are some of the questions we are going to deal with in the present thesis.

OBJECTIVE OF THE THESIS:

Ever since the time of Locke and Descartes, philosophers seem to have discussed two different though not unrelated questions under the title 'Personal Identity'. One is the question about the Unity of the Self and the other is the questionabout its Identity. The former question arises from the observation that a vast variety of experiences - sensations, desires, thoughts, emotions, etc. - seem to be united in a per-

son: they are all his experiences, exist in a single (his) mind. What is it that unites all these experiences? Is it some thing that relates them to one another in some specific manner? Or is it so by virtue of their relation to an entity which is not an experience, namely, a Self or a Brain or some other thing?

The question about Identity, on the other hand, arises from certain unusual cases imagined both by philosophers and science-fiction writers, such as the cases of reincarnation or brain-transplantation. These cases raise the question how, in principle, we should settle disputes about personal identity. In effect, it asks for what is essential to a person being the person he is.

The philosophers of Cartesian persuasion seem to treat these two questions as though they were the two versions of the same question. In the present thesis, it is my attempt to show that not only they are different, but when the question about Identity is settled, the question about Unity appears to be a spurious one.

METHODOLOGY:

The materials collected for the present thesis are mainly drawn from secondary sources which include published books borrowed from the Libraries, works and researches done

on subjects relating to the topic collected from various sources. All these materials are read, analysed and examined, various theories put forward by different philosophers are studied having the objectives of the present thesis in mind and these materials are employed to show the extent to which the attempts of various philosophers have ended in a more or less failure in providing satisfactory answers thus strengthening my options and conclusions which, I think, are relavant for our day to day life. Discussions with my Supervisor on the topic have made major contributions and my own contemplation and conclusions arrived at have made a very important contribution to the present thesis.

CHAPTERIZATION:

With a view to achieving the objectives of the present thesis, the thesis is divided into different chapters with each chapter having a sub-title of its own. The following are the chapters with their titles in this thesis:

Chapter I : Introduction

This Chapter is an introduction to the problem. Here a brief account of the major questions and problems in the context of Personal Identity are highlighted and discussed. Some of the existing theories relating to the topic put forward by different philosophers and a review of literature regarding

the subject of the present thesis are given in a gist.

Chapter II : Hume On the Unity of Mind

This chapter deals with the question about the unity of mind with special reference to David Hume and his followers. In his attempt to solve the problem of Identity, Hume tried to give an answer to the unity of a person's experiences. If the unity question is satisfactorily dealt with, Hume expected, that the Identity question will be automatically dissolved. This chapter deals with how Hume, according to my opinion, has failed in his attempt and why.

Chapter III : Criteria of Personal Identity

In this chapter, different theories of the Criteria of Personal Identity are discussed at great length. Theories of self can be divided into three - theories which identify the self with the body; theories which take the concept of the self to be primitive and not to be explained in terms of anything else, and theories which explain the self in terms of various mental relations. To certain extent, the criteria of personal identity are the same as what they are criteria of. By criterion, it means, 'which is logically necessary and sufficient condition' for identity of a person. In an attempt to find out this kind of criterion, different theories are examined and this chapter provides whether such cri-

terion exists or not and what conclusion we arrive at and why.

Chapter IV : Parfit On Survival Without Identity

This chapter deals with the case of survival without identity with special reference to Derek Parfit. The case of brain-bisection as suggested by David Wiggins seems to have shattered the ordinary notion of the self, a simple substance. Since Identity is one-one relation, it cannot be applied to Wiggins's case because in this case the relation of the two resulting people and the original person is one-two. In this chapter, I talk about how we are to compromise with such extraordinary cases of survival and how our ordinary concept of self is not equipped to deal with such cases.

Chapter V : Conclusion

This chapter is the conclusion and it embodies the summary of the preceding chapters along with the conclusion arrived at in this thesis.

# CHAPTER TWO

## HUME ON THE UNITY OF MIND

# CHAPTER II

## HUME ON THE UNITY OF MIND

In the present chapter I will try to explain and answer what I have called the Unity question with special reference to its most seminal thesis which is to be found in David Hume. Modern Philosophy of the West has been done mostly within the framework of Cartesian epistemology which is rooted in the dualistic conception of man presented by Rene Descartes. Within this framework philosophers who have written on the problems of Personal Identity have raised as noted earlier to two distinct questions: the first question is raised by David Hume, 'What unites a person's present experiences with his past experiences?'.

The second question which Hume's first question is supposed to answer is what is essential to a person being the person he is. Of course the two questions are related in the sense that if the second question is answered satisfactorily, the first one is rendered spurious. The first is what I have called the Unity question because it deals with the principles of co-existence and the unity of a number of different and distinct experiences which a person undergoes in his life time - feelings, thoughts, desires, etc. - in the constitution of individual human person.

The Unity question requires us to spell out what if anything is common to the great variety of experiences which we have in day to day life. What is common will be what unites them. Two lines of thought have been pursued in this regard:

(i) Some philosophers have maintained that the unity of experiences in a person (i.e. unity of a person qua 'Self') consists in the fact that the experiences are related to one another in a particular way(for example, Causality).

(ii) Other philosophers, however, have tried to show that the unity in question is due to the fact that all the experiences of a person are related to some entity which itself is not an experience such as a Self or a Brain.

In his account, Hume is attacking the view that we are every moment conscious of what we call 'SELF' and in doing this he provides the answer to the unity question, that is the question 'What is it for a variety of experiences all to be one person's experiences?' (All or what amounts to the same, what makes him one person). So, in what follows I have to explain two things: First, what view Hume is attacking and second, what is his own answer to the Unity question which follows upon his attack.

Some philosophers have the view that we are directly or immediately aware of ourselves, that 'We are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its

existence and continuance in existence.'[1] In other words, by reflecting upon my present self and my self, say, twenty years ago, I see them to be one and the same self. This would require that - (a) I be conscious of my present Self,

(b) I be conscious of the Self twenty years ago,

(c) I discern that the two selves are identical.

It is the last act which Hume seems to have in mind when he talks of feeling the Self's 'continuance in existence'.

If what these philosophers' view is true, then it would be possible for us to get the idea of the Self directly from the senses, just as we get the idea of colour, say, red or green. But Hume says that this is not the case. In normal sense-experiences, it is necessary to have the impression of X if we are to get the Idea of X. By 'impressions' Hume means our immediate sensations, passions, and emotions, the immediate data of seeing, touching, hearing, desiring, loving, hating, etc. And 'ideas' are copies or faint images of impressions. Hume says that the difference between impressions and ideas is in the greater force and liveliness of impressions. Impressions enter our consciousness with more 'force and violence'. By contrast, ideas are only images of our impressions, which occur in our thinking, reasoning and remembering.

For example, if you look at the room you are in, you have an impression of it, sensations of its size, its

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1. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature. Ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge. Oxford University Press. 1958. p. 251.

chairs, tables, carpet and other furnishings, the colour of its walls, its windows, the ticking of the Clock. Hume looks at his own room and he says,

> "When I shut my eyes and think of my chamber the ideas I form are exact representations of the impressions I felt; nor is there any circumstance of the one which is not in the other.... ideas and impressions appear always to correspond to each other".[2]

Hume quickly sees, however, that he has been 'carried away too far' by the principle that ideas and impressions always correspond to each other, since the rule does not seem to hold for complex ideas. For this reason Hume now makes a distinction between simple and complex impressions and the simple and complex ideas which are images of them. My perception of red colour is a simple impression, and my recollection of this red colour is a simple idea. "The rule here holds without exception, that every simple idea has a simple impression which resembles it; and every simple impression, a correspondent idea".[3]

Our perception of a big brightly illuminated City, say, New Delhi, from an Aeroplane during the night time is an impression too, but a very complex one, consisting of many sensations of darkness and lights, blackness and yellow globes of

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2. The Philosophy of David Hume (ed.V.C.Chappell) 'A Treatise of Human Nature' p.27. Random House,Inc. 1963.
3. Ibid. p.27.

lamps, white marble grayish in shadows, stretching out into the vast wings of the building; it is a complex impression and our recollection of it is a complex idea. Hume admits that it is probably not the case that my complex idea corresponds in all its details to the original complex impression.

Also, Hume asks, what if I imagine a city? Hume himself gives the example. "I can imagine to myself such a city as the new Jerusalem, whose pavement is gold and walls are rubies, though I never saw any such".[4] Is this not the case of a complex idea without a corresponding impression? But this complex idea (for example, gold, walls, rubies) out of which the imagination has fabricated it. And we can show, says Hume, that every one of its simple ideas has a simple impression which it resembles.

Hume is making an important empiricist argument here - that we cannot know anything which we have not had a prior impression of in sensory experience. Even in our religious fantasies of a new world in outer space, we cannot imagine anything which we have not had an impression of in sensory experience. Finally, on the matter of complex ideas, while they may not correspond to all the details of an immediate impression, the rule does hold, says Hume, for all our simple impressions, that every simple idea has a simple impression which precedes it and every simple impression has a correspondent idea.

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4. Ibid., p.27.

The fundamental principle that Hume sees and has established is this: "All our simple ideas in their first appearance are derived from simple impressions which are correspondent to them and which they exactly represent".[5] In short, all ideas are copied from impressions. Now it is true that each of us has an idea of himself as one thing or being that remains the same throughout his life time. This being the case, therefore, any impression that alone could give rise to such an idea would itself have to remain constant and invariable throughout a whole life. But there is no such impression.

When we examine the impressions of the external objects that come to our mind through sense-experience, we find that impressions succeed and follow one another in rapidly changing sequences, with none of them remaining constant for more than a moment. Even if one of these impressions were an impression of the Self at a particular time, and some of the others were impressions of the Self at different times, still the idea of the Self as something that endures for a life-time without interruption would not be a mere copy or correlate of any one impression. So the idea of the Self is not directly derived from the senses.

It is the case that in our normal day to day conversations, we talk and act as if there is a thing or a being which we call our 'self'. Statements like 'my body, my hand, my feet,'

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5. Ibid., p.28.

seem to convey that there is a being or a self which owns the body, the hand and the feet. The physical entities which the so called being or self owns can be seen and felt, but the owner (Self or Being) cannot be seen and felt. It is not subject to sense-experiences. If this were the case, then, what guarantee do we have for the existence of the so called Self by looking into ourselves? When we 'look into' ourselves to see what we are 'aware of', what do we find? Hume's answer to this question is thought-provoking:

> "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call 'myself', I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure, I can never catch <u>myself</u> at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception...."[6]

According to Hume, when we look into ourselves, all there is to be observed is a sequence of perceptions. There is nothing else going on. For me to think, to see, to love, to hate and so on, is just for certain perceptions to be occuring. Hume says that he can never find anything that is invariable and uninterrupted. All that we can ever find is 'a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement'.[7]

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6. David Hume, <u>Op.cit</u>, p.252.
7. Ibid., p.252.

The above observations are connected with Hume's real reason for denying the continued existence of an invariable self. We have to remember that Hume was an empiricist. On empiricist principles we cannot claim to have any knowledge of the self as a unity, as permanent and continuous, but only as a series of perceptions. Being an empiricist philosopher, Hume believes that all our ideas are derived from experience. Hume, in effect, denies that we have a valid idea of the self. Strictly speaking, Hume cannot claim that the flux of our perceptions have even the unity of a bundle.

If we had an idea of the self there would have to be an impression of the self from which the idea is derived. But an impression of the self would have to have qualities which no impression does have. This is so because the Self is supposed to 'continue invariably the same through the whole course of our lives'. But experience does not give us an impression which continues invariably the same.

But this way of rendering the problem suffers due to Hume's commitment to his empiricism. For Hume recognises that 'self or a person is....that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference', and yet, he treats the question 'Is there a self?' as though it were a question about something which could be <u>observed</u> in experience. When he says, 'I Can never catch <u>myself</u> at any time without a perception'

(see above) he gives the impression as though he half expected to find something which he could call his 'Self'. The absurdity of this expectation comes out if we imagine actually finding 'something simple and continued'when we introspected. Would we want to call it one's 'self'? Supposing I realise that I have had a mild chest pain for nearly two years, why should I want to identify this 'simple and continued' impression with me or my 'self'?

The same is true when we reflect on the so called external objects as well. 'Our ideas of bodies are nothing but collections formed by the mind of the ideas of the several distinct sensible qualities, of which objects are composed, and which we find to have a constant union with each other...'[8] The identity of object through time is not something we ever find in our experience. We find only collections of perceptions, but we 'regard the compound, which they form, as ONE thing, and as continuing the SAME under very considerable alterations...'[9]. So we can say that the Identity of selves and of external bodies is something we merely attribute to them as a result of various operations of the imagination. It is not something we directly observe.

The idea that we have of identity or sameness is nothing but the idea of the invariableness and uninterruptedness of an object through time. On the other hand, we also have an

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8. Ibid., p.252
9. Ibid., p.219.

idea of diversity - of several different bodies existing either simultenously or in succession. According to Hume, an instance of the second of these ideas is really an instance of the first. It is a belief in both the continued and the distinct existence of things. We believe that things continue to exist even when they are not being perceived. That they exist independently of their being perceived by anyone. Since we have such a belief, we must have an idea of an enduring, independent world, and so there must be some intelligible way in which we come to have that idea and that belief.

Our minds are so constituted that we find it natural to regard a succession of resembling perceptions as one continously existing thing. Yet if we consider that succession at two distinct moments we cannot avoid concluding that we are presented with different things and thus with an instance of diversity. The inclination to regard it as one which is invariable and uninterrupted is so strong, however, that we cannot but yield to it.

How then do we come by a warranted belief in the existence of physical objects having the perceptible properties with which we normally credit them? The phenomena of constancy and coherence, Hume says, which he invokes to explain how we fall into the illusion of supposing our perceptions to have a continued and distinct existence, can be regarded instead as

affording an adequate basis for an imaginative transformation of sense-perceptions, or percepts, as following Russell, into the constituents of the physical world of common sense.

In his book 'The Problems of Philosophy'[10] Russell makes a distinction regarding our knowledge into - Knowledge by Acquaintance, and, Knowledge by Description. By the former, he means the kind of knowledge we have of anything we are directly aware of with our senses, without the intermediary of any process of inference or any knowledge of truths. For example, what I immediately conscious of when I am seeing and touching my Table is 'Knowledge of the table by Acquaintance'.

My knowledge of the Table as a physical object, on the other hand, is not direct knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge which is derived or abstracted from acquaintance with the sense-data that make up the appearance of the table. The kind of knowledge we have as a result of our judgment or conclusion about what our sense-data give to us is what Russell calls 'Knowledge by Description'. For example, our knowledge like Table, chairs, Sun, Moon, etc., are 'knowledge by description'. Whatever we can be acquainted with, Russell says, must be something particular and existent. Among the objects with which we are acquainted are not included physical objects (as opposed to sense-data), nor other people's minds. These things are known

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10. Bertrand Russell, Problems of Philosophy, Oxford University Press. 1973. pages 25-32.

to us by what Russell calls 'Knowledge by Description'.

Russell says, 'All our knowledge both knowledge of things and knowledge of truths, rests upon acquaintance as its foundation'.[11] Sense-data are among the things with which we are acquainted. But our knowledge is not confined within the realm of sense-data alone. If this were the case, we will know only what is now present to our senses. We have 'abstract ideas' which are derived from our sense-data. For Russell, Memory' plays an important role in the formation of our knowledge regarding the past. And by Introspection, we can be aware of our acts - that is, we can be aware of our 'seeing objects'. I see the Sun and by introspection, I become aware of my 'seeing the Sun'.

'When I am acquainted with 'my seeing the Sun' it seems plain that I am acquainted with two different things in relation to each other. On the one hand, there is the sense-datum which represents the Sun to me, on the other hand, there is that which sees this sense-datum. All acquaintances, such as my acquaintance with the sense-datum which represents the sun, seems obviously a relation between the person acquainted and the object with which the person is acquainted. When a case of acquaintance is one with which I can be acquainted (as I am acquainted with my acquaintance with the sense-datum represen-

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11. Ibid., page 27.

ting the Sun), it is plain that the person acquainted is myself. Thus, when I am acquainted with my seeing the sun, the whole fact with which I am acquainted is 'Self-acquainted-with-sense-datum'.[12]

We can sum up Russell's points like this: our senses give us a kind of raw materials. For example, the sense-data I have when I see or touch a table is in Russell's terminology 'Knowledge by acquaintance'. Then, on the basis of these sense-data, my reason makes a conclusion that that which gives me these sense-data must be a physical object, namely, a table. This knowledge of physical object is Knowledge by Description. By introspection, I become aware of my 'seeing and touching the table'. Russell concludes that it is probable, though not certain, that we have acquaintance with Self, as that which is aware of things or has desires towards things.

It is very natural to invent something that does remain constant and invariable and uninterrupted throughout the successive changes, something that is not directly accessible to observation. This, the philosophers of the past, call a Substance, or in case of persons, a Soul or Self. Thus the conflict between identity and diversity is apparently resolved. Everything we are aware of - the sequence of perceptions - is variable and interrupted; but there is thought to be something

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12. Ibid., page 27.

else, the Substance, that remains invariable and uninterrupted throughout those changes. The 'accidents' that 'inhere' in the substance change, while the substance remains the same throughout time.

For Hume, the notion of Substance is a mere philosopher's invention which is both unintelligible and unnecessary. However, it is very easy for us to fall into using it when we reflect on our ideas of individual things. It is clearly an invention, according to Hume, since all the objects we regard as having a continuous identity are in reality nothing but a succession of parts connected by resemblance, contiguity or causation.

The idea of substance, for Hume, as well as that of a mode is nothing but a collection of simple ideas that are united by the imagination and have a particular name assigned them, by which we are able to recall, either to ourselves or others, that collection. In other words, it is not the reality that the object of which we have the notion of identity - something which exists uninterrupted and continued in existence even when we do not perceive its existence - even if the object really exists independently of our perceiving it, there is no way of verifying its existence except by sense-perceptions. Any object of perceptions to which we give identity are given identity because each perception we have of them in different instances bear resemblance among them and our reason concludes that since

each perception resembles one another that they all might belong to one particular existent object. Thus, the notion of identity of an object arises. But for Hume, this does not prove whether the objects really exist independently of our perceiving them. The notion of Self or Self identity is also the product of our imagination. We see perceptions in our minds, we have memory of the past, so on. Then, we conclude Hume argues, that there must be a continued and uninterrupted entity to which all these perceptions belong. This entity, he says, we call it 'Self'. Since it is the product of our imagination, there is no way of proving its reality in sense-experience, except by means of those sense-data, feelings, sensations, emotions, etc., from which we infer the existence of Self.

Having rejected the notion of Self as a mere philosopher's invention to solve the problem of Unity and Diversity of our experiences, Hume thus gives us his own answer to the Unity question - 'For as such a succession answers evidently to our notion of diversity, it can only be by mistake we ascribe to it an identity; and as the relation of parts, which leads us into this mistake, is really nothing but a quality, which produces an association of ideas, and an easy transition of the imagination from one to another, it can only be from the resemblance, which this act of the mind bears to that, by which we contemplate one continued object, that the error arises...'[13]

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13. David Hume, Op.cit, page 255.

We can explain the statement mentioned before in a simpler way. I open my eyes and I see a table in front of me having four legs, made of woods, with a particular colour say yellow. I close my eyes and open them again, I see the table again which exactly resembles the one I have just seen minutes ago, I see it standing in front of me in the same position and place as the one I have seen just now. I close my eyes again and when I open them, I see the table which resembles the two tables I have just seen standing in the same place in the same position as those two tables. Strictly speaking, I have observed three tables and each table resembles one another. In fact, in Hume's terminology, each table has a 'quality' inheres in itself, which in the present example, is 'resemblance' among them, and this quality produces in us an association of the ideas we have of the three tables which our sense-perceptions have given to us. This quality makes an 'easy transition of the imagination' from one to another. This means, this particular quality of the tables (resemblance) reminds (easy transition) us of the other two. Then, we make a conclusion that those three tables must, in fact, be one continued object perceived in different times. Then, we give an identity of an object, table. It is this quality, for Hume, from which the error of giving identity arises. Thus, the so called 'Identity' of an object is nothing but the product of our imagination which cannot be accepted as truth for it is not subject to sense-experience.

For Hume, the fiction of a substance is unintelligible for it requires us to have an idea of something of which no idea can be formed. He says, 'There is nothing in any object, considered in itself, which can afford us a reason of drawing a conclusion beyond it.'[14] A substance is not something with which we can ever be 'acquainted' in experience, and the only way we can represent something to ourselves is by means of ideas that are derived from experiences. A substance is also defined as 'something which may exist by itself', but this traditional definition does not serve to distinguish substances from fleeting and variable perceptions which are present to the mind.

Each of our perceptions is different and uniques from every other and from everything else in the universe. Therefore, it is possible for us to separate every distinct thing from every other by means of our imagination. And since imagination of separating each of our perceptions is possible, each of our perceptions, we can conclude, can exist separately from all others, and requires nothing else to support its existence.

The definition of the substance as 'something which may exist by itself', therefore, shows that each of our perceptions is a substance, but the very point of the doctrine of substance was to have something distinct from the perceptions on

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14. Ibid., page 139.

which their existence depends. This is not to say that Hume seriously believes that each of our perceptions is a substance. He has no use for the notion, and simply relies on this argument to show that the traditional distinction between substance and accidents does not help to make the notion of substance philosophically intelligible.

Hume goes on to say that we do not need the notion of substance to explain how we come to attribute identity to things. We make such attributions, because the passage of thought along a series of related but different perceptions is so smooth and effortless that we mistake it for 'a continued view of the same object'. Many things facilitate that passage. If the change in what we perceive is very small and gradual, we hardly notice it. And smallness and gradualness are matters of proportion. Adding a mountain to a planet would not make us regard it as a different thing, but for many bodies, changing a few inches would destroy our belief in its identity.

Even when we notice great changes in the succession of the parts, there is an 'artifice' which still induces us to attribute identity. If all the parts are connected with a 'common end or purpose' the passage of the mind along the sequence of parts is still facilitated. As for instance, we have different kinds of chairs and tables, some of the tables have two legs, some three and some four, even their shapes and sizes

are variant in appearance. Yet we give to each one identity, that is, an identity of a chair or table.

Hume gives us in his own words the example as such: 'A ship, of which a considerable part has been changed by frequent reparations, is still considered as the same; nor does the difference of the materials hinder us from ascribing an identity to it. The common end, in which the parts conspire, is the same under all their variations, and affords as easy transition of the imagination from one situation of the body to another....'[15]

As in the case with all animals and vegetables, Hume says, this effect is even more readily forthcoming when the parts bear to each other the reciprocal relations of cause and effect. Each part has a mutual dependence on and connection with all the others. This makes it possible for us to allow that a particular tree, say, has undergone a total change of matter in the transition from a small sapling to a giant Oak tree while remaining the same tree.[16] This kind of ordinary examples give us some of the factors influencing the imagination and leading us to ascribe identity when, strictly speaking, we never observe it. That is just what happens in the case of personal identity. There is no invariable and uninterrupted entity that is Self or Mind. When we examine ourselves, the kind

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15. Ibid., page 257.
16. Ibid., page 257.

of life we live now and that of twenty years ago may be quite different, our attitude towards different things, our values and opinions, our shapes and sizes, our physical appearances may also have undergone a total change. That means there is no invariable and uninterrupted entity or Personal Identity that we can call Self or Mind.

As already discussed, Hume denies any such consciousness of self. He says that introspection never gives us an impression of the self. Moreover, he argues that we cannot have an impression of the self, since self is not an impression but that to which all impressions are said to belong. The unobservability of the self coupled with the unintelligibility of the notions of 'substance' and 'inherence', leads Hume to the conclusion that self is nothing but a 'bundle of perceptions'. These perceptions succeed each other with 'an inconceivable rapidity and are in a perpetual flux and movement'.[17]

Each perception, according to Hume, is a distinct existence, that is, it is logically independent of other perceptions. There is no logical contradiction in supposing a perception to exist although the perceptions prior to it, or coming after it do not exist. From this, Hume says, it follows that strictly speaking, the self is neither simple nor does it remain identical through time. There is no simplicity because self is a complex of perceptions, there is no identity because

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17. Ibid., page 239.

perceptions appear and then disappear in quick succession. The idea of identity according to Hume is the 'idea of an object that remains invariable and uninterrupted through a supposed variation of time.[18] Since none of the perceptions that constitute a self exist throughout a period of time and one perception is quickly replaced by another and different perception, the self cannot be said to remain identical through time, whatever 'natural propension' we may have to suppose this identity.

The reason why there is a natural tendency to believe that the self remains identical throughout a person's life, Hume explains, can be accounted for by psychological analysis. The belief in the identity of the self, for Hume, is the result of a 'natural propension' of the imagination, which is brought into play be certain features of the order or series of perceptions that constitute a self. He says that when several different but related objects appear in a succession this should actually give us the idea of 'diversity'. But because of the closeness of the relation between members of the series, imagination confuses this with invariable and uninterrupted existence of one and the same object. The fact that the members of the series are related makes it easy for the imagination to pass from one member to another and the imagination overlooks the fact that what is appearing is a succession of different perceptions and not one object. Thus identity is ascribed to self due to confusion and is a 'fiction of imagination'. It is a mistake which

18. Ibid., page 240.

everybody makes and cannot get rid of.

Hume's theory of personal identity is generally regarded as an interesting failure. Not only his critics, but Hume himself felt dissatisfied with his theory and termed it as a 'labyrinth'.[19] Wittgenstein in his book 'Investigations' says, 'Really you do not see the eye. And nothing in the visual field allows you to infer that it is seen with an eye'.[20] From the context it is clear that what Wittgenstein here says of the eye he means also to apply to the 'I'. We cannot see our own eyes except their reflections in the Mirror. The eyes are organs of sight with which we can see all kinds of things, but we cannot see our eyes with our own eyes. That means, the eye cannot see itself, but this does not imply that there is no eye. Likewise, the 'I' perceives and sees, the 'I' imagines and thinks, the 'I' searches for itself, looks for itself - and the 'I' catches the perceptions, feelings, emotions, etc., which are going on in the mind, but the 'I' cannot see or perceive itself, it cannot even catch itself. That is what Wittgenstein's point tries to say when he talks about the functions of the eyes.

In the same line as that of Wittgenstein, H.D.Lewis also says that even though our 'Self' is not subject to experience, but we just know it is there. 'We are aware of ourselves and of our continuous identity in a way that is not dependent on

19. David Hume, Appendix to Treatise, Volume II.
20. L.Wittgenstein, Investigations, pages 123-'24.

any particular feature of our experience and that in the sense we have thus no criteria, or need for criteria of Self Identity. We are just aware of ourselves....'[21] Just as we know and aware of the existence of our eyes even though they themselves are not subject to sense-experience, we are just aware of ourselves. It is the 'seeing' which makes us aware of the existence of the eyes, likewise, it is the acts of feelings, of perceptions, of thinking, etc., that make us aware of the existence of the 'I'.

Hume does not simply yield to such examples as given above. He says, 'The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. There is properly no simplicity in it at one time, nor identity in different; whatever natural propension we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity. The comparison of the theatre must not mislead us. They are the successive perceptions only, that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place where those scenes are represented, or of the materials, of which it is composed.....'[22]

If we are to think of all those perceptions as constituting one mind, it cannot be in virtue of some real connections which we observe between them. There are no such connec-

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21. H.D.Lewis, The Elusive Mind, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. ed.H.D.Lewis. London. 1969. Page 220.

22. David Hume, Op.cit, page 257.

tions between perceptions. 'Even the union of cause and effect, when strictly examined resolves itself into a customary association of ideas....'[23] So we attribute identity to minds only because of the effect those different perceptions have on a mind that contemplates them. Hume's question is, therefore, 'What features we contemplate make us suppose that they constitute a single mind, and how do they bring about that effect?'. This is by now a familiar sort of question, and it arises here for the same kinds of reasons as parallel questions arose about Causality and the idea of continued and distinct existence.

It is the opinion of Penelhum[24] that Hume does not have to admit the substantive soul which he so strongly refutes. As far as his theory of self is concerned, it seems that at least Hume has to admit the existence of apprehensions of or reflections over perceptions. To maintain consistency in his statements, Hume will have to say that these reflections or apprehensions themselves are perceptions and that perceptions are capable of reflecting over other perceptions.

William James thought that a perception or an experience can reflect over another. According to James, the difficulty which Hume finds insurmountable is a result of misrepresentation of facts. The discontinuity of experiences that Hume emphasises is a result of artificial analysis and not a feature

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23. Ibid., page 260.

24. Terence Penelhum, Hume, Macmillan, London. 1975. pp.85-88.

disclosed in immediate introspective experience. Hume breaks up the living continuity of experience. According to James, self is not a sheer plurality of distinct perceptions; it is a 'stream of consciousness'. The experiences constituting this stream are logically independent but there are factual relations of 'sensible continuity' and 'appropriation'. According to William James, every experience or state of consciousness 'tends to be a part of a personal consciousness' and 'within each personal consciousness thought is sensibly continuous'.[25]

Experiences form exclusive groups, one is never aware of a mere experience but always of his experience. Thus the basic datum is not mere experience but experience belonging to some personal consciousness and within each such consciousness, consciousness is felt to be continuous. The present consciousness reaches out to and makes contact with the consciousness that was. James terms this relation as 'appropriation'. Since he does not accept any permanent self, James says that an experience appropriates another experience. Thus the agent which unifies the stream of one's experiences is 'the real, present, onlooking, remembering, judging thought' or the identifying 'section of the stream'.[26] The present thought appropriates those that came before it and is in its turn appropriated by later thoughts. The relation of appropriation when shorn of various metaphoric descriptions is actually reduced to memory.

25. William James, The Principles of Psychology. Henry Holt&Co.
26. Ibid., page 338.

Naturally it would be only a person or a self which is supposed to be capable of reflecting over perceptions or experiences, not experiences themselves. It sounds very strange to say that 'an experience experiences'. Since each experience lasts only for a short duration, it is not at all clear how an experience can take note of or reflect over other experiences that have ceased to exist. Thus the difficulty in Hume's theory can be removed only if it is shown to be plausible that perceptions can reflect over other perceptions. James says that this is not logically self-contradictory, hence it is possible.

According to Hume, Identity implies that of an object which exists uninterrupted and unchanged over a period of time. As far as the condition of uninterrupted or continued existence is concerned, he is correct. But why does he say that identity implies absence of change? Hume seems to be confusing between two senses of identity - 'numerical' and 'qualitative' identity. If two things, for instance, X and Y are said to be qualitatively identical, it means that they are similar. But it does not imply their numerical identity. When something at a later time is said to have remained qualitatively the same, it implies that it has remained unchanged till this time. Numerical identity does not imply qualitative identity unless the very concept of the object to which identity is being applied is such that in its case a qualitative change implies numerical diversity. Hence Hume cannot maintain that the idea of 'identity' is of an object that remains unchanged. It is surprising that Hume

makes this confusion because he himself distinguishes between numerical and specific(i.e.,qualitative) identity. Actually the talk of change in an object itself implies its numerical identity. Unless the object has remained numerically the same, how can it be said to have changed? If the object at a later time is numerically different from that which existed at an earlier time and is supposed to have changed, then it is a case of two different objects and not of one object having changed.[27]

Hume takes this position, perhaps, because while discussing identity of self, he has perceptions in mind. In case of perceptions, qualitative change would generally be taken to imply numerical diversity. But one thing which Hume fails to realise is that identity is ascribed not to perceptions but to the series of perceptions. On his theory a series or 'succession' of related but diverse perceptions constitutes one self and when we ascribe identity, we do so to this self. Since self here is a succession of related perceptions, identity, as Hume interpretes it, obviously cannot be ascribed to it. But we do ascribe identity to a changing complex thing and then we call it identical because of the continuity of the members of the series. Hume also admits that the members of the series which constitutes a self are related. But this relatedness, he thinks, only explains why we mistakenly ascribe identity to the self. If he was not confused regarding the conception of identity, he would have realised that the relations among the percep-

27. Vibha Chaturvedi, The Problem of Personal Identity, Ajanta Publications(India). 1988. page 49.

do provide a justification for ascribing identity to the self.[28] Hume adds that if the perceptions were to inhere in something simple and individual, or if the mind were to perceive any real connection among them, the difficulty would be solved. But both conditions are not satisfied, since there is nothing like spiritual substance and 'no connection among distinct existences are ever discoverable by human understanding. We only feel a connection or determination of the thought to pass from one object to another'.[29]

So far we have discussed how Hume attacked the view of some philosophers - 'We are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF: that we feel its existence and continuance in existence'. And for Hume, the so called Substance or Self and Identity as such is a matter of a union in the imagination. We will now see how Hume explains this.

According to Hume, there are only three relations that can produce a 'Union in the imagination' between ideas; and those relations are - Resemblance, Contiguity and Causation. These are the only 'natural relations'. We can explain how Hume calls these as playing key roles in the union of imagination:

(i) Resemblance: We have sense perceptions with our senses, visual perception, tactile perception, olfactory perception, etc. Each of our perceptions is different and unique from every other and from everything else in the universe. The visual per-

28. Ibid.,pages 49-50.
29. David Hume, Appendix to Treatise, page 319.

perception I have of the Book and that of the Table is different from each other and owing to this difference I call them different objects. Therefore, our idea of diversity has its basis in the different nature of perceptions we have. On the other hand, we have sense-perceptions which bear resemblances with one another. For instance, I saw a red book lying on my table yesterday and this morning I saw a red book again in the same place and the book resembles the one I saw yesterday and this evening, I saw again a red book lying in the same place which resembles the two books I saw yesterday and this morning. Owing to this resemblance of my perceptions at different times, I come to the conclusion that there is a single book lying on the table which gives me all these resembling perceptions. Therefore, Hume concludes that our idea of Identity has its foundation in 'resemblance' in our different and unique perceptions.

(ii) Contiguity: The relation of contiguity can be put as 'contact'. We ordinarily consider that for something to be the cause of something else, it must touch it, be spatially connected to it, as when we see one billiard ball roll towards another, and make contact with it. When the second billiard ball moves we are likely to say that the first ball caused it to move. In the same way, when we examine our perceptions, the 'seemingly external objects' seem to be the cause of our perceptions because every time we have those perceptions they are there. Then, we conclude that our perceptions are caused by 'them' and therefore, they are there in the external world.

(iii) Causation: This third relationship, says Hume, is necessary connection, and he adds, 'that relation is of much greater importance than any of the other two.....'. By necessary connection is meant the relation between cause and effect in which the cause necessarily produces the effect; for example, the impact of billiard ball (1) on billiard ball (2) is the cause which necessarily produces the effect of the motion of billiard ball (2). But from what impression, Hume persists, do we derive the idea of necessary connection between cause and effect? Hume finally concludes with the answer: We have the idea of a necessary connection between a particular cause and effect after we experience their conjunction repeatedly. He calls this 'constant conjunction'. If repeatedly we have sensory impressions of fire as spatially contiguous to my fingers and temporally prior to my fingers' having a sensation of burning, 'Without any further ceremony', he says, 'we call the one cause and the other effect,'.

Where, Hume asks, then does the idea come from, this crucial and powerful idea, since it does not come from a sensory impression? What then is the source? Since it does not come from sensory impressions, it must be subjective, it must come from the mind, and specifically from the psychological laws of association of ideas. The idea of necessary connection between causes and effects is not in the objects we observe, but only in the mind, he concludes. For after we have observed the constant conjunction of fire and the sensation of burning

in our fingers, we feel a necessity of the mind to 'associate' fire with burning.

In our present study, we can ignore Contiguity since it has little or no influence in the present case, although Hume never really explain why. Since our attributions of identity result only from the easy transition of the mind from one perception to another, and since resemblance and causation are the only relations that in this case can facilitate such a transition, it follows that resemblance and causation alone must be enough to produce in us the 'fiction' or 'mistake' of a continuously existing self or mind.

There are resemblances among many of the perceptions that constitute a person primarily because people remember many of their experiences: 'suppose we could clearly see into the breast of another, and observe that succession of perceptions, which constitutes his mind or thinking principle, and suppose that he always preserves the memory of a considerable part of past perceptions; 'tis evident that nothing could more contribute to the bestowing a relation of this succession amidst all its variations. For what is the memory but a faculty, by which we raise up the images of past perceptions? And as an image necessarily resembles its object, must not the frequent placing of these resembling perceptions in the chain of thought, convey the imagination more easily from one link to another, and make the whole seem like the continuance of one object?'[30]

30. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, Op.cit, pages 260-'1

It is not just that memory provides us with access to our past self, and thus gives us a sense of our endurance through time. That is true. But we think of ourselves as one enduring thing also partly because we remember. To remember is for certain kinds of perceptions to occur in the mind, so remembering actually contributes to the bundle of perceptions some members which then come to facilitate the transition of the imagination along the series making up the bundle. To remember is to have a perception which represents, and therefore, resembles the past perceptions it is a memory of, and so one result of the fact that we remember our past experiences is a greater degree of resemblance among those perceptions that constitute our mind.

Therefore, resemblance is a relation that leads the imagination to slide more easily from one member of the series to another, and hence to think of it as 'a continued view of the same object'. In other words, as it is the case that when we see something which resembles some other thing which we have seen in the past we are reminded of that which it resembles. For example, I see a Zebra(which very much resembles a Horse), the moment I see it, it reminds me of the horse which I have seen in the past and say, 'Oh, it looks like a horse!'.In the case of what I call 'the same object', it is the resembling character of each and every perception that I have whenever I see it that makes me conclude that it is the same object because every time I see it, the sense-perceptions I have are all alike

in nature. But we do not remember all, or even most, of our perceptions and of experiences. We do not conclude that we did not exist at those post-natal times we no longer remember, so there must be something else that enables us to think of those now forgotten perceptions as also belonging to our enduring self. That is where Causality comes in:

> 'the true idea of the human mind, is to consider it as a system of different perceptions or different existences, which are linked together by the relation of cause and effect, and mutually produce, destroy, influence, and modify each other. Our impressions give rise to their correspondent ideas; and these ideas in their turn produce other impressions. One thought chaces another, and draws after it a third, by which it is expelled in its turn...'[31]

When we think of ourselves as existing during the intervals we can no longer remember, we extend this chain of causes and effects into the gaps. So causation supplements resemblance to help give us the idea of ourselves as continuing through time. The mind slides easily along a series of perceptions that form a single causal chain, and thereby leads us to suppose that those intervening members we no longer remember, nevertheless, existed during those forgotten intervals. Thus we come to think of ourselves as single, continuous thing extended through time.

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31. Ibid.,page 261.

Now we can sum up what we have discussed so far in this chapter from Hume's attempt to explain Personal Identity or Identity as such by answering the Unity question can see what conclusion his attempt has brought us to:

1. Hume is right in rejecting the view that 'We are every moment conscious of what we call our SELF'.

2. Hume is not right in what he goes on to say, namely, 'The identity which we ascribe to the mind of man is only a fictitious one'. Hume's enquiry is whether there is 'something that really binds our several perceptions, or only associate our ideas in imagination'. This question is not easy to understand. His answer is that the ideas of perception are united in the imagination in some way. But in what way? His answer is by Causation. This is alright as far as it goes, but it does not tell us about the identity of person. Let us see how the conclusion arises:

Hume's question is 'When we pronounce concerning the Identity of a person, do we observe some real bond among his perceptions, or only feel one among the ideas we form of them?' There is something wrong with the question itself. It assumes that the Identity of a person is the same thing as the bond among his perceptions. In other words, it assumes that the Identity question is the same thing as the Unity question. But are they? This is the crux of the matter in this thesis. I am going to argue that they are not. It is like asking a bache-

lor 'Does your wife like cooking or does she prefer eating out?' The Bachelor can neither say 'Yes' nor 'No'.

The two questions are different because when we 'pronounce concerning personal identity' say of John, I do this on the basis of what can be seen and heard of John and not on the basis of the unity of his perceptions. In fact, the latter is meaningful to someone only if he already understands the difference between 'myself' and 'other people'. So people must be observable. So any philosophical theory of Personal Identity must take into account our 'Physical existence'. This Hume ignores under the spell of Cartesianism. What then are the criteria of Personal Identity? This is what I am going to talk about in the following chapter.

# CHAPTER THREE

## CRITERIA OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

# CHAPTER III

## CRITERIA OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

The states and acts of mind are one thing, that which has them, it would seem, quite another. We often make statements like - my body, my hands, my eyes, my feelings, my emotions, etc. I can see my body, my hands, my legs, etc., the so called physical entities, and I know what is going on inside me, the feelings, the pains, the anger, etc., and I am aware of them vividly. Without much thought it is our common sense belief that there is, it seems, the entity or the Self, the 'Me' which has them, my so called physical and mental entities. The nature of the self can best be asked with the question "What am I?". It is the nature of the self, the subject of mental phenomena - the entity to which we ascribe sensations, perceptions, thoughts, desires, actions - which is the subject of our concern here in this chapter.

What am I? There can be many answers to this question. I am John. I am a student. I am a husband. So on and so forth. The identities we give to the subject 'I' may be various - John, student, husband. We know that the 'I' is not identical with all these (John, student, husband, etc.), it is more than these. The 'self' is just what is referred to when the word 'I' is used. We know that the question of the self is naturally formulated with an approach from the first person perspective. That means, the question 'What am I?' is one that each person asks of himself. But this does not mean

that the question about other selves cannot be properly asked. It is just that in doing so we mean to speak, in using words like 'you" or "him", precisely of that which the other would speak of as 'I'. All the perspectives - first, second and third person approaches are quite appropriate. It is just that all the three perspectives need to be heeded and, if possible, integrated.

We often make and hear statements like 'I am in pain / I am dancing / I am singing / I am thinking' so on and so forth. It is our aim and objective in this chapter to discover 'Who and what is' that 'I' which seems to do the dancing, the singing and the thinking. Even though we are taking for granted that we are familiar as such reference to oneself is, we shall see that elucidating the nature of what is thus referred to presents considerable difficulties.

Questions of Identity arise whenever we think and talk about the existence of persons over a period of time. We often, if not always, re-identify people in our day to day life. We often make statements like - "This is Johny whom we met yesterday at the Department" or "This is David who was my classmate in College", so forth. To re-identify a person is to imply that in spite of changes and lapse of time that person has remained the same. What makes a person the same over a period of time? On what grounds we can be certain that this is my friend whom I met five years ago?

Ordinarily we are able to make judgments regarding a person's identity and do not find this very difficult. But this does not mean that we are clear about the grounds for such judgments. The problem of personal identity is the problem of clarifying what personal identity consists in and what the principles behind re-identification of persons are. This is the problem of the criterion of personal identity.[1]

We know that Identity implies Persistence. By persistence we mean the existence of one and the same thing at two different times.[2] Every individual undergoes changes - both physical and psychological. Our physical appearances keep on changing with time and our attitudes, our beliefs and interests also undergo changes. Now the question is - what changes can be allowed in persons without having to deny identity and what changes cannot be thus allowed. The problem of personal identity, therefore, consists in explaining as to what makes a person the same in spite of these changes.

As mentioned above, we observe that persons undergo changes and I myself also undergo changes. Not only my physical appearance change, but my likes and dislikes, my attitudes, personality and character also undergo changes. Ordinarily these changes are slow and gradual. And we hardly observe absolute or complete change - in most cases, similarity of the physical aspects and of mental-makings and of character and

1. Vibha Chaturvedi, The Problem of Personal Identity. Ajanta Publications (India). Jawahar Nagar. Delhi. 1988. p.1/
2. Ibid., p.2.

personality is retained. How is it that in spite of these tremendous changes, I talk of myself and of others remaining the same. Why? and How? The problem of personal identity is thus the problem of 'trying to justify a practice - of talking about people as single beings in spite of the fact that they are constantly changing, and over a period of time may have changed completely'.[3]

In the face of the difficulties mentioned, it is quite tempting to suppose that the question of the self is a pseudo-problem, generated by a misunderstanding of the function of 'I'. By saying that the question of the self is a pseudo problem, we mean that we wrongly take 'I' to be a referring expression. We mistake 'I' as referring some entity or object and we thus perplex ourselves trying to discover what kind of entity is thus referred to. So we just happen to discover that 'I' is not really referential in function, that there is no such entity referred to by 'I'. Then our problem of personal identity will be solved. The argument that 'I' is not referential in function, that it does not identify any entity might be backed up by saying that 'I' is strictly redundant. That means, the word 'I' is used merely for the purpose of drawing the hearer's attention to the person who is speaking. When we say 'It is raining' - it is not <u>It</u> that is raining, <u>it</u> simply stands for <u>rain</u>. Similarly, we can argue that 'I' has the sort of role 'It' has in 'It is raining' -

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3. Terence Penelhum, <u>Hume on Personal Identity</u>, <u>Philosophical Review</u>. LXIV, 1955. p.571.

not to indicate a kind of thing that is raining but a kind of dummy grammatical subject.

It seems that these claims about the logical role of 'I' look unacceptable. The question is - can we actually show them to be mistaken? But even if they were found to be correct, they would not by themselves dispose of the problem of the self, though they would require us to find some other formulation of our question. We could always put the question by asking what personal proper names like 'Jack' or 'John' refer to. It would be mad to suggest that these proper names picked out no kind of object but the non-referential thesis about the 'I' would spoil the first-person formulation of the question, and so rob the issue of its distinctive character.[4]

It is not enough to point out that from 'I am Jack' we can deduce 'Something is Jack', where the 'something' asserts the existence of the entity 'I' referred to; for we seem equally entitled to infer 'Somewhere there is rain' from 'It is raining', yet it would be wrong to say that 'it' refers to that somewhere. So it could be countered that while it is true that, if 'I am Jack' holds, then 'Something is Jack' must also hold, the something in question need not be what is referred to by 'I'.[5]

To make the argument more clear let us consider

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4. Collin McGinn, The Character of Mind, Oxford University Press. 1982. p.103.

5. Ibid., p.103.

the systematic relations between 'I' and other referential expressions. If 'I am brave' is true as uttered by Jack, then 'Jack is brave' is also true as well as 'He is brave' as uttered by others in reference to Jack. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that among these statements the truth of the statements is derived from the fact that 'I', 'Jack' and 'He' all have the same object as reference. Even if 'I' were not used referentially, surely we could introduce another word in its place to refer to what these other words (Jack and He) refer to, the kind of word which would be employed only from the first-person perspective. And then we could formulate our question about the self by asking after the nature of the denotation of that word. Let us then persist in our enquiry as to what sort of thing 'I' refers to.

The formulation of the question regarding the nature of the self, however, seems to have suffered from a defect. It limits the question to creatures equipped with language only. When we ask "What does 'I' refer to?" when a creature uses 'I' - it means that we assume that the creature performs acts of reference. But we are not certain whether the question about 'Self' is confined within the realm of creatures capable of speech and conversant with the word 'I'. But this defect can be easily remedied by shifting to the level of self-directed thought. What does a creature think about when it has thoughts about itself? Such self-reflexive thoughts are what get expressed in utterances containing the word 'I'. So

even when the first person pronoun is used by a creature, the subject of self-reflexive thought is the real focus of our interest.

Now we have another important question. Does the above formulation give rise to another assumption that Self always has self-reflexive thoughts? If we hold that there could be a genuine self which had no such self-reflexive thoughts, then it would be useless to question about what sort of thing its self-reflexive thoughts were about. But it is the case that we do often talk about self-awareness, self-consciousness, so on and so forth. Feelings like shame and guilt, when properly examined, imply that we, human beings, have self-awareness. It is our common sense view about the self that it has self-consciousness. Is it too much to say that it is necessary for a self to have self-consciousness in order to raise the question of the self about itself?

According to McGinn, we can respond to this line of objection in one of two ways. Eliminating the first-person character, we can ask what sort of thing we refer to when we say or think of another 'He is thus-and-so'; or, we can retain the first-person formulation - we can insist that it is true that self has the self-consciousness necessary to raise the question of the self about itself. The former is easier, but it eliminates a very important question of the self, that is, the first-person perspective of self. The latter seems dogma-

tically conditional. By conditional, it means that in order for a thing to be 'self' it is not only necessary to have mental attributes but also self-consciousness. It is very unlikely to think of creatures lacking self-consciousness as having mental states proper.

Is it reasonable to maintain that there is something which has mental states only if what has them is aware of that something? In response to this question, McGinn introduces a distinction between different kinds of psychological subject:[6] there is the idea of a thing which has mental attributes but *which is not qualified as a self because* it lacks self-consciousness. This could be simply animal in question, a certain kind of living body. And there is the idea of a psychological subject different in nature from the first, that is, the living animal body and conferring upon a mind a kind of unity not conferred by the body. Then we can say that the mental states of simple creatures belong to the subjects in the first sense, but the mental states of self-conscious creatures have subjects in the second sense. The latter sort of subject - the self proper - displays a special kind of unity. It has a unity which is properly grasped only from the inside.

The main doctrines regarding the nature of the self can be divided into three: (i) theories which identify

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6. Ibid.,p.104.

the self with the body; (ii) theories which identify the self in terms of various mental relations, and (iii) theories which take the concept of the self to be primitive and not to be explained in terms of anything else. The first theory tells us that 'I' refers to a (living) body endowed with mental attributes. The second theory says that the reference of 'I' is a complex entity constructed in certain ways from mental states we take to belong to the self. The third theory claims that the self is a simple substance which is distinct from the body and is not reducible to the mental states of which it is the subject.

It must be noted that the question of Personal Identity, as it is commonly understood, is the question under what conditions a person may be said to exist over time. For instance, we judge that the person we see before us is the same person we saw last week. The question arises: what such identity over time consists in for persons. Answering this question can be expected to shed light on the question what a self is, because it is reasonable to suppose that the conditions of a thing's identity over time depend upon what sort os thing it is. In other words, if we know what kinds of change a self may sustain and still persist, we shall know what it is that constitutes a self - it will be that which cannot change without the self ceasing to exist.

It should be remembered that broaching the ques-

tion of Personal Identity is an indirect way of getting at our real interest - what a self is. There is a sense in which the question of the nature of the self must be conceptually anterior to the question of Personal Identity. That means, in order to determine what the identity of a person consists in, we must explore what our concept of a person is that is judged the same. The point of asking the question of identity is to help to lay bare the concept of self which is invoked to answer the identity question. Since the concept of the self determines the kinds of change a self may endure, we can hope to expose the concept to clearer view by consulting our intuitive judgments about the continued existence of a self under various sorts of real or imagined change. We might say that the issue of personal identity has a methodological, but not conceptual priority.

There is generally a close relationship between a philosopher's conception of person or self and his view about personal identity. It is like the two sides of the same coin. We cannot have concept of a person without such a concept giving rise to identity of a person. On the other hand, we cannot talk about Personal identity without talking about the concept of a person. Most of the supporters of Cartesian dualism equate the problem of personal identity with that of identity of the self, namely, the problem of what makes a self or soul the same over a period of time. On the other hand, the philosophers who submit to Humean view of self try to explain perso-

nal identity in terms of relations holding between different experiences. For A.J.Ayer, the so called Mind or Self is nothing but a series of experiences causally dependent upon a particular body. He explains personal identity in terms of identity of the body. Therefore, it can be considered more or less the same to discuss the concept or meaning of person and to discuss the problem of personal identity.

To discuss the concept of person is not an easy matter because the term 'Person' has no single and unanimously agreed upon usage. Philosophers do not agree in their view and conception about what a person is. Therefore, the controversy is wide ranging. Man is endowed with the capacity for reasoning and it is this reason which makes human beings distinct from things of nature and other beings. The existence of Reason or Mind is reflected in so many ways, for example, sensations, emotions, feelings, images, perceptions, memory, expectations, desires, believing, and other types of reasoning like dreams, motives, volitions, will, choices, etc. It seems, therefore, that in the definition of person the capacity for thought must figure prominently.

The theory of dualism, the view of Rene Descartes is one of the most popular views of person and it is widely accepted. According to this view, a person is a soul or essentially a soul which is united with a body but the soul is distinct from the body and can exist without the body. For Des-

cartes, the body is a material substance and its attribute is extention. On the other hand, the soul or the 'I' of the 'Cogito Ergo Sum' is a spiritual substance and its attribute is thinking. Thus the embodied being, called person, is actually a combination of two distinct and independent substances, the soul, a spiritual substance and the body, a material substance.

According to Cartesian dualism of the soul and the body, the relationship of the body and the soul is a contingent one. That is, the soul can exist without the body. Since Descartes believes that the soul continues to exist even after the destruction of the body, this clearly shows that according to him, person is nothing but the soul. Cartesian dualism has influenced the thinking of later philosophers a great deal. For instance, George Berkeley, who denied the existence of the material substance, maintained that a substantive self is revealed to us in self-consciousness. He says, '....I know or am conscious of my own being; and that I myself am not my ideas, but somewhat else, a thinking active principle that perceives, knows, wills and operates about ideas.'[7]

Cartesian dualism has a deep impact upon the thinking of many philosophers. H.D.Lewis, one of the Cartesian supporters observes: "The truth seems to be that we do not strictly ascribe corporeal characteristics and mental characteristics to the same thing. When for example, I say, 'I am tall', I am

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7. George Berkeley, 'Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous', British Empirical Philosophers. ed. A.J.Ayer, Routledge Kegan Paul. London. 1965. page 281.

not saying anything about my mind but only about my body, which of course affects my mind in a great many ways. My mind has neither height nor length nor breadth. It would be absurd, except in a thoroughly figurative sense, to ask how big is my mind. To speak of a 'small mind' is sheer metaphor. Minds are neither big nor small. If anyone denies this, let him give me the approximate length of his mind, or any other, and say how he measures it. Is it six inches, or a foot, or a mile, or what? Clearly it is none of these. The question is absurd, for tallness and so on has nothing to do with my mind, but only with my body. The much maligned Descartes was obviously right in maintaining that it was distinctive of minds not to be extended."[8]

Cartesian psychological dualism may be defined as the doctrine that reality consists of two kinds of substances, mental and physical, and that the one kind of substance can never be shown to be a form of, or be reduced to, the other. So for psychological dualism, mind can never be shown to be derived from, or a form of, or a function of, or reducible to, matter. Cartesian psychological dualism formulates its doctrine in terms of substances, since Descartes, as we have seen, accepts as a clear and distinct idea that attributes such as mental or physical cannot exist except as belonging to substances.

Now we can understand why Cartesian psychological dualism is regarded as the sharpest and clearest formulation of

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8. H.D.Lewis, The Elusive Mind, Allen & Unwin, London. 1965. pages 148 - 149.

metaphysical dualism. It is because Descartes has made one attribute, one property or quality, the principal attribute of each kind of substance. He established the principal property of each kind of substance by this question: What is my clear and distinct idea of this thing, what is my clear and distinct idea of its essential, necessary quality or attribute?

For mental, spiritual substance, the principal attribute is thinking; it is therefore, a thinking kind of substance, substance which is conscious (which means, for Descartes, it thinks, doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, imagines, and feels.) But this attribute of thinking is the very attribute which is distinctly lacking in the piece of wax, in spatially extended bodies, and in the motion of bodies from one space or place to another. It is lacking in earthly clockwork mechanisms and in the celestial clockwork of the planets, in the clockwork bodies of animals and humans - there is no consciousness in any of these.

Physical substance is defined, on the other hand, by its principal attribute of being extended in space. It is measureable by geometry, which is the science of spatial measurement. Its motion is mechanical, the result of impact, as the cogs in a machine impact upon the cogs in other wheels, or as one billiard ball impacts upon another. But being physically extended is the very attribute or property which is lacking to mental substances.

Minds, thinking things, consciousness are not extended in space, they are not measureable, they are not in motion, they do not move on impact, they do not function like clockworks. Was it by mechanical clockwork that Descartes resolved for once in his life to doubt everything, to overthrow all his beliefs, to attempt to use methodological skepticism in order to reach an absolutely certain belief? That was no clockwork, that was nothing mechanical - that was the masterful triumph of a free spirit, a thinking thing, a mental substance.

Thinking substance, mental, spiritual reality, by definition lacks any spatial extension, occupies no space, is not measurable or quantifiable, is not in motion. (Where, for example, is thinking? In my head?). Physical substance, spatially extended, mathematically measurable, lacks any mental, spiritual, or conscious attribute. Physical things have no consciousness and cannot think. And so we are confronted by the dual, two fold substances and their attributes of Descartes's world; on the one hand, spatially extended mechanical substance which have no consciousness, no mind; on the other hand, mental, conscious, spiritual, thinking substances which have no body, no spatial extension. Descartes's psychophysical dualism is well expressed by an old English couplet:

What is mind? No matter.
What is matter? No mind.[9]

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9. T.Z.Lavine, From Socrates to Sartre, the philosophic Quest, A Bantam Book/March 1984, Part II Descartes, pages 122-'23.

British empiricist John Locke is also a famous supporter of Cartesian dualism. Locke defines a person as, 'a thinking intelligent being that has reason and reflection and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places, which it does by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking and essential to it.'[10] Locke goes to the extent of saying that a rational parrot would be a person whereas an irrational man would not be so. For Locke, man and person are not one and the same thing. According to him the term 'person' is qualitative in character whereas the term 'man' is not. The term 'person' in Lockean interpretation is not a matter of kind but of degree. Rationality is the determining factor of personhood for Locke. The idea of man, according to him, is simply that of an animal of a certain form. It entails a determinate shape and size. 'Man' cannot be defined either in terms of rationality or immortal soul. A rational parrot, he says, cannot be called man because it lacks the requisite physical form. Having a human form or for that matter any physical form is not essential for personhood. The essential characteristics for personhood are rationality and awareness of one's identity over time.

Cartesian dualism is subject to severe criticism. David Hume, the British empiricist is one of the most prominent and distinguished critics of Cartesian concept of person. David

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10. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Ed. A.C.Fraser, Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1894. Volume I, Book II, Chapter XXVIII, page 448.

Hume says, 'For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or another, of heat, or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I can never catch myself at anytime without a perception and never can observe anything but the perceptions'.[11]

Prominent empiricists like Bertrand Russell and A.J.Ayer also support David Hume in his criticism of Descartes. Ayer says, 'It is still fashionalble to regard the self as a substance. But when one comes to enquire into the nature of this substance, one finds that it is an entirely unobservable entity. It may be suggested that it is revealed in self-consciousness but this is not the case.... We find that the possibility of self-consciousness in no way involves the existence of a substantive ego. But, if the substantive ego is not revealed in self-consciousness, it is not revealed anywhere.'[12]

The question now is what is the essential proof with *which we can be assured of the existence of anything.* Being empiricists Russell and Ayer try to prove the reality of the self by means of sense-experience which they find it impossible. Their point is this - we just take it for granted that there is an entity called Self. But when we introspect and have close examination as to what self actually is, we find there is no

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11. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, Op.cit. page 239.
12. A.J.Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, Victor Collanez Ltd. London. 1967. page 126.

such observable and empirical object called self. If self is not subject to sense-experience, how can we know that there is self?

R.M.Chisholm and H.D.Lewis pointed out the weakness of Hume's explanation of self. Chisholm argues that Hume, while describing the evidence for the non-existence of the self, is actually admitting its existence. As mentioned earlier in the previous chapter, Hume says that he can never catch himself at anytime without a perception and never can observe anything but the perception. Hume comes to his famous conclusion that he finds nothing but perceptions whenever he examines himself in search of the so called self. Chisholm rejects the suggestion that the objection can be answered by rephrasing Hume's report in a subjectless way. For example, instead of saying, "I find nothing but perceptions," one may say, "Nothing but perceptions are found." According to Chisholm, just because he could not find anything but perceptions, Hume cannot conclude that nothing but perceptions are found and will be found by others too. He himself may find perceptions, but that does not imply that others will also find nothing but perceptions. On the basis of what ha has found Hume does not have any guarantee to deny the existence of self. He says, "The self is an object of 'inner perception'. And this would be to say that each of us is directly acquainted with himself."[13]

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13. R.M.Chisholm, Person and Object, Allen and Unwin, London. 1976. page 46.

The validity of the truth of life for oneself is awareness or consciousness. The fact that I am aware of my surroundings, the objects of nature, etc., underlines that I am existing - without this object-awareness, to be more precise, there is no way of knowing that I exist. It is not only true that we are aware of things around us, it is also true that we are aware of this awareness. That means, I am just now aware of the things around me and I am also aware that I am aware of the things around me - I am aware of my awareness of things. H.D. Lewis says that one is aware of oneself in having any experience: "Just as no creature can have an experience without being aware, in the very process, that it has it, so it cannot fail to be aware of itself, in its irreducible distinctness, however, little able to take express cognizance of this or reflect upon it."[14]

It is the argument of the modern empiricists that it is linguistic usage that misleads us to posit the self. We can explain this argument with the help of an illustration. When we examine the role of 'It' in the statements like 'It is raining' 'It is noisy' and 'It is dark' - we know that 'It' is used just for the sake of grammatical purpose, we know that it is not the 'It' in these three statements which does the 'raining' or 'making noise' or 'being dark'. The 'It' in these three statements is not one and the same thing with the attributes of 'rain', 'noise' and 'dark'. Instead of merely saying 'raining' for the

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14. H.D.Lewis, The Elusive Mind, Op.cit., page 233.

purpose of communication 'It is raining' is grammatically correct and easier to understand. Similarly, when I say 'I am thinking', the 'I' can be considered as playing the same role as that of 'It' in 'It is raining'. Since 'I' is used as a subject in statements reporting mental states, we think that it refers to something which is the subject of these mental states. Russell thinks that the subject or the 'I' though schematically convenient, is not empirically discoverable. C.D.Broad also gives a similar reason for thinking that there are selves. He classifies pure ego theories as 'Central theories' and says:

> "The prima facie presumption in favour of central theories and against non-central theories is the common usage of language, which strongly suggests the existence of a centre. We say, 'I am thinking of this book and wanting my tea and feeling tired.. This certainly suggests that 'I' is the proper name of a certain existent which stands in a common asymmetric relation to all those contemporary mental events."[15]

Even if we argue that 'I' is a referring expression, that 'I' refers to an object, the Self or the Ego, it still has to be shown what that entity to which 'I' refers is like, a spiritual substance or a pure ego. All the referring expressions are not in reality referring to objective realities. For exam-

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15. C.D.Broad, Mind And Its Place in Nature, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. 1951. page 584.

ple, "The present King of France" may be a referring expression, but since there is no King of France at present, it refers to no objective reality. Similarly, the word 'I' in our ordinary usage, is a referring expression, we use 'I' to refer to 'Self' but the problem is that what is referred to cannot be observed and found as Hume has said. The unobservability of the pure ego poses a big difficulty. Cartesian dualism faces other serious difficulties also. It cannot provide any satisfactory principle for identification and individuation of persons. If a person is identified with his soul, it is impossible for any person other than he himself to know this soul. The only way one person can be said to know another person (that is, his soul) is through observing his body and his behaviour. Hence the problem of other minds.

If the existence of the soul is taken for granted, it is not subject to sense-experience. It is beyond the reach of persons other than the one who owns it. Here the importance of bodily-identity comes in - the only way to identify a soul, from a third person perspective is through the body with which it is supposed to be associated. Not only for the purpose of identification but also for the purpose of individuation, reference to the body plays the key role. The personality and character traits and memories of a person cannot provide a principle of individuation because it is logically possible that two distinct persons may have exactly similar personalities and

characters and also exactly similar mental histories. But the question of individuation or individuality has to do with a body. One individual means 'One body'.

Phenomenalistic explanation of a self is very interesting. The chief proponents of phenomenalism are Bertrand Russell and A.J.Ayer. Following Humean analysis of self as a 'bundle' or 'series' of perceptions, Russell and Ayer also argue that Self is nothing but a 'logical construction' out of experiences. In other words, the statements about Self can be translated without the loss of meaning into statements about experiences. The phenomenalists explain the unity of mind either in terms of relations between experiences or relations of experiences to the body. That means, whatever happens happens in time. Two events may happen simultenously, but one body cannot have two kinds of experiences at a time.

Whatever experiences one particular body goes through can be compared to a long chain, one event after another. The unity of the mind occurs because a body's experiences are in time sequence thus providing a chain-like unity. According to Ayer, "Experiences are said to belong to one person if and only if they are causally dependent upon the body which is called that person's body." Experiences are individuated only by reference to the persons who have them and persons in their turn are identified only by means of their bodies.

The phenomenalistic theories of person are faced with the difficulty of giving satisfactory account of the unity of a person's mental life. We must find some principle for distinguishing between the mental biographies belonging to two different persons. But no such principle can be given in a phenomenalistic theory, solely on the basis of relations holding between experiences. It is possible that two mental biographies may be exactly similar. Hence a reference to the body of the person seems essential. But even that does not succeed in giving such a principle. Besides there is something paradoxical about denying that there is a subject to which the various mental experiences are ascribed. To regard this subject as a pure ego leads to inseparable difficulties. May we then say that the subject really is the body? Apparently this seems unacceptable. We never say that the body thinks, intends and reflects. It is always a person who is said to indulge in these activities.[16]

P.F.Strawson is the philosopher who in modern times has, perhaps, laid the greatest weight on the notion of a person, and in a way that, on his own admission, makes considerations about personal identity secondary. It must be noted that considerations about the criteria of identity for a certain kind of thing go hand in hand. Strawson does not really present a thesis about what we mean when we talk of people. He says nothing, for example, about something which must surely be essen-

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16. Vibha Chaturvedi, Problem of Personal Identity, Ajanta Publications(India).Delhi. 1988. pages 11-12.

tial to the notion of a person as we ordinarily employ it - the idea of personal relations. Rather, he invokes the notion of a person as a largely technical concept, which we need both to invoke and to understand if we are to appreciate issues involved in the mind-body problem and the framework in which we think of ourselves and others.

According to Strawson's theory of person, the concept of person is the concept of a type of being to whom both M-predicates and P-predicates can be ascribed. By 'person' Strawson means a subject to which both material predicates such as height, weight, colour, etc., as well as mental activities like thinking, reflecting, intending, remembering, etc., can be ascribed. Strawson rejects the view that the two types of predicates are ascribed to two different subjects, that is, M-predicates to a body and mental activities to a soul. It is characteristic of person that both types of predicates can be ascribed to it at the same time. Strawson describes: "What I mean by the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation, etc., are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type."[17]

The reference to the mind-body problem is clear

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17. P.F.Strawson, Individuals, Methuen, London, 1959. page 102.

from the fact that Strawson sets out his conception of the matter in conscious opposition to two other points of view - first that of Cartesian dualism and second that of what he calls the 'no ownership theory'. The first view maintains that states of consciousness are ascribable only to, and thus owned only by, minds, while bodily characteristics have similar relation to something different - the body. The second view maintains that states of consciousness do not belong to anything, although they may be causally dependent on the body.[18]

The concept of persons according to Strawson is logically primitive. That means, states of consciousness must be ascribed to something, and that something has physical characteristics also. That leads Strawson to the concept of a person as something presupposed by both physical or corporeal states and states of consciousness; this in a sense is what we call 'logically primitive', that is, not reducible either to something mental or to something physical, since it is presupposed by both. In other words, the concept of person cannot be reduced to the concept of a mere body nor to that of a pure ego, nor to the concept of a combination of the two. There are two different types of particulars - physical bodies and persons. To the former, only M-predicates can be ascribed but the latter necessarily have both a physical and mental dimension. Strawson gives due recognition to the distinction between M and P predicates.

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18. D.W. Hamlyn, Metaphysics, Chapter IX, 'Persons and Personal Identity', page 193.

P-predicates cannot be reduced to or explained in terms of M-predicates. But from this it is wrong to conclude that the two types of predicates are necessarily ascribable to different subjects.

As mentioned before, Strawson's theory claims that the concept of a person is logically primitive, such a claim does reveal that in thinking about ourselves and others we need to have the idea of something that owns both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics. It is that idea which Strawson refers to as the concept of a person. That usage of 'person' is to some extent technical, and whether it corresponds exactly to the ordinary usage of 'person', if there is such a thing, is arguable. It is also arguable whether persons must be embodied, as Strawson claims (though with qualification). Strawson does allow, in individuals, the possibility of disembodied persons, but only as secondary cases; he also toys with the idea of a dead person - a corpse.

The title of one of Bernard Williams' papers is 'Are persons bodies'?[19] In this paper Williams appears to want to answer 'Yes' to that question and does so by way of criticism of Strawson. In his book 'Problems of the Self' Williams suggests that 'person' can be defined as 'a body which thinks'. By this definition what he wants us to keep in mind is that: there

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19. B.A.O. Williams, Problems of the Self, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1973.

are some material bodies that cannot think and on the other hand, there are some material bodies that can think. The latter are called persons. Thus, according to Williams, person is neither a pure ego as Descartes said, nor is it a mere body nor an unanalysable subject of M and P predicates as Strawson says. Person is simply a material body which thinks.

The basic difference of Williams with that of Strawson is regarding the primitiveness of the concept. Williams focuses only to the body. The body, in a sense, is the pivot round which the concept of person revolves for Williams. All we need is the concept of body and person can be defined in terms of the concept of body by adding the qualification that it thinks. We know that there are many material bodies which cannot think, for instance, table, chair, mountain, trees, Moon, Stars, etc. And persons are those material bodies that can think. Thus according to Williams' definition, a person is a material body which thinks. That means, a person is identical with his body.

There is no possibility of disembodied soul if person is defined as 'a material body that thinks'. As we have discussed earlier, P.F.Strawson admits the possibility of disembodied beings or souls, a pure individual consciousness may be regarded as person in a logically secondary sense, this implies survival of a person after bodily death. For Williams, however, no such possibility exists because identity of a person would

consist in identity of the body since 'same Person' would imply 'same body'. Williams, nevertheless, seems to have ignored one important feature of the concept of person. In one sense a person can be said to be a body since a person is an embodied being, yet in a sense person is not merely a body because there is also the psychological dimension of a person. Williams himself defines 'person' as 'a body which thinks'. Possession of psychological characteristics, seems an essential part of what we mean by 'person'. Since there can be beings other than persons capable of psychological characteristics, it seems that a definition of 'person' would have to do justice to the complex psychological activities of which only a person is capable.[20]

People think, have experiences, engage in many forms of behaviour, stand or are capable of standing in relations to other people (relations which we call 'personal'), and in other relations to other kinds of things; they may be the objects of ethical judgments and the subjects that make such judgments, they may be held responsible for things and be subjects to reward and punishment in consequence, and they may take aesthetic interests in a variety of things - and so on. To list such factors is not in itself to say what people are, but any account of persons must be consistent with such possibilities.

David Wiggins has spoken eloquently against the idea that deciding what counts as a person or which person is

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20. Vibha Chaturvedi, Op.cit., page 16.

identical with which is a matter of deciding who is responsible for what. Decisions about who is responsible for what depend upon prior decisions about the identities of persons. Wiggins seems to think, however, that the natural antithesis to the view which he rejects is that 'by person we mean a sort of animal'. In the book 'Sameness and Substance' Wiggins suggests what he calls 'the animal attribute view' of person which defines 'person' in terms of life and vital functions. According to this view, it is an empirical fact that the human brain is the seat of psychological functions of a person. Hence this definition of person in functional terms makes the human brain the individuating nucleus of a person. It is conceivable that brain may not perform this function but according to Wiggins, some parcel of matter must have this role. Thus the survival of a person would depend upon the continuance of the parcel of matter, viz, the brain, which is essential for continuance of the vital functions that characterise a person.

So far we have discussed and examined the different theories and concepts of persons, as we have said, the concept of a person and the criterion of personal identity are like the two sides of the same coin because the criterion is more or less the same as what it is criterion of. In order to identify something, the criterion I would employ in the identification would have to be a part and parcel of that something. Similarly, the concept I have of persons have very much to do with the criterion I would go by for Personal Identity. Now let us see what

do we mean by criterion and how it relates to concepts of person and personal identity.

THE CRITERIA OF PERSONAL IDENTITY:

The problem of Personal Identity is often described as the search for 'criteria' of identity. Here we need to distinguish two ways in which the object of this search may be understood, and to note that the way that is relevant for us has an implication we do well to make explicit. The notion of criterion is ambiguous between the idea of a way telling that a certain sort of fact obtains, and the idea of what is constitutive of its obtaining: the former is an epistemological idea, the latter a metaphysical one.[21]

In application to Personal Identity, the distinction is between the evidence we use to judge of personal identity over time, and our conception of what this is evidence for. And there is no guarantee that what we actually use as evidential signs of personal identity will coincide with that which these are signs of. To take an extreme example in which these come apart: We can imagine a society in which judgments of personal identity were always made on the basis of documents the people carried around with them; these documents would be criteria in the epistemological sense, but they are obviously not criteria in the metaphysical sense - or else we would have to say that selves are constituted of documents!. This is not, however,

21. Collin Mc Ginn, The Character of Mind, Op.cit. page 107.

to say that the two questions are totally independent; they are dependent in the way that any questions are about what something is and how we tell what it is. But unless we are to assume that, in general, the constitution of reality and our methods of knowing about it coincide, we cannot take it for granted that how we judge of personal identity affords direct access to what personal identity consists in.[22]

Before taking up the question of the criterion of personal identity, let us first clarify what is meant by 'criterion' here. In most of the discussions of personal identity, the term 'criterion' is used in the sense of logically necessary and sufficient condition. We would generally use the term in the sense of logically necessary and sufficient condition. Therefore, a question about the criterion of personal identity is a question about the necessary and sufficient condition of personal identity, that is, of saying correctly that person $P_2$ at time $T_2$ is the same person as $P_1$ at time $T_1$.

John Locke in his Essay finds the criterion of personal identity in consciousness. Consciousness, he says, makes the same person. 'That with which the consciousness of this present thinking thing can join itself, makes the same person, and is one self with it, and with nothing else.'[23] Since Locke sees the most typical identity question as backward looking in the

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22. Ibid., page 107.
23. John Locke, Op.cit., page 45.

sense that it asks something of the form 'Is this...the same... as the one which was...?', the form of consciousness which is directly relevant to personal identity seems to be memory. And so Locke specifies it. It is perhaps worth noting, however, that it is possible to raise forward looking identity questions - 'Shall I in ten years time be the same person as I am now?' or perhaps even 'Am I now the same person I shall be in ten years time?' - although those questions, seem to admit of rather easy answers.

Criticisms were soon made of Locke's view, construed as saying that if and only if X remembers being Y or having the experiences that Y had, X and Y are the same person. It is Bishop Butler who argued that memory presupposes personal identity and cannot therefore constitute it. He actually says that it is consciousness of personal identity that presupposes personal identity, but it is clear that I cannot properly be said to have remembered having some experience unless it is I who had that experience. I can, of course, think that I remember having it without that being true. I can have putative memories without my having had the experiences in question. Veridical memory does, however, presuppose personal identity, and in that sense Butler is right (whatever may be said about the parallel that Butler sees with knowledge and truth - 'consciousness of personal identity presupposes, and therefore cannot constitute, personal identity, any more than knowledge, in any other case, can

constitute truth, which it presupposes' - a point which Wiggins makes something of).[24]

In 'Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man'[25] Reid argues that Locke confuses personal identity with the evidence that we have of our personal identity. According to Locke, a man may be, and at the same time not be, the person that did a particular action. Reid argues this view of Locke on the basis of an example according to which a boy who was flogged at school for stealing apples might become a brave officer who took a standard from the enemy in his first campaign, and then become a general in advanced life. Reid posits that the general can remember taking the standard but not being flogged for stealing apples, but when he took the standard he could remember that. According to Locke's criterion, therefore, the officer is the same person as the boy who was flogged, but the general is not the same person as the boy. 'Therefore, the general is, and at the same time is not, the same person with him who was flogged at school.'[26]

The point is well taken, although Reid does not deny that 'The conviction which every man has of his identity, as far back as his memory reaches, needs no aid of philosophy to strengthen it; and no philosophy can weaken it, without

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24. D.Wiggins, 'Locke, Butler and the stream of consciousness'
25. T.Reid, Essays on The Intellectual Powers of Man. ed, B.A.Brody, M.I.T. Press. England. 1969.
26. Ibid., page 115.

first producing some degree of insanity'.[27] That, however, is not a point about the criteria of identity; it is one about our beliefs about our identity, and the grounds for them. Reid in fact thinks that personal identity itself is a perfect identity; it is the identity of a monad and is not further analysable. He admits, however, that this conclusion is derivable from a consideration of our own identity. When it comes to the identity of others we proceed on a different basis, and our grounds for judgments of identity are more or less those which we rely on in arriving at judgments concerning the identity of bodies, where the identity, he says, is not perfect.[28]

The notion of a criterion has received a great deal of attention in recent times, largely because of some remarks of Wittgenstein - especially his remark that an 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria. Wittgenstein used the term in a sense in which the relationship between a criterion and what it is a criterion of, is looser than logical relationship of entailment yet stricter than the relationship between inductive evidence and what it is evidence of. He says, "If Medical Science calls angina an inflammation caused by a particular bacillus, and we ask in a particular case 'why do you say this man has got angina?' then the answer 'I have found the bacillus so-and-so in his blood' gives us the criterion, or what we may

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27. Ibid., page 107.

28. D.W.Hamlyn, Metaphysics, Op.cit, page 204.

call the defining criterion of angina - to say 'A man has angina if this bacillus is found in him' is a tautology or it is a loose way of stating the definition of 'angina'...'[29]

For Wittgenstein as he clearly mentions in the later half of 'The Blue and Brown Books' and 'Philosophical Investigations' that he is not using the term 'criterion' in the sense of logically necessary and sufficient condition. In his usage it is possible that 'p' is criterion of 'q', yet 'p' may be true and 'q' false. For example, according to him the truth of 'I see my hand moves' is criterial evidence for 'My hand moves'. Yet it is possible that the former be true and the latter false. Similarly pain behaviour is a criterion of pain but one may be pretending. What a person says is a criterion of what kind of image he has of himself, but he may be lying. Thus it is clear that in Wittgenstein, criterial relation is distinct from entailment. It is weaker than entailment and hence weaker than mutual entailment. In Wittgenstein's terminology 'p' being the criterion of 'q' does not mean that 'p' entails 'q' or that 'q' entails 'p', that is, that 'p' is equivalent to 'q'. Rather he claims that the sense of 'q' is partially specified by the fact that the truth of 'p' is non-inductive evidence justifying the application of 'q'.

However, in most of the discussions of the problem

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29. L.Wittgenstein, The Blue Book, Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, ed. W.Barrett and H.D.Aiken, Random House, New York, 1962. page 730.

of personal identity, 'criterion' is not used in the above mentioned sense of logically necessary and sufficient condition. When Locke discusses personal identity it is clear that he is interested in the necessary and sufficient conditions for its being the case that person A and person B at a previous time are the same person. When we say that we are concerned with the criteria of personal identity, we mean that we are concerned with the necessary and sufficient conditions for a person $P_2$ at time $T_2$ is the same person $P_1$ at time $T_1$. This implies that necessary and sufficient conditions follow from something that is a necessary part of the concept of a person. If we say that the concept of a person is unanalysable, we are likely to reject the attempt to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for personal identity, at least on the basis of something about the concept itself. The question about the conditions of personal identity, however, has its basis in the concept of a person itself and vice versa.

It may be sufficient to note at present that the meaning of the phrase 'criteria of personal identity' is not something which can be taken for granted. Nevertheless, the most important philosophical considerations about the criteria of personal identity are those that do have to do with the concept of a person. If we could provide necessary and sufficient conditions for Xs and so could provide a decision procedure for identifying Xs, that would not have a great deal of philosophi-

cal interest or at least that would be so in the case of an 'X' which is as problematic as 'person' is.

There are various criteria of personal identity proposed by different philosophers. Philosophers who accept the existence of a substantive soul generally take the Identity of this soul as the criterion of personal identity. On the other hand, those philosophers who deny the existence of the substantive soul explain personal identity either in terms of relations between experiences specially memory; or in terms of relation of experiences with a body. Now let us see different criteria of personal identity in a nutshell:

(i) Identity of the Soul:

According to this theory, personal identity consists in the identity of the spiritual substance, a person is the same, if and only if, his soul, which is regarded as a spiritual substance, is the same. Thus, the criterion of personal identity is identity of the spiritual substance. Even though a person's thoughts, feelings, emotions and perceptions keep changing, a person remains the same amidst all the changes of his experiences and mental states, because the subject to which these perceptions, emotions, etc., belong, remains identical throughout his life time. This subject is a spiritual substance, a spiritual entity.

For Descartes, Berkeley and Butler, identity of a person consists in the identity of his soul. A person remains the same through a period of time if and only if his soul remains numerically the same, irrespective of whether his character, personality or even his body remains the same or not. Descartes and Berkeley have not discussed the question of identity of persons as such, but the criterion of identity of the soul would be in agreement with their philosophical system.

According to Joseph Butler,[30] the sameness or identity of person neither depends upon the identity of the particles of his body nor upon possession of any body, nor does it depend on consciousness as Locke said. It consists in the sameness or identity of the conscious substance or thinking being and it is known intuitively. Thus according to Butler, a person is aware of his self at present and he is also aware of his self at past moments through memory and he then concludes intuitively that the two are identical. Thus the identity is that of the conscious substance or thinking being, not of consciousness nor of material substance.

Thomas Reid also advocates that personal identity consists in the identity of thinking substance. According to him, the belief in one's continued existence is an intuitive principle for which we require no proof. An intuitive principle,

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30. Joseph Butler, 'Of Personal Identity' *The Analogy of Religion*. Ed. W.E. Gladstone. Oxford University Press. 1896.

according to Reid, is one which is universally held long before people reach the stage of philosophical reflection. Its denial is felt to involve some absurdity by every body and it is such that even those who deny it continue to act in accordance with it in practice.

Both Butler and Reid advocate that a person has direct and immediate knowledge of his identity through time. Reid qualifies this by saying that it is only in one's own case that a person has such knowledge. A person cannot know intuitively about the identity of someone other than himself. Hence one's judgments about identity of persons other than himself are based on the same grounds as his judgments of identity of sensible objects, and this ground, says Reid, is 'similarity'. In one's own case one has direct knowledge of his identity and has undoubted certainty about his identity as far back as he remembers, but his judgments about identity of other persons are based on similarity, etc., which are not decisive and may leave room for doubt.

Thus according to both Butler and Reid, a person can be said to have remained identical, if and only if, his self or the thinking substance has remained the same. The identity of the spiritual substance is a necessary condition of a person's identity because unless the spiritual substance is numerically the same, the person cannot be said to be the same. It is also

a sufficient condition because if this condition obtains, nothing else is required to conclude that a person has remained identical. Both Butler and Reid admit that memory plays a central role in our concept of personal identity. But the latter is not to be defined in terms of the former, since this would amount to confusing the evidence for a claim with what is asserted in the claim. The claim is that of the identity of the thinking substance.

Can the identity of such a spiritual substance provide a satisfactory criterion of personal identity? By its very nature, the spiritual substance is unobservable. The only thing which can be said about it is that it is or that it exists. Now this mysterious and unperceivable substance which has no properties of its own is quite unsuitable for providing a criterion of reidentification of persons. Nevertheless, it seems that even if a substantive soul exists, its identity cannot provide a criterion of personal identity.

(ii) Psychological Continuity:

Recently, psychological continuity has been widely regarded as the criterion, that is, as providing both a necessary and a sufficient condition of personal identity in the philosophical discussions on personal identity. Psychological continuity includes similarity of character and personality traits and memories of one's past actions and experiences. In this con-

text, the importance of memory has been emphasized by philosophers time and again. The view that memory is the sole criterion of personal identity can be traced back to John Locke. It is in the works of Locke that we find for the first time a systematic exposition of the memory-criterion.

We know that a person undergoes many changes during his life time. Not only does his physical appearance change but also quite often his personality and character. But this change is gradual and at every stage there remains a fair degree of similarity between his present self and his earlier self. No matter what the changes, as long as there is a fair amount of the degree of similarity, there is continuity of character and personality. Even more important than this continuity is the bond provided by memory. A person can normally remember many events from his past life. Psychological continuity involves both kinds of continuities discussed above.

Similarity of character and personality can neither be said to be a necessary nor a sufficient condition of personal identity. Since a person's character and personality can change drastically, it cannot be a necessary condition. Again two persons existing at the same time may have exactly similar character and personality. Therefore, similarity of character and personality cannot be said to be a sufficient condition of personal identity. Hence there must be some other criterion of personal identity apart from similarity.

Apart from the similarity of character and personality, the really important factor would be memory. What is meant by saying that memory provides the sole criterion of personal identity? It implies that a person at time $T_2$ remembers himself having the experiences that the person at time $T_1$ had and doing the things that the person at $T_1$ did. The memories that are relevant for personal identity are those where on remembers oneself as having experienced or done something. This kind of memory may be called 'memory from the inside' or 'Experience memory'.

From the exposition of Locke's view on personal identity, it is clear that Locke takes memory to be both a necessary and sufficient condition of personal identity. Several objections have been raised against Locke's theory or any theory which regards memory as the sole criterion of personal identity. Joseph Butler raised the objection that to define personal identity in terms of memory is circular. He says:

> "And one should really think it self-evident, that consciousness of personal identity presupposes, and therefore cannot constitute, personal identity; any more than knowledge, in any other case, can constitute truth, which it presupposes."[31]

According to Mackie[32] when one says "I remember do-doing the action X" it is not that he remembers that he did it,

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31. Ibid., page 346.
32. J.L.Mackie, Problems from Locke, Oxford.1976.

rather it expresses a way of remembering the action which if genuine, makes the action his. The memory of one's past actions does not include as a constituent the belief that it was done by the person remembering it. Mackie says that one remembers a past action in a particular way, and then automatically infers that the action was his. The inference may be automatic, nonetheless, it is an inference. Now if we grant the point that Mackie is making then memory criterion can be defended against Butler's objection. But this defence would amount to rejection of the criterion because the identity of a person is not judged on the basis of memory but on some other grounds, i.e., similarity of appearance and behaviour. This clearly goes against Locke's theory and the memory criterion.[33]

If memory is a necessary condition of personal identity, then, the person suffering from amnesia would not be identical with his earlier self. For Locke, the person having amnesia remains the same man but not the same person. To solve the problem of amnesia, some philosophers introduce the notion of 'potential memory' - though a person does not actually remember past events of his life, he can in principle remember them. The introduction of 'potential memory' gives rise to another difficulty, as Mrinal Miri points out:

> "But the notion of potential memory seems obviously to require a prior criterion of personal identity. For, one must, it seems, demand a criterion for

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33. Vibha Chaturvedi, Up.cit., page 64.

> saying, for instance, that someone, X, has potential memories of certain things...And what can the criterion be but that the things X is claiming to have potential memories of should have happened to X, the very same person? But the application of this test would obviously require another, independent, criterion of personal identity." [34]

A strong objection against the psychological continuity criterion comes from the supposed cases of brain-bisection and cases of fusion and fission, from the possibility of there being more than one person, existing at a certain time who satisfy the criterion of being identical with a person existing at an earlier time. This we will discuss in the following chapter. To rule out the possibility of 'splitting', David Wiggins stipulates the following modification in the criterion of personal identity:

> "It would be better....to analyse person in such a way that coincidence under the concept person logically required the continuance in one organised parcel of all that was causally sufficient and causally necessary to the continuance of essential and and characteristic functioning, no autonomously suf-

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34. Mrinal Miri,'Memory and Personal Identity' Mind Vol LXXXII, No.325, Jan 1973. page 4.

ficient part achieving autonomous and functionally separate existence." [35]

(iii) Bodily-Identity:

Bodily Identity has been put forth as a rival criterion to the Psychological continuity criterion in the philosophical literature on the problem of personal identity. Since the body of a person undergoes many changes during his life time, bodily-identity is defined in terms of the spatio-temporal continuity of the body and not its similarity. It is claimed that this criterion is more fundamental than the Psychological continuity criterion. Philosophers like A.J.Ayer, Terence Penelhum and Bernard Williams attach greater importance to spatio-temporal continuity. Ayer, though a supporter of mind-body dualism maintains that personal identity consists in spatio-temporal continuity of the body. He says:

"I am, however, inclined to think that personal identity depends upon the identity of the body, and that a person's ownership of states of consciousness consists in their standing in a special causal relation to the body by which he is identified." [36]

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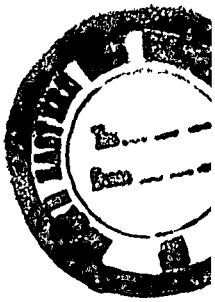
35. D.Wiggins, Identity and Spatio Temporal Continuity, Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 1967. page 55.

36. A.J.Ayer, The Concept of a Person, Macmillan, London. 1968. page 116.

In order to show the insufficiency of Bodily criterion for personal identity, the cases of dead bodies is often used. It is certain that the dead body is not regarded as identical with the person that was, instead, we would regard that the person was no more thought we still have his body. For Terence Penelhum neither a dead body nor a body incapable of exhibiting personality is a person. He says:

> "If we are asking whether X before us, who is a person, is the same as Smith whom we once knew, who was a person, it is a sufficient condition of an affirmative answer to know that X's body is Smith's body." [37]





It may also be argued that cases of split-brain and multiple personality show that bodily identity is not a sufficient condition of personal identity. Suppose a person is absolutely normal person but sometime later he starts exhibiting split or multiple personality. The bodily identity is maintained but it is difficult to say that the person now is the same as the normal person that was like the fiction story of 'Dr.Jekyll and Mr.Hyde'.

The most problematic case for the view that bodily identity is a sufficient condition of personal identity is raised by cases like Brain-transplantation. Suppose X's brain is tranplanted into Y's body and as a result, Y's body wakes up

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37. Terence Penelhum, 'Personal Identity' Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.Ed.Paul Edwards. Vol VI, page 101.

with the memory of X. Now, is it Y who has survived the operation or is it X? It is still the body of Y but it has now the personality and character traits of X and it is very likely that he would say, "I am Mr.X". The Bodily Identity is not sufficient for deciding who, whether X or Y, has survived now.

To be able to give an answer to this, we have to decide whether bodily identity is a necessary condition of personal identity or not. Bernard Williams gives an argument to show that bodily-identity is a necessary condition of personal identity. He, however, does not consider bodily identity as a sufficient condition of personal identity. He says:

> "a question of personal identity is evidently not answered merely by deciding the identity of a certain physical body. If I am asked whether the person in front of me is the same person as one uniquely present at place 'a' at time 't'. I shall not necessarily be justified in answering 'yes' merely because I am justified in saying that this human body is the same as that present at 'a' at 't'. Identity of body is at least not a sufficient condition of personal identity, and other considerations of personal characteristics and, above all, memory must be invoked."[38]

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38. Bernard Williams, 'Personal Identity And Individuation' Problems of the Self, Cambridge University Press.1973.Page 1.

Another case that raises difficulty for bodily identity criterion is the case of fusion. Just as it is possible for one person to divide into two, it is also possible that two persons, say, X and Y, may fuse into one. Let us call the resulting person XY. A supporter of bodily-identity criterion may argue that since the spatio-temporal continuity has been interfered with by the fact of fusion, identity is not preserved and that the application of the criterion would reveal the fusion. If bodily identity is a necessary condition of personal identity, then, change of body or bodily transfer of persons cannot be allowed. That means, it cannot be maintained that a person can occupy numerically different bodies at different times.

A major difficulty for spatio-temporal continuity criterion comes from the supposed cases of a person's survival after bodily death. Belief in such survival is not uncommon, in fact, it is an integral part of many religions. The essential point of all such beliefs and doctrines is that bodily death is not the end of persons; they continue to exist ever after that. P.F. Strawson, a severe critic of Cartesian dualism has admitted the intelligibility of such beliefs, he observes:

> "This is not to say that the concept of a pure individual consciousness might not have a logically secondary existence....We speak of a dead person - a body - and in the same secondary way we might at least think of a disembodied person. A person is

> not an embodied ego, but an ego might be a disembodied person, retaining the logical benefit of individuality from having been a person." [39]

If disembodied existence or survival after bodily death is logically consistent, then there is a difficulty for spatio-temporal continuity criterion. Because then this possibility cannot be ruled out apriori. But if bodily-identity is a necessary condition of personal identity then it becomes self-contradictory to say that persons survive bodily death.

It is often said that no two individuals are exactly alike, every individual is unique and extraordinary. By this we mean that each person is unique and special in personality and character, each one has a unique nature the replica of which cannot be found else where. This uniqueness and distinctive personality is the criterion by which we identify and reidentify persons. Someone shows me the photograph of his room-mate in the hostel and it looks like my friend whom I have not met for many years. In order to find out whether he is my friend or not, then, I enquire more about his nature and personality, his whereabouts, so on and so forth. When I come to learn that he is cool-headed, quiet, very fond of playing football, religious, caring, etc,. Then, I believe that he is none other than my because all the descriptions about his character and personali-

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39. P.F.Strawson, Individuals.
Methuen, London. 1959. page 103.

ty just befit the friend I have known for many years. This is the method we go by for reidentification of persons in our day to day life situations.

We know people undergo changes both psychologically and physically. Our attitudes, our interests, our principles, our character and personality keep on changing. In spite of all these physical and psychological changes, how do we reidentify others, and on what basis do we make such identification and reidentification? Sometimes, the change in a person can be drastic. Say for instance, in Christianity, such a drastic change like the change of mind and heart is known as new birth. Saul of Tarsus saw a vision on the outskirts of Damuscus as a result of which he was totally changed, the Saul who hated Chri Christ and his followers had now become Paul who loved Christ even unto death. He himself said 'It is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me'.

In spite of the radical change mentioned in the life of Paul, there is a sense in which we still hold him as the same person and none other else. On what basis do we say that he was the man who once tried to destroy christianity, he was a man who witnessed the stoning of Stephen, so on. The fact that we take him as the same person before the change or new birth can be explained in terms of 'Spatio-temporal continuity of his body'. We know that two objects cannot be in one place at the

same time, because when it practically becomes possible, they cease to be two, they become one thing. We know our bodies undergo a lot of changes - my bodily appearance now is quite different from that of twenty years ago. But in spite of all these changes, there is spatio-temporal continuity of my body. Since it is logically impossible for two or more than two bodies to occupy the same space at the same time thus remaining distinct from one another, then, we take the body as the same body in spite of the changes. It is this identity of the body which is the determining factor, the criterion of identity of persons in our day to day life. Though psychologically Saul of Tarsus is changed, it is the body which counts for our identification and reidentification of him as the same man in spite of the changes in his life.

We can conclude like this: What am I? What makes me me and what are my boundaries? I am a center of consciousness. Our ordinary concept of consciousness can be captured roughly by the phrases 'From the inside' and 'From the outside'. From the inside, our own consciousness seems obvious and pervasive. Those things of which I am conscious, and the ways in which I am conscious of them, determine 'What it is like to be me'. I know in a way no other could know what it is like to be me. This implies that for the first person perspective, it is memory or psychological continuity which really matters for my identity. Though it may not be sufficient, but it is a necessary

condition for the criterion of personal identity.

On the other hand, when we consider others we consider them perforce 'from the outside'. The fact that we regard others as having 'consciousness' is also done on the basis of outside indicators like they recognize things, avoid painful circumstances, learn, plan and solve problems. These outside indicators are expressed through their bodies. The various 'outside' indicators are more or less reliable signs or symptoms of the presence of that whatever-it-is each conscious subject knows from the inside.

It is the practice of our normal day to day life that we do make identification as well as reidentification of others, had it not been for this practice, life will be full of chaos and confusion. And this practice of identification and reidentification of persons we go by 'Bodily Identity' in general and there are exceptional cases where we need to verify the truth of our reidentification by way of Psychological continuity. Therefore, it is my conclusion in this chapter that since we have not found logically necessary and sufficient criterion of personal identity, it is better to go by our ordinary criterion, that is, bodily identity criterion.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## PARFIT ON SURVIVAL WITHOUT IDENTITY

# CHAPTER IV

## PARFIT ON SURVIVAL WITHOUT IDENTITY

In recent times there has been much discussion in the literature about what would be the case if a person were to split or fuse. The issue about splitting was, as we shall see in this chapter, raised by Derek Parfit, although the question "What if we split like an amoeba?" is probably originally due to Antony Flew,[1] it has been taken up by David Lewis and others. The main problems to which such ideas give rise have to do with how, if at all, one would survive in such circumstances: they are less concerned with identity.

Let us begin by considering about the case of the man who divides like an amoeba. We have seen that with respect to each individual person, a particular body, namely, his own occupies a unique place and significance in relation to his experiences. All the experiences of a person are dependent in a certain way on this particular body. We, therefore, assume that all the experiences that are related in the relevant ways to a particular body are experiences of the person whose body it is and that each body indicates one person. This assumption, however, may be questioned in cases of split or multiple personalities and brain bisection.

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1. Antony Flew, 'Can A Man Witness His Own Funeral?' Meaning and Existence, ed. W.T.Blackstone, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1971.

Philosophers have been recently interested in the cases of Split brain in which the Corpus Collosum which connects the two hemispheres of the brain is removed. After the removal of the Corpus collosum, the two hemispheres become separate units. R.W. Sperry observes:

> "In the surgically separated state, the two hemispheres appear to be independently and often simultaneously co-conscious, each quite oblivious of the opposite hemisphere and also of the incompleteness of its own awareness.... These remarkable indications of a doubling of the psychic machinery in the brain raises a number of new questions.... There are also many intrigueing philosophical implications. When brain is bisected we see two separate 'selves' - essentially a divided organism with two mental units, each with its own memories and its own will-competing for control over the organism."[2]

At another place he says: "Instead of the normally unified single stream of consciousness, these patients behave in many ways as if they have two independent streams of conscious awareness, one in each hemisphere each of which is cut off from and out of contact with the mental experiences of the other. In other words, each hemis-

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2. R.W. Sperry., 'The Great Cerebral Commissure' Scientific American. Jan 1964. p.52.

phere seems to have its own separate and private sensations, its own perceptions, its own concepts and its own impulses to act, with related volitional, cognitive, and learning experiences. Following the surgery, each hemisphere also has thereafter its own separate chain of memories that are rendered inaccessible to the recall process of the other."[3]

It is David Wiggins who has recently dramatized the case of brain bisection by first referring to the operation imagined by Shoemaker.[4] We suppose that my brain is transplanted into someone else's (brainless) body, and that the resulting person has my character and apparent memories of my life. Most of us would agree, after thought, that the resulting person is me. Now Wiggins goes to the extent of imagining his own operation. In such operation, his brain is divided, and each half is housed in a new body. Both resulting people have the character of Wiggins and apparent memories of his life. What happens to the person before the operation? There seem only three possibilities as suggested by Derek Parfit:[5] (i) I do not survive.

(ii) I survive as one of the two people.

(iii) I survive as both.

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3. R.W.Sperry, 'Hemisphere Disconnection And Unity in Conscious Awareness', American Psychologist, 23,1968.p.724.

4. Sydney Shoemaker, Self Knowledge and Self Identity, Allied Publishers, India. 1971. p.22.

5. Derek Parfit, 'Personal Identity' - The Philosophy of Mind, ed.Jonathan Glover.Oxford University Press.1980.pp.143-'44.

(i) I do not survive: The trouble with this is that we agreed that I could survive if my brain were succesfully transplanted. And people have in fact survived with half of their brain destroyed. It seems to follow that I could survive if half of my brain were successfully transplanted and the other half were destroyed. But if this is so, how could I not survive if the other half were also successfully transplanted? How could a double success be a failure?

(ii) I survive as one of the two people: Let us assume that one success is the maximum score and that I shall be one of the resulting people. The trouble here is that according to Wiggins, each half of the brain is exactly similar. So, how can I survive as only one of the two people? What can make me one of them rather than the other?

(Iii) I survive as both: Is it possible for me to survive as both? The whole question depends on what do we mean by 'survive'. Now, if 'survive' implies identity, then the description makes no sense because I cannot survive as two people at the same time. If 'survive' does not imply identity, the description is irrelevant to a problem about identity.

In order to understand Wiggins more clearly, it would be better to see what he means by identity. In his book, 'Identity and Spatio-temporal Continuity'[6] David Wiggins sug-

6. David Wiggins, Identity And Spatio-Temporal Continuity. Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 1967. p.55.

gests that what we want for personal identity is not bodily-identity, nor even for that matter strict identity of some part of the body, but merely the continuance in one organised parcel of whatever is both necessary and sufficient for normal psychological functioning, no part being functionally autonomous. That organised parcel is of course normally the brain, but that is an empirical point and there is no need to commit oneself to that in setting out a general criterion of personal identity. That means, if there is to be personal identity, there must be spatio-temporal continuity of <u>something</u>, and in this dramatized operation, that something is nothing but the brain. Since for Wiggins, spatio-temporal continuity is the criterion of identity, there arises the possibility of identity crisis in the case of brain bisection as he suggested in what we will call "Wiggins's operation".

Derek Parfit suggests that what we have called 'the two resulting people' in Wiggins's operation are not two people. They are one person. I do survive Wiggins's operation. Its effect is to give me two bodies and a divided mind. He suggests that we should use the concept of 'survival' instead of 'Identity' in the cases of fission and fusion. Parfit argues against the belief that a question of personal identity must have a definite answer in every case. He points out that in a dramatized cases of both fission and fusion, the logic of identity breaks down. Hence the concept of identity should be

used only in cases where it is applicable, and in such problem cases like Wiggins's operation the concept of 'survival' should be used. Parfit defines 'survival' in such a way that it does not presuppose identity.

Parfit argues against the notion regarding the special nature of personal identity. He says: "The real issue seems to me no this; does personal identity just consist in bodily and psychological continuity, or is it a further fact, independent of the facts about these continuities? Our reactions to the 'problem cases' show, I think, that we believe the latter. And we seem to believe that in any describable case it must hold either completely or not at all. My main claim is the denial of this further fact."[7]

Out of these two continuities - Spatio-temporal continuity and Psychological continuity - Psychological continuity is what matters most in the issue of personal identity for Derek Parfit. For him, personal identity consists in Psychological continuity of a person. In the previous chapter, we conclude that bodily-identity is a necessary condition of personal identity because psychological continuity criterion is helpless in guarding against the possibility of reduplica-tion. But Parfit takes a different stand of argument. He

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7. Derek Parfit, Op.cit, p.142.

accepts that psychological continuity fails to guard against the threat of reduplication, nevertheless, it is psychological continuity which is important for personal identity. He, therefore, says that where there is no reduplication, psychological continuity is the ground for asserting personal identity. But in the cases where there is reduplication like that of Wiggins's operation, Parfit proposes, we should stop talking about identity and start talking about survival instead.

> "Even if psychological continuity is neither logically, nor always in fact, one-one, it can provide a criterion of identity. For this can appeal to the relation of non-branching psychological continuity, which is logically one-one..."[8]

He also says -

> "if psychological continuity took a branching form, we ought to speak in a new way, regarding what we describe as having the same significance as identity."[9]

Now we have seen that Parfit drops the language of identity and he uses the language of survival as we have mentioned above in the context of Wiggins's operation.

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8. Ibid., p.150.
9. Ibid., p.151.

Parfit argues for the possibility of survival without identity. If a mind was permanently divided and its halves developed in different ways, the point of speaking of one person would start to disappear and Wiggins's case, where there are also two bodies, seems to be over the borderline. After the operation, the two resulting persons, each has all the attributes of a person. Now the two products of the operation could even live at the opposite ends of the earth and we can even imagine that if they later met, they might fail to recognise each other! It would become intolerable to deny that they were different people.

Williams had argued in a similar case that the two resulting people cannot be called identical with the original person since this goes against the logic of identity, not can one of them be called identical with the original since such a decision would be purely arbitrary. Williams concludes that the two resulting people of Wiggins's operation are not identiaal with the original person. But Parfit does not agree with Williams' conclusion. For him, since psychological continuity is more important than bodily identity, it should be taken as ground for personal identity. Among the three alternatives mentioned earlier, Parfit says -

(i) is implausible because if only one of the two resulting people had survived, he would be identical with the original person. If half of the brain were trans-

planted and the other half were destroyed and the person still survived, how could a person would not survive if both halves of his brain were successfully transplanted? 'How could double success be a failure'?[10]

(ii) is also implausible, because since both of the two resulting people are psychologically continuous with the original person in a similar degree, we have no ground for saying that the original person survives as one.

As mentioned earlier, Parfit concludes that only the third alternative (I survive as both) is plausible. We have discussed that we cannot say that both the two resulting people are identical with the original person because that would violate the logic of identity. According to his definition, survival does not necessarily imply identity. That means, there can be survival without identity. The advantage of applying Parfit's concept of survival is that, on the one hand, we do not use the term 'identity' and yet at the same time we are able to do justice to the criterion of psychological continuity. When Williams says that both the two resulting people of Wiggins's operation are exactly similar to the original, it did not bring out clearly the factor of psychological continuity. But when we say as Parfit suggests that the original person survives Wiggins's operation as two people, this problem is solved.

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10. Ibid., p.144.

> "The relation of the original person to each of the resulting people contains all that interests us - all that matters - in any ordinary case of survival. This is why we need a sense in which one person can survive as two."[11]

Parfit mentions three important things about 'Survival':-

(i) Survival does not imply identity.

(ii) What matters in survival are relations of degrees.

(iii) These relations can be described in a way that does not presuppose personal identity.

According to Parfit, 'memory' is the most important particular relation involved in 'survival'. It is a common-sense belief that memory presupposes personal identity because there cannot be memory without someone who remembers. And because of this, Parfit feels the need to introduce a new concept of 'q-memory' - by this he means that a person can remember not only his own experiences but also the experience of others. Whatever I remember like 'hearing a peculiar music' or 'seeing a particular place' etc., if all these memories are the memories of my own experiences, then, they are 'memory proper'; but if they are the memory of someone else's experiences, then, they are 'q-memories'. Thus in the case of Wiggins's operation, both the two resulting people would be said to 'q-remember' the experiences of the original person.

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11. Ibid., p.148.

Factors like intentions, recognition, being a witness of, having ambitions, making promises and responsibility, etc., are important for psychological continuity. Just as we can develop a sense of memory (q-memory) which does not presuppose personal identity, similarly, we can define the factors mentioned above in such a way that they do not presuppose personal identity. Parfit develops new concepts like - 'q-intentions' 'q-recognitions' 'having q-ambitions' 'make q-promises' and 'being q-responsible'. This way of defining would enable us to talk of one person surviving as two.

Another important feature of survival, according to Parfit, is that survival is a matter of degree. Identity does not admit of degree, identity is a matter of all or nothing. But survival, for Parfit, admits of degrees. The necessity of this feature of survival is emphasised when we consider the supposed cases of fusion.

> "Just as division serves to show that what matters in survival need not be one-one, so fusion serves to show that it can be a question of degree."[12]

In his book 'The Character of the Mind'[13] Collin McGinn discusses the possibility of survival without identity. Is brain division tantamount, in respect of survival, to brain destruction? If fission is not as lamentable as death, then

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12. Ibid., p.154.

13. Collin McGinn, The Character of Mind, Oxford University Press. 1982. pp.116-117.

there can be personal survival without continuing personal identity. Fission cases thus appear to suggest that the self can continue to be - can persist - by virtue of relations to future selves which are not relations of identity.

McGinn cites the example of fusion to underline the possibility of survival without identity. Suppose one hemisphere of your brain is detached and preserved while the other is destroyed. And suppose the same thing is done to someone else's brain (to avoid complications we can suppose the two persons to be psychologically similar); suppose further that the two preserved hemispheres are hooked up to one another in the usual way, so that a person results.

Say for instance, a person A and a person B undergo the operation. The left hemisphere of A's brain and the right hemisphere of B's brain are hooked up to one another in the body, say, a person C. In a sense, two different people are fused into one person. We cannot identify the resulting person with either of the originals, because they are distinct from each other and each has equal claim to identity with the future person. If we do not regard this kind of fusion as equivalent to death, then, we allow the survival without identity.

Cases of personal fission and fusion may be usefully compared with the fission and fusion of entities of other kinds, and from this we can make the decision whether there is

possibility for survival without personal identity or not. Suppose a plant is cut into two and the two halves grown separately so as to produce two plants of the same kind as the original. Again the logic of identity prohibits us from describing the relation between the original plant and the resulting plants as identity. Anyway, there is enough reason to say that the original plant persists as two plants.

We can also suppose that two plants are halved and a pair of these halves grafted together to give a new plant. There is no identity between the fused plant and the plants it fused from. But it would not be wrong to say that the originals have in some way persisted in the fused plant. When we examine the intuition of survival without identity, this is what we find out: the parts of the original plant still exist when they have been separated from other parts of the plant. Indeed it is true to say that there is a relation of identity between whole plants and parts of other plants.

An object survives if the whole of it survives, and it may also survive if its parts survive. The part-whole relation is also crucial in the cases of brain surgery. Your brain in a fission case survives because parts of it are identical with future brains, and in fusion case, the future brain has as its parts the parts of earlier brains. In just the sense in which the plants can persist through separation and recombination of parts, the brain can do likewise.

In a case of fusion two bodies become one and similarly in the case of brain fusion, it may be supposed that there is psychological fusion of the two persons, Now the resulting person from the fusion of the two, would 'q-remember' living the lives of both the earlier persons. And then what happens to the character and personality traits of the earlier persons? Can they be supposed to fuse perfectly? It seems that the two persons cannot fuse perfectly into one new person because of their difference in character traits, desires and intentions, etc. What is Parfit's answer to this problem, he says:

> "Some of these will be compatible. These can co-exist in the one resulting person. Some will be incompatible. These, if of equal strength, can cancel out, and if of different strengths, the stronger can be made weaker. And all these effects might be predictable."[14]

In the case of fission, the two resulting persons can be exactly similar psychologically with the original person. But in the case of fusion, the resulting person can never be exactly similar psychologically with the original persons, because in the process of fusion, some of the characters must have changed. Now if that were the case, then, the two original persons seem to have not survived as the resulting person

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14. Derek Parfit, Op.cit, p.154.

and it does not seem plausible to say that they have not survived. As mentioned earlier, for Parfit, survival is a matter of degree - now if we admit this conception, there is no difficulty in saying that in the case of fusion the two original persons have survived the operation of fusion. That is why Parfit says:

> "I have suggested that fusion, while not clearly survival, is not clearly failure to survive, and hence that what matters in survival can have degrees."[15]

With the help of an example, Parfit tries to reinforce this new conception of survival as a matter of degree. Now there are imaginary beings who are like persons in all respects, their only difference is that they reproduce by a process of division. There is, say, a person A. He divides into B+1 and B+2. Now B+1 after sometime divides into B+3 and B+4; and in the same way, B+2 also divides into B+5 and B+6. The process goes on like that until, say, the division amounts to 30 in number. Now Parfit says that the person A be psychologically continuous not only with B+1 and B+2 but also with all the members arising out of the division of each of these till the member B+30. The degree of psychological continuity of person A would go on diminishing as it go down from B+1 and B+2

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15. Ibid., p.155.

to B+29 and B+30. Still then, we can say that person A survives even though his survival is a matter of degree. Parfit, by introducing the conception of survival as a matter of degree, can use the language of survival in the cases of both fusion as well as division. In the light of this new language of survival, I can talk about my 'Ancestral self' and my 'Future self' without implying that I am identical with them.

D.W.Hamlyn in 'Metaphysics'[16] said in connection with Wiggins's operation that there is a sense in which the original person has not survived. It remains perfectly correct to say that he has survived, and it is reasonable to believe that he would think so too, whatever he might take the content of that suggestion to be. What would he have said if he had known that these changes were to take place? Once again, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that he would think he would survive the changes, however, extreme these were. What if he were told that he would cease to exist and be replaced by someone just like him with all the same 'memories', personality, etc.? Some philosophers seem to think that there would be no difference as far as he was concerned from what happens in the ordinary way when we go to sleep, for example: there would be no difference between the ordinary case of my waking up and the waking up of someone just like me.

It is Schopenhauer who says that sleep is a con-

16. D.W.Hamlyn, 'Persons and Personal Identity' Metaphysics. pp.213-215.

stant preparation for death. We can suppose that when we go to sleep at night we wake up as a person who is exactly similar to the one who went to sleep. We can also suppose that we die every night and someone who is exactly similar is created to wake up in the morning. Some might say that what we have in that supposition is a matter of similarity and not a matter of identity.

Parfit makes a distinction between questions about identity and questions about survival as to solve the problem of whether one would survive if one were replaced by someone exactly similar and whether one should think that one would survive. According to him, Identity is one-one relation and it is applicable only in such cases where we have a relation which is one-one. Identity is not applicable in the case where we have a relation of one-many. In this latter case, according to Parfit, survival is applicable because the relation is one-two. As mentioned before, according to Parfit, survival does not imply identity and it is a matter of degree.

Now we can argue if degree of survival goes with degree of mental connectedness, then where it seems likely that there will be little mental connectedness, little, fore example, in the way of memory of one's past, there is likely to be a low degree of survival. Say for example, Methuselah of the Bible lived for 969 years; it would be difficult for him to remember his experiences of the early part of his life at the end of his life. If that were the case and if survival is a

matter of degree, then Methuselah at the end of his long life would not have survived.

Ordinarily since one would not agree with such argument, so it seems there is a certain degree of conceptual legislation in what Parfit has to say. Wiggins has provided some splendid comment on the whole issue.[17] Suppose if someone were told that tomorrow there would certainly be no one who was him but there would be someone related to him by Parfit's relation of mental connectedness, what would the one concerned would think of it? Wiggins suggests that what people would think and whether they would accept the 'offer' is not relevant to the issue. The fact that people have desire to leave a memorial or something of the sort can be taken as typical accommodations to the certainty of death. Hamlyn mentions that he would prefer a low degree of survival to death:

> "To me at least it is not clear how much more there would be to the possession of mentally connected descendants than there is in these more etiolated forms of survival. Indeed I think that I myself prefer the more etiolated forms. What I am certain about is that I do not see how the offer of all these things, Parfitian or etiolated, can be taken for a proper surrogate(equivalent at the level of

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17. David Wiggins, 'The Concern to Survive', Midwest Studies in Philosophy. Vol 4.1979. pp.417-422

imagination, conception and desire) for the continued existence of the one and only person who is me. Unless, of course, I no longer want that continued existence - in which case the etiolated forms of survival are again not equal or tantamount, but simply better." [18]

Now Hamlyn argues that questions about the identity of the self, as distinct from questions about the identity of myself or yourself, admit only of formal answer. The continued existence of a self is the continued existence of whatever has, or owns, a stream of consciousness and, usually but not of logical necessity, a body subject to the changes that bodies normally undergo. When it ceases to exist there may remain a body which is not then 'owned' by anything, and there is no consciousness belonging to whatever had it before. There is, however, no way of breaking down that 'I', that owner of consciousness and body, into the characteristics of what it owns, in such a way as to make it analysable in such terms. To that extent the notion of a self is unanalysable in a way that the notion of a person is not.[19]

In agreeing that a person may survive in cases of fission and fusion are we tacitly conceiving the person strictly on the model of his brain - and if we are, is this legiti-

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18. Ibid.,
19. D.W.Hamlyn, Op.cit, p.216.

mate? That is, are we regarding the self as subject to the same principles, with respect to the connection between survival and the part-whole relation, as these other non-personal entities? If we are, then we are presupposing a certain conception of the constitution of the self, and the question must arise whether this conception is really acceptable.

Collin McGinn[20] observes that it is important, in considering the question raised above, to appreciate that the intuition of personal survival is not satisfactorily explained in terms of psychological similarity and causal connectedness theories of the self, we cannot accept this account of what survival amounts to in the fission and fusion cases; indeed such an account of survival in the personal case is even less plausible than for the analogous fission and fusion cases involving material objects. The relation of being a part of an earlier object is a far stronger relation than that of having states which are causally connected with states of some earlier object.

Self is a simple substance according to our ordinary notion and it is not divisible. In the case of fission, the resulting persons are conceived as leterally parts of the original and in the case of fusion, the resulting person is being taken to have the earlier persons as parts. This will, it seems, amount to conceiving persons in the image of their brains. In

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20. Collin McGinn., Op.cit, pp.117-122.

other words, it is equivalent to saying that Self can be divided into parts or into sub-selves, as brains and plants may be so divided. This is to suppose that Self has self-like parts which can be divided into other selves. Since it is our ordinary belief that Self is a simple substance and hence indivisible; then, the suggestion that Self has divisible self-like parts is something we are made to believe only through reflection on fission and fusion cases. Now it seems that it is necessary for us to review and revise our conception of the constitution of the self.

It is the argument of McGinn against survival of Wiggins's operation, if we continue to hold on to our ordinary concept of the self, that is, the self is so constituted that it could not be literally divided - then, in being non-composite, it is not the sort of entity that can admit of detachment and separation of its parts. In the so called fission and fusion cases, the resulting selves are quite new selves, not made up of the parts of old selves. By splitting a person's brain, we do not split the person into two, rather, we create two totally new selves. Similarly, when we fuse two brains or brain parts into a single self, a new self is resulted. This will be the interpretation of fission and fusion cases of a person in the light of the ordinary naive conception of the constitution of the self.

The problem arises when we imagine the case where

the divisibility of a self increases in numbers: suppose person A brain has just one hemisphere capable of sustaining a self, and the brain of person B has two hemispheres, and that of person C has twenty nine, and that of D has fifty and that of E has a thousand - it is the case that the self of each of these creatures is capable of producing as many non-identical survivors as the number of parts their brains have. Now it begins to seem even more like making new selves out of bits of the old brain.

The problem arises from our prior commitment to the simplicity of the self and depending on this commitment we can explain why preservation of both hemispheres as in the case of fission might be reasonably viewed as less like survival than preserving just one because fission case requires us to regard the self as divisible, whereas the latter does not. Therefore, in view of the ordinary naive conception of the self, a double success can be considered a failure, and it must be rather considered as the creation of totally new selves.

McGinn observes that the simplicity of the self is analogous to the subjectivity of sensations. It is our ordinary concept that sensations are subjective in a way no merely physical state could be; yet we also believe that sensations must in some way depend on physical properties of the brain - so we have a clash between two ways of thinking about sensations. Similarly, our concept of the self tells us that it is

a simple substance, but we also believe the self to depend upon the brain which is a complex divisible substance. Conceptually thinking, the self cannot be divided, but when we think of it in terms of its physical entity, we are compelled to suppose that this simplicity is in some way illusory. Now the choice is: to revise our concept of self or to ignore the considerations drawn from the physical facts about the brain.

The nearest thing to an argument for abandoning the naive conception of the self, McGinn concludes, stems from the considerations about brain division we grappled with; but the diagnoses we gave of those considerations should make us cautious about recklessly throwing over such a pervasive and important notion as that of the self. Short of a direct demonstration of incoherence in the naive conception of the self, we therefore seem entitled - or perhaps driven - to the conclusion that the self should be conceived as a simple mental substance whose identity over time is primitive and irreducible.

Parfit, we saw, takes psychological continuity to be more basic than bodily-identity in the context of personal identity. According to him, identity is simply "non branching psychological continuity". The emphasis on psychological continuity seems to stem from the belief that persons are special in virtue of their possession of psychological capacities of memory, intention, thinking, etc. But from this it does not follow that their identity consists in the continuity of such

capacities alone. Even if persons are special in this respect yet the criterion of identity need not necessarily be different from the criterion of identity of other living things or even of non-living things. Thus it does not seem obvious that psychological continuity is more basis than bodily-identity for questions of personal identity. If by 'person' is meant a psycho-physical being then it is not correct to disregard the factor of bodily-continuity completely.[21]

Parfit's claim that most of the relations that matter for psychological continuity can be defined in such a way that they do not presuppose personal identity, also seems doubtful. We have seen that even the introduction of 'q-memory' does not clearly specify the relationship between the original experience and its 'q-memory'. The relationship cannot be exactly the same as the one that holds between an experience and its memory, nor can it be something totally different because then there is no justification for using the term 'memory'. When it comes to intending, recognising and other factors, it seems even more doubtful that they can be defined without presupposing personal identity. But suppose we grant that this can be done, even then other difficulties would arise. Once we accept that a person can 'q-remember' another person's experiences, can intend or desire another person's intentions or desires, there does not seem any justification for taking continuity of these characteristics as ground for personal identity.

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21. Vibha Chaturvedi: 'Puzzle cases, Difficulties and Reinterpretations'. The Problem of Personal Identity. Ajanta Publications. Delhi. 1988. p. 130.

However, Parfit is not primarily concerned with identity, his primary concern seems to be continuity of psychological characteristics itself and finding a concept which, while not presupposing identity can do justice to psychological continuity between persons. Here he seems right to the extent that if a person B can q-remember another person A's experiences, actions, intentions, etc. then A survives in B. However, this survival cannot be equivalent to nor can do justice to all the aspects of the concept of personal identity. Parfit seems to think that personal identity itself is of no great significance and what matters is simply survival of a person in terms of psychological continuity. One factor which is guaranteed by personal identity, that is, uniqueness is not guaranteed in survival. One and only person at a later time can be identical with a person at an earlier time but one person can survive as many. It is one thing for a person to continue to exist and another thing to have a psychological replica or replicas. Hence it is not correct to say that survival preserves all that matters in a normal case of personal identity. In a normal case of personal identity, not only psychological continuity is maintained but spatio-temporal continuity is also there. Further it is not the case that only psychological continuity matters for personal identity, similarity and continuity of the facial and physical features and continuity of the body also, we think, will contribute to survival of a person. After all we do regard the similarity of one's children with oneself as an extension of oneself.[22]

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22. Ibid., pp.130-131.

We can come to conclude like this: What Derek Parfit suggests in favour of abandoning the language of identity in problem cases and adopting the language of survival instead has some merit. If a person can split like an amoeba as suggested by Wiggins, into two or more than two, and if two persons can fuse with each other and become one person, it is evident that in such cases of both fission and fusion, the resulting person or persons cannot be considered identical with the original person or persons. The concept of 'survival' can be useful for describing the relationship between the person involved. But here, not only psychological continuity but spatio-temporal continuity would also be relevant.

As mentioned earlier, the concept of person or the concept of the constitution of the self plays a very crucial role here in the cases of fission and fusion. In our ordinary notion of the self, a person is a simple substance and is not divisible. If we try to understand Wiggins's operation, both fission and fusion, in the light of our ordinary notion of the self as a simple substance, we face a contradiction. If we are to preserve our ordinary notion of the self as indivisible substance, then, we need to revise the concept of survival to conform the notion of the self. And if we decide to make survival of a person in both cases of fusion and fission possible, then, we need to revise the ordinary concept of self in such a way that it makes survival without identity intelligible. Now in view of the fact tha the concept of person is of a psycho-

physical being and that both psychological and spatio-temporal continuity of the body are deeply embedded in the concept of personal identity, the concept of survival needs modification which Parfit does.

From what Parfit has suggested, we have learnt that what fundamentally matters in survival is 'Psychological continuity' of a person. As long as there is psychological continuity like memory, intention, interests, attitudes, etc. we hust cannot deny that a person survives Wiggins's operation. That implies that the original person survives the operation as two people. Since according to Parfit, identity is one-one relation and in Wiggins's case, the relation of the original person and the two resulting people is one-two, identity is not applicable. Then, it implies that there is possibility of survival without identity.

Psychological continuity presupposes spatio-temporal continuity of something, say, for example, self-consciousness of a person. By Self-consciousness what I mean is the integrating power of a person which not only brings all the experiences of a person together as a single unitary experiences belonging to one individual person, it also has the power to be conscious of itself which we call 'Self-consciousness'. In the light of this integrating power, we can talk about all the experiences as belonging to one single being. If I do not have this Self-awareness or Self-consciousness, then, all my experiences will just be a matter of history, not a matter of

my experiences belonging to myself only. It is this Self-consciousness which gives me an integrating power by means of which all my experiences, past and present are united as 'my experiences'.

Now it is clear that what is necessary for survival of a person is that there must be psychological continuity of that person after, say, operation. Without psychological continuity, survival makes no sense, in Wiggins's operation in particular. If this were the case, then, Psychological continuity is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion of survival. We have said that psychological continuity presupposes spatio-temporal continuity of something, that is, consciousness by which a person can have self-awareness or self-consciousness. This Self-consciousness is the very element which makes a person a person.

In the previous chapter I have discussed that Psychological continuity alone is not sufficient for the criterion of personal identity and it is our conclusion that it is better to go back to the criterion of personal identity in our normal day to day life's situations and hold on to it, which is, Bodily-identity of a person. Since psychological continuity is a necessary element in survival, as long as there is psychological continuity of the original person, we cannot deny that he survives Wiggins's operation. But since, it is by bodily-identity criterion we make judgments of personal identity in our day to day life, it is not applicable in Wiggins's case. Hence,

the original person survives the operation without identity.

Wiggins[23] rejects the view that there are two independent and conflicting criteria of personal identity. According to him, the memory criterion, when based upon a causal view of memory, gives us the kind of spatio-temporal continuity which is required for personal identity. For him, no adequate criterion of identity of persons can be given without taking into account the factor of continuity of memory and character. His notion of person implies this. He says:

> "What interests memory-theorists and what bodily theorists ignore is something which is surely both central to the notion of a person and utterly distinctive of it..... an individual's memory of some sufficient number of the things which have happened to him. To be a person(in any unattenuated sense of the word) is to be capable of believing and ceasing to believe things on evidence, which in its turn requires the possibility of memory of experience. One can be forgetful and enjoy the status of person. But one must have the biological potentiality of experience-memory of a sufficiently sophisticated sort." [24]

Wiggins regards only the identity of brain to be relevant in the context of personal identity and not the identity

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23. David Wiggins, Identity And Spatio Temporal Continuity, Basil Blackwell. Oxford. 1967.

24. Ibid, page 49.

of the whole body. The reason is that the bodily-identity criterion "left the functional memory criteria wholly unexplained and at some points it gave the wrong criterion of identity for persons."[25] Perhaps, Wiggins picks on brain because it is "functionally relevant bodily matter". He thinks that in his theory he has taken care of both the spatio-temporal continuity factor and the factor of psychological-continuity specially person's characteristic capacity of memory.

In the cases of fission and fusion we have discussed, we have faced a severe problem regarding personal identity. We have discovered that even though the brain gives a sufficient psychological continuity of a person, it does not serve as a sufficient criterion for personal identity. Does the admission that our concept of personal identity fails to give an intuitively obvious and universally acceptable answer in the cases of fusion and fission imply that the concept is defective in some way and needs a revision or that it should be replaced by another and better concept?

Derek Parfit suggests that we should use the concept of 'survival' instead of 'identity' in the problem cases of both fission and fusion. He points out that in the imagined cases of fission and fusion, the logic of identity breaks down. Hence we should use the concept of identity in cases where it is applica-

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25. Ibid, page 54.

ble, and in such problem cases we should use the concept of 'survival'. Parfit defines 'survival' in such a way that it does not presuppose identity.

Out of the two kinds of continuities, what matters in the context of personal identity, according to Parfit, is psychological continuity. We have just discussed that psychological continuity-criterion is not able to guard against the possibility of reduplication. Parfit grants the importance of psychological continuity as a criterion of personal identity but it has its drawback because it is open to the threat of reduplication. Therefore, he proposes that where there is no reduplication, psychological continuity is the ground for asserting personal identity, but in the cases where there is reduplication, we should stop talking about identity and start talking about survival instead. He says:

> "Even if psychological continuity is neither logically, nor always in fact, one-one, it can provide a criterion of identity. For this can appeal to the relation of non-branching psychological continuity, which is logically one-one....." [26]

> "If psychological continuity took a branching form, we ought to speak in a new way, regarding what we describe as having the same significance as identity." [27]

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26. Derek Parfit, Personal Identity, Op.cit, page 150.
27. Ibid, page 151.

About 'survival' Parfit mentions three important things: (i) Survival does not imply identity.

(ii) What matters in survival are relations of degrees,

(iii) These relations can be described in a way that does not presuppose identity.

The most important particular relation involved in 'survival' according to Parfit is 'memory'. It is commonly believed that memory presupposes personal identity. Therefore, Parfit introduces a new concept of 'Q-memory' about which it is not a logical truth that a person can remember only his own experiences. Thus in the case of brain-bisection, the two resulting persons would be said to 'Q-remember' the experiences of the original person. Second important feature of survival, according to Parfit, is that survival is a matter of degrees. Identity is a matter of all-or-nothing, it does not admit of degree; but, for Parfit, survival does admit of degrees.

Parfit's suggestion in favour of abandoning the language of identity in problem cases and adopting the language of survival instead has some merit. If a person can split like amoeba, into two, or, two persons can fuse and become one, it is obvious that in such cases the persons or person resulting from fission and fusion cannot be regarded identical with the original person or persons. The concept of 'survival' can be useful for describing the relationship between the persons involved. But here not only psychological continuity but spatio-

temporal continuity would also be relevant.[28]

The imagined cases like fission and fusion we have discussed so far have highlighted various aspects of the problem of personal identity and they also help us to see the implications of a proposed criterion. We know that our concepts relating to different objects and subjects of day to day life have been formed against the background of certain network of facts that obtain in the world. If these facts undergo a radical change, then, our concepts would also break down. Even thought concepts can be stretched to a certain extent to meet new requirements, but since there is a limit to this stretching, it cannot deal with all kinds of unforeseen and imaginable situations. If a radical change in the facts takes place, then, we have to modify our concepts also. However, in the present circumstances the concept of personal identity does not need a revision or a modification.

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28. Vibha Chaturvedi, Op.cit, page 131.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# CONCLUSION

# CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

In the beginning I have said that there are two questions which philosophers seem to have discussed ever since the time of Locke and Descartes under the title 'Personal Identity'. These questions as I have mentioned are different but related in nature. One is the question about the unity of the Self and the other is the question about its Identity. The former question arises from the observation that a vast variety of experiences - sensations, desires, thoughts, emotions, etc., seem to be united in a person, they are all his experiences, exist in a single mind. What is it that unites all these experiences? Is it something that relates them to one another in some specific manner? Or is it so by virtue of their relation to an entity which is not an experience, namely, a Self or a Brain or some other entities?

The question about Identity, on the other hand, arises from certain unusual cases imagined both by philosophers and science fiction writers, such as the cases of re-incarnation or brain-transplantation. These cases raise the question how, in principle, we should settle disputes about personal Identity. In effect, it asks for what is essential to a person being the person he is.

I have attempted in this dissertation to show that not only these two questions are different, but when the question about Identity is settled, the question about Unity appears to be a spurious one. That means, the question about Identity is more fundamental than the question about Unity of the Self. In other words, the question of Identity already includes the question of Unity of mind or self. Therefore, if the question about Identity is answered, then, automatically the question about the Unity of the mind will be solved.

In the Second Chapter, I dealt with the question about Unity of the mind with special reference to David Hume and his followers. The question raised by Hume is: 'What unites a person's past experiences with his present experiences?'. Now, if this question is satisfactorily answered, the question about Identity will be solved automatically - that is what Hume expected. The Unity question raised by Hume requires us to spell out what is common to the great variety of experiences which we have in day to day life, that means, what is common will be what unites a person's experiences as belonging to him only.

We have discussed that some philosophers tried to solve this Unity question by saying that the unity of a person's experiences consists in the fact that the experiences are related to one another in a particular way, say for example, Causality. There are other group of philosophers who explained the unity of experiences in terms of a being or a self or a brain

to which all the experiences of a person belong.

David Hume rejected the ordinary notion of a Self as an entity which owns all the experiences of a person. For him, a Soul or a Self is nothing but a mere philosopher's invention. If there really exists the so called Self, according to Hume, it must be subject to sense-experience; and since, there is no such thing which can be seen, touched or felt with our senses, then Hume argues that there is no such thing called a self (even if there is, it cannot be experienced with our senses and if it is not subject to sense-experience we have no guarantee for its existence). The myth of a Self or a Being, according to Hume, is just a mere logical construction of the mind to make the unity of all experiences of a person intelligible and reasonable - when we 'see' perceptions, ideas and sensations going on in the mind, we conclude that there must be a continued and uninterrupted entity to which all these experiences belong and we call this supposed entity, a Self. If there really is a Self, Hume argues, it must be subject to sense-experience but since there is no such thing when we look into ourselves except those perceptions and sensations going on in the mind, then, we cannot conclusively say there is Self. Being an empiricist, the criterion of truth for Hume is sense-experience, whatever is not subject to sense-experience cannot be considered as existent.

According to David Hume, there are only three rela-

tion that can produce a 'Union in the imagination' between ideas and those relations are: Resemblance, Contiguity and Causation. They are, for Hume, 'Natural relations' of ideas, in the mind. I see a book lying on my table. The next day I see a book which resembles the one I saw yesterday lying on the same place and the third day also I see a book which resembles the book I saw yesterday and day before. Then, I come to the conclusion that all these perceptions of the book on different days, owing to their resemblance with one another must come from one book. Our idea of identity, according to Hume, has its foundation in 'resemblance' in our different and unique perceptions.

Ordinarily we consider that for something to be the cause of something else, it must touch it, be spatially connected to it. In order to make a football move, it must be kicked by my foot. In the same way, when we examine our perceptions, the 'seemingly external objects' seem to be the cause of our perceptions because every time we have perceptions, they are there. Then, we come to conclude that our perceptions are caused by these 'external objects' and therefore, they are there in the external world. Thus, Contiguity for Hume is one of the natural relations with which we logically explain the perceptions and sensations as caused by external objects.

Causation, according to Hume, is a necessary connection. By this he means, the relation between cause and effect

is necessary. For example, the cause necessarily produces the effect. We have the idea of a necessary connection between a particular cause and effect, according to Hume, after we experience their conjunction repeatedly. He calls this 'constant conjunction'. The idea of necessary connection, Hume says, between cause and effect is not in the objects we observe, but in the mind. Therefore, it is subjective in nature.

In the Second Chapter, I argued against Hume's attempt to explain and solve identity question by explaining the unity of our experiences in terms of psychological laws of association in general and causation in particular. Since it is his attempt to answer the identity question by answering the unity question, then, when he explains the unity question in terms of causation, it amounts to an assumption that a person is the same thing as the bond among his perceptions, which cannot be accepted because it contradicts our ordinary notion of the Self. Hume's argument, it seems, assumes that the identity question is the same thing as the unity question. It is my argument that they are not. When we pronounce the judgement concerning personal identity of a person, we do this on the basis of what can be seen and heard of that person, not on the basis of the unity of his perceptions. It was my conclusion of the Second Chapter that any philosophical theory of personal identity must take 'physical existence' of a person into account which Hume, as we have found, ignores under the spell of Cartesianism.

In the third Chapter under the title 'Criteria of Personal Identity' I have discussed at great length the different theories of criteria of personal identity. Questions of identity arise whenever we think and talk about the existence of persons over a period of time. We often make statements like 'This is my friend John who is my best friend ever since my childhood' and 'This is my teacher David about whom I often talked' so on and so forth. To reidentify a person is to imply that in spite of the changes and lapse of time, that person has remained the same. What makes a person the same over a period of time is the question of personal identity. The problem of personal identity is the problem of clarifying what personal identity consists in and what the criteria behind reidentifications of persons are.

Every individual undergoes changes - both physical and psychological. Physically we keep on changing right from the time of our birth till the time we die, we keep on changing in our physical appearances. Similarly, out attitudes, our beliefs and interests, our psychological-makings, etc., undergo a lot of changes too. What changes can be allowed and what changes cannot be allowed in order to preserve the identity of a person is the question I have dealt with in the Third Chapter.

In an attempt to find out the 'logically necessary and sufficient' condition of personal identity criterion, I have discussed different theories and opinions regarding perso-

nal identity criterion. The notion of criterion, I have said, is ambiguous between the idea of telling that a certain sort of fact obtains, and the idea of what is constitutive of its obtaining. The former is an epistemological idea and the latter is a metaphysical one. In application to personal identity, the distinction is between the evidence we use to judge of personal identity over time, and our conception of what this is evidence for.

In most of the discussions of personal identity, the term 'criterion' is used in the sense of logically necessary and sufficient condition. A question about the criterion of personal identity is a question about the necessary and sufficient condition of personal identity, that is, of saying correctly that Person $P_2$ at time $T_2$ is the same person as $P_1$ at time $T_1$. This implies that necessary and sufficient conditions follow from something that is necessary part of the concept of a person. That means, if we say that the concept of a person is unanalysable, we are likely to reject the attempt to provide necessary and sufficient conditions of personal identity, at least, on the basis of something about the concept itself. If this were the case, then, the question about the conditions of personal identity has its basis in the concept of a person itself and vice versa.

In the end of the Third Chapter, however, I have mentioned that though it seems that criteria of personal identity

and the concept of a person appear to be the two sides of the same coin, but in fact, they are not. They can be separated from each other. This implies that what is a fundamental necessity in our concept of a person may not be a necessary criterion of personal identity and also, what matters as a necessary and sufficient condition for judgment of personal identity may not be necessarily inherent in the conceptual framework of what a person is. In other words, without the condition on which the criterion of personal identity rests, the concept of a person may still be meaningful.

There are various criteria of personal identity proposed by different philosophers. Philosophers who accept the existence of a substantive soul generally take the identity of this soul as the criterion of personal identity. On the other hand, those philosophers who deny the existence of the substantive soul explain personal identity either in terms of relations between experiences especially memory, or in terms of relation of experiences with a body. In modern times, two criteria, namely, psychological continuity and bodily-identity, dominate the others in philosophical discussion regarding personal identity.

After thoroughly examining different theories of criteria of personal identity, we have found that there is no single criterion which is both logically necessary and sufficient. All the theories we have discussed have some drawbacks. Having

found no logically necessary and sufficient criterion, I have concluded that it is better to go back to our ordinary criterion of personal identity in our day to day life. That is, the criterion of bodily-identity.

How do we know that Person $P_2$ at time $T_2$ is the same as Person $P_1$ at time $T_1$ in spite of all the changes involved both physically and psychologically? It is the 'Spatio-temporal Continuity' of the person's body over time which makes us consider the same person. This is the way we identify and reidentify a person as the same over a period of time in our day to day life. Therefore, it is 'Bodily-identity' which serves as a sufficient, though not necessarily, criterion of personal identity in ordinary life situations.

In our every day life's situations as we interact with one another, without this practice of identification and reidentification, our life will be full of chaos and confusion. We do think and talk about identity of persons and we have to have the criterion by which we reidentify a person and this, we go by bodily-identity. We have discussed different theories and we have found out there is no single criterion which is logically necessary and sufficient for personal identity. Therefore, in spite of its insufficiency, bodily-identity is a necessary criterion of personal identity as far as this physical existence on the earth is concerned.

In the Fourth Chapter, I discussed whether there is any possibility of survival without identity with special reference to Derek Parfit. David Wiggins has dramatized a case of brain bisection in which the two hemispheres of a person's brain is divided and they are housed in different bodies thus resulting into two persons having the same memories of the original person. The question arises: which of the two persons is the original person? Or, what happen to the original person? There seem only three possibilities as suggested by Derek Parfit:

(i) The original person does not survive.

(ii) The original person survives as one of the two.

(iii) The original person survives as both.

For Parfit, the third possibility is the most likely possible case.

From what Parfit has suggested, we have learnt that what matters in survival is 'Psychological continuity' of a person. As long as there is psychological continuity like memory, intention, interests, attitudes, etc., we just cannot deny that a person survives Wiggins's operation. That implies that the original person survives Wiggins's operation as two people. Since for Parfit, identity is one-one relation, in the case of Wiggins' operation, the relation between the original person and the resulting people is one-two, identity cannot be applied or talked about. If this were the case, the original person survives without identity. This means, there is possibility of survival without identity.

Now going back to the question raised in the Introduction: What unites a person's experiences? Is it something that relates them to one another in some specific manner? Or, is it so by virtue of their relation to an entities which is not an experience, namely, a Self or a Brain or some other entities? As I have said in the beginning, if the question about Identity is sucessfully dealt with, then, the question about the Unity of a person's experiences will be automatically rendered spurious. Now let us see how this is so.

What is it for a being to be a person? What are the conditions that must be met for a being to be a person? What distinguishes human beings from things of nature and other beings is their highly developed capacity for thought, feelings and deliberate or intentional action. Some of these capacities may be found in animals in a limited way, but the full blown development that is found in men is something distinctive of them. Men have minds. I am conscious of my surroundings; and not only that, I am capable of having self-consciousness. This is what makes human beings distinct from the rest of animals. It is doubtful that a dog knows that it is a dog in the same way we humans know that we are humans. The condition for a being to be a person is the power of self-consciousness. A person knows that he is a person.

I know in a way no other could know what it is like to be me. From the inside, consciousness seems to be all-or-

nothing phenomenon - an inner light that is either on or off. Even though we talk about sub-consciousness or half-consciousness, and on occasion we even experience abnormally heightened consciousness, but when we are conscious, that we are conscious is not a fact that admits of degrees. There is a view, then, from which consciousness seems to be an element that sunders the Universe into two strikingly different kinds of things - those that have it and those that do not. Those that have it are subjects, beings to whom things can be one way or another, beings it is like something to be. It is not like anything at all to be a Rock or a book or an apple. These things have insides - but not the right sort of insides, no inner life, no point of view.

Now we have said that we human beings are different because we have a unique capacity of knowing who and what we are in a way no other beings can know themselves. In other words, in order for a being to be 'self' or 'person' it is not only necessary to have mental attributes but also self-consciousness. It is very unlikely to think of creatures lacking self-consciousness as having mental states proper.

Is it reasonable to maintain that there is something which has mental states only if what has them is aware of that something? We can introduce a distinction between different kinds of psychological subject: there is the idea of a thing

which has mental attributes but which is not qualified as a self because it lacks self-consciousness. This could be simply animal in question, a certain kind of living body. And there is the idea of a psychological subject different in nature from the first, that is, the living animal body with a mind and conferring upon a mind a kind of unity not conferred by the body. Then we can say that the mental states of simple creatures belong to the subjects in the first sense, but the mental states of self-conscious creatures have subjects in the second sense. The latter sort of subject, the self proper, displays a special kind of unity, it has a unity which is properly grasped only from the inside.

To be a person is to have the power of knowing who and what one is. The Tape Recorder Cassette keeps a record of whatever is recorded by the player, but it lacks the kind of consciousness we are talking about, the Cassette has no power of Cassette-consciousness. On the other hand, a person has memory and he also has the power of self-consciousness. The essential characteristics for personhood are rationality and awareness of one's identity over time. John Locke goes to the extent of saying that a rational parrot would be a person whereas an irrational man would not be so. Locke distinguishes between 'man' and 'person'. The idea of man, according to him, is simply that of an animal having a certain form, human form to be precise, It entails a determinate shape and size. 'Man'

cannot be defined either in terms of rationality or immortal soul. A rational parrot he says cannot be called a man because it lacks the requisite physical(human) form. Having a human form or for that matter any physical form is not essential for personhood. Locke thus defines person as:

> "A thinking intelligent being that has reason and reflection and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and place, which it does by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking and...essential to it".[1]

P.F.Strawson[2] gives a theory of person according to which 'person' is a type of being to whom M-predicates and P-predicates can be ascribed. By 'person' Strawson means a subject to which both material predicates such as height, weight, colour, etc., as well as mental activities like thinking, remembering, intending, etc., can be ascribed. He says:

> "What I mean by the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation, etc., are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type."[3]

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1. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. ed.A.C.Fraser.Clarendon Press.Oxford. 1894. p.448.
2. P.F.Strawson, Individuals. Methuen, London. 1959.
3. Ibid.,p.102.

Against Cartesian dualism, Strawson argues that it is necessary in order that one be able to ascribe one's states of consciousness to others, one must be able to ascribe One's states of consciousness to oneself. For this, one must be able to identify other subjects of states of consciousness. If this subject is a pure ego or soul, a completely immaterial principle, then one cannot identify other subjects. But Strawson argues one cannot have a concept of oneself as a person, that is, as a subject of states of consciousness.

We often talk about experiences. I claim these experiences as mine, not other's. The kind of unity we ascribe to experiences can be discussed in two ways. The first kind of unity is the unity of the body. That is, all the experiences are experienced by the one and the same body, they all belong to one particular body. The second kind of unity is the unity which is bound up with self-consciousness. Without self-consciousness the mind of a creature has no more unity than that conferred by its body, from the inside it is just a collection or succession of mental states. Self requires consciousness of self because the characteristic unity of the self cannot exist without the unifying and integrating power of self-awareness. Therefore, the self proper cannot be antecedent to consciousness of itself. Then we are not wrong to introduce the self as the subject of self-reflexive thought. This kind of approach really testifies that the presupposition that Self must have self-consciousness is quite reasonable and plausible.

Now we have said that all the creatures with mental attributes cannot be treated as having what we call 'self'. Some creatures clearly do not possess a self, though they have mental states; others definitely do - but are there intermediate cases? Is possession of a self a matter of degree? It is quite natural to suggest that the existence of the self is an all or nothing matter - you either have one or you don't. This seems to derive from the special kind of unity in a creature's mental life which the self confers. We just feel that mental states are not just collection of different perceptions and sensations, they either belong to a unitary thing or they do not - they could not fall between being unified and being fragmented. The unity of the self is the unity conferred by self-consciousness, and this unity cannot come in grades.[4]

The concept of the self is to be distinguished from the concept of a human being and from any other biologically based classification. Like other mental concepts, the concept of the self already contains the essence of what it specifies - it does not need empirical science to disclose what it consists of. Biological concepts do not do this - they wait upon empirical science to disclose what the designated biological kind consists in. As we might predict, then, the concept of self will cut across groupings of creatures made upon biological grounds, with the result that indefinitely many biological kinds may per-

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4. Collin Mc Ginn, The Character of Mind, Oxford University Press. 1982. Chapter VI, p.105.

mit the ascription of selfhood to their members. An indication of this feature of the concept of self is this: if a creature understands the concept of self and this concept in fact applies to that creature, then the creature must know this - selves necessarily know that they are selves.[5]

In conclusion, what makes me me, from the first-person perspective, is the integrating power which we call 'Self-consciousness' and it is this 'Self-consciousness' which brings all the experiences of a person together in unity apart from the unity of the body (that is, they are experienced by the one and the same body). To be a person is to have this integrating power of Self-consciousness. So the unity of the mind is only the function of being a person. In other words, the concept of a person already presupposes the unity of the mind. Self-consciousness is the awareness of one's own identity from the first person perspective. Without this Self-awareness or Self-consciousness, the question of personhood cannot arise. It is this integrating power which unites all the experiences of a person and it is this Self which a person is conscious of that claims the ownership of all the experiences or in other words, it is Self-consciousness which accounts for all the experiences of a particular person or self as belonging to that particular Self or Person and no other else's.

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5. Ibid., p.105.

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