PERSPECTIVES

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Special Issue
Personhood and Identity

Articles

From Nature to Spirit: Husserl's Phenomenology of the Person in *Ideen II*
Tim Burns (University College Dublin)

Merricks's Eliminativism: Neither Objects Nor Persons
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Personhood and Personal Identity in the Online World
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Ontology of Discontinuity: Buddhism and Descartes
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EDITORS:
Pegah Lashgarlou, Catherine Lawlor,
Hugo Newman

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Editorial

We are delighted to (belatedly) welcome you to the fifth volume of *Perspectives: International Postgraduate Journal of Philosophy*. This journal is a peer reviewed, postgraduate publication that features articles and book reviews from the analytic and continental traditions in philosophy. It is our goal to offer a platform for all students of philosophy who are in the early stages of their career, be they master's students, doctoral students or recent graduates, to publish their work, and gain experience with the peer-reviewing and editing process that is part of publishing in a serious academic journal.

This year's edition invited submissions addressing philosophical issues pertaining to personhood and identity. There were several reasons - political, social, theoretical - informing the decision to choose this theme. Over the previous decade or so, the world has witnessed great socioeconomic upheaval. In the years preceding the ongoing global financial crisis, a pro-globalisation consensus appeared to be forming, particularly among western policymakers and pundits. National identities were becoming increasingly subordinate to transnational interests, evidenced by extended political-economic integration across the EU and beyond. With the onset of the global crisis in 2008, much doubt began to emerge about the viability of the international economic system. The public debt crises that plagued nations worldwide brought concerns over national sovereignty back to the forefront of political discourse. Within this context of international discord, many citizens have demonstrated a preference for political and economic activities that directly support local communities and regional "interests" over globalised alternatives. At the heart of these movements are competing conceptions of identity - regional, national, political - informing people's changing priorities and allegiances. At the same time, the ever greater scope and prevalence of internet communication has complicated this picture further. A preponderance of people's daily commercial and social interactions now take place in an environment of virtual anonymity transcending political and cultural boundaries. New and unforeseen moral and legal issues arise with increasing frequency within this expanding social environment – most notably those pertaining to intellectual property, hacking, censorship and political surveillance. Where the legal and moral burdens of responsibility fall on these issues depends in no small part upon our conceptions of personhood and how they apply in the online context. Finally, advances in the fields of genetics, neuroscience and evolutionary psychology continue to challenge our self-conceptions as free and autonomous persons with enduring identities. At such a juncture,

it is imperative that philosophers engage these issues and scrutinise the manner in which notions of personhood and identity relate to each other and indeed influence the way people relate to one another – whether morally, politically or economically.

In keeping with the journal's mission statement of philosophical pluralism, we welcomed submissions addressing a broad range of issues bearing on personhood and identity. We endeavoured to give equal consideration both to papers addressing problems pertaining exclusively to individuality, and to those with a broader and more social focus on questions surrounding personhood and identity. The original call for papers reflected this objective, suggesting that prospective authors may address a diverse set of relevant research areas. These included (among others): political autonomy and identity, social cognition, consciousness, embodiment, nature and the self, national identity, group agency, free-will and responsibility, the self and the other.

We are more than satisfied that the present volume extends the record of intellectual diversity associated with this publication, showcasing the work of young scholars from across the philosophical spectrum. In his article 'From Nature to Spirit: Husserl's Phenomenology of the Person in *Ideen II*', Tim Burns sets out to supplement the relatively sparse literature on personhood in recent Husserlian scholarship while offering a provisional defense of Husserl's analysis. The article traces the constitution of personhood in Husserl's text through an explication of its relationship with the concept of the "*Umwelt*." Dominic Preston offers a compelling case for dispensing with our conception of persons as causally efficacious entities apart from their physical constituents in 'Merrick's Eliminativism: Neither Objects nor Persons'. While defending the validity of Merrick's eliminativist argument for non-human objects, Preston rejects Merrick's exemption of persons by arguing against the assumption that consciousness is not necessitated by microphysical properties. Rui Vieira da Cunha scrutinises the interface between personhood, identity and online contexts in 'Personhood and Personal Identity in the Online World'. He argues that standard approaches to "personal identity" problems often neglect the significance of the conditions of personhood in treating "personal identity" as a special case of persistence problems for objects in general. Having returned personhood to the centre of the analytic framework, da Cunha proceeds to apply the lessons from this revision to online personal identity problems. Becky Vartabedian's paper 'Allowances, Affordances, and the Collaborative Constitution of Identity' develops a notion of allowances,

a designation for speech-acts indicative of the collaborative behaviour we engage in with others. Such behaviour, she argues, marks a facet of identity that could not be created by the individual alone. Vartabedian grounds this notion of allowance in the view of the self as intentional body-consciousness developed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty and John Russon, concluding by drawing attention to the ways in which allowances are markers of the collaborative constitution of identity. Finally, in his article, Itsuki Hayashi integrates insights from both Descartes and Buddhist philosophers to defend an "ontology of discontinuity", applying that ontology to the question of persistence of persons over time. Addressing Leibniz's "coma" objection, Hayashi concludes that if there cannot be any gaps of existence, persons must persist by having some mental operation that remains continuously active, even during a coma.

Perspectives is a collaborative project made possible not only by the work of the contributing authors, but also by the gracious efforts of the many anonymous peer reviewers who were kind of enough to offer their services. We would like extend our thanks to all those who assisted in the editing process, and to the UCD School of Philosophy for supporting the journal from its inception. We are proud to present to you the fifth volume of *Perspectives*.

The Editors,
Pegah Lashgarlou
Catherine Lawlor
Hugo Newman

From Nature to Spirit: Husserl's Phenomenology of the Person in *Ideen II*

Tim Burns
University College Dublin

Abstract

In this article, I explicate Husserl's phenomenology of the person as found in Ideen II by examining the most important aspects of persons in this work. In the first section, I explicate the concept of the surrounding world (Umwelt) with special attention to the difference between the different attitudes (Einstellungen) that help determine the sense of constituted objects of experience. In the second section, I investigate Husserl's description of the person as a founded, higher order, spiritual (geistig) objectivity. I consider this description of the person by examining the symmetry between the organization of Ideen II as a whole and the order of the constitution of the person. In the final section, I look at the relationship between the constitution of the person and the spiritual (geistig) world.

Amidst the barrage of secondary literature on Husserlian philosophy, the phenomenological conception of the person has received less attention in recent years than other prominent themes such as temporality, transcendental subjectivity/intersubjectivity, and the phenomenology of the lived body to name just a few. Some who have chosen to write on this theme use it as a benchmark by which to situate Husserl's thought in relation to other early 20th Century phenomenologists (see especially Alles Bello, 2008; and De Monticelli, 2002). For others, the person is one of many foci within the debates that surround empathy and intersubjectivity (see for example Beyer, 2012; and Moran, 2004). In addition to these approaches, a small amount of literature has begun to emerge on what Husserl calls, in some of his later and unpublished manuscripts, the "transcendental person." Sebastian Luft's "The Transcendental Person: Another Look at the Husserl-Heidegger Relationship" is the first, and only, significant article I know of on this topic. His argument centres around understanding the "transcendental person" as an attempt to respond to Heidegger's criticism of his insistence on discussing subjectivity in terms of the transcendental

ego instead of *Dasein*.[1] While all of these are important tasks, it is difficult for the beginning phenomenologist, looking to gain her bearings in the field, to find a basic resource that answers the question "What is a 'person' for Husserl?" (Woodruff Smith, 1995; and Stack, 1974 are notable exceptions). With this in mind, the goal of the present article is an explication of Husserl's phenomenology of the person as found in *Ideen II*. It is my hope that clarification and explication of Husserl's conception of the person may contribute to understanding the role that this concept can play in other debates within phenomenology.[2]

I approach this task in the following way. First, in *Ideen II*, Husserl writes, "As person, I am what I am (and each other person is what he is) as subject of a surrounding #world [*Umwelt*]."[3] To understand what a person is then requires one to understand the Husserlian conception of the *Umwelt*. This is the task of the first section, where I explicate the concept of the *Umwelt* with special attention to the difference between the different attitudes (*Einstellungen*) that contribute to the sense (*Sinn*) that constituting subjectivity bestows on objects of experience. A critical point emerges in the analysis of attitudes. Whether or not one experiences persons depends upon the constitutive attitude in which one engages experience. When one does experience persons, and we do, we experience them as particular kinds of objectivities - as motivated individuals who are not wholly determined objects in the causal nexus of nature. In the second section, I investigate Husserl's further description of the person as a founded, higher order, spiritual (*geistig*) objectivity. I consider this description of the person by examining the symmetry between the organization of *Ideen II* as a whole and the order of the constitution of the person. In the final section, I look at the relationship between the constitution of the person and the spiritual (*geistig*) world.

It should be noted that the goal of this article primarily exposition. I wish to explicate Husserl's rather complex notion of the person as we find it in this text and answer the question "What is a 'person' for Husserl?" As such, a great deal of the text is dedicated to parsing Husserl's constitutional analyses, interpreting his examples, and attempting to provide others that elucidate his descriptions. Along the way, I raise objections and do my best to defend Husserl's analysis.

1. Person as Subject of a "Surrounding World"

Rendering the German term, *Umwelt*, as "surrounding world" conveys the sense of an environment, a word which might better capture, in English, the sense Husserl gives to the *Umwelt*. The *Umwelt* envelopes the person. It is the world of practical agency. In the surrounding world, the person acts as a person. Husserl writes, "And a person is precisely a person who represents, feels, evaluates, strives, and acts and who, in every such personal act, stands in relation to something, to objects in his surrounding world."[4] The surrounding world is one in which the person perceives the objects around her in relation to herself. This is a world in which one engages, not one abstractly viewed, measured, and studied. That world we might call nature – when it is considered as the object of the natural sciences.[5]

To understand the world as *Umwelt*, as opposed to nature, consider the difference between a person taking a stroll along the beach and a scientist working in a lab. In her lab, the scientist analyses the results of experiments, measures compounds with special attention to accuracy, and divides objects according to their properties as reagents, catalysts, syntheses, and so forth. As she strolls along the beach, the engagement in her environment is different. The world presents itself in terms of affordances and hindrances. The ocean is an affordance for swimming or a hindrance to walking. The sand is firm enough on which to walk easily or is soft and so she alters her gait accordingly. Some stones are flat enough for skipping others large enough that she must walk around them. This engaged mode of acting in the world is a stark contrast to how, in her lab, she analyses the water in terms of its chemical properties, the stones in terms of their mass, volume, and origins as igneous or sedimentary.

When Husserl classifies the personal world as the *Umwelt*, he also claims that different intentional objects are present in different types of experience.[6] At the risk of simplifying Husserl's claim, the point is that nature is what the natural sciences study; the *Umwelt* is the world in which we act, judge, and live on a personal level, and the two are not identical.

One might object that the distinction Husserl is making is simply a matter of attention. When the scientist is at the beach, if she is any fun, she does not analyse the chemical composition of the sand. She builds a sand castle. When she is in her lab, she analyses the composition of the same sand, and in doing so sees it for what it is at the chemical, biological, or "scientific" level. The point of the objection is that this difference between her activities in the lab and on her day off is a matter of how she chooses to spend her time and direct her attention. The world is not really different at the beach than it is in the lab. In the lab, her job is to study the way

the world in a scientific manner, as opposed to how it appears in ordinary perception. To put it another way, the difference, if there is one, between the surrounding world and nature is a matter of where and how one directs one's attention. For the scientist, it is not the case different objects are present in the lab and at the beach. The difference is a matter of how one looks at those same objects. On a recreational day at the beach, the scientist is just not attentive to the chemical, physical, and biological make up the objects of her surroundings.

In short, Husserl's potential answer to this objection is that the objector is right in one sense and wrong in another. There are different attitudes in which one engages the world. This is what the objector claims when she says that the distinction Husserl is making is a matter of where and how one directs her experience. With this, he agrees. However, where the scientist goes astray is in the claim that she experiences the same objects in the lab as she does at the beach. To claim this is to ignore the finer points of the experience of these objects.

Husserl maintains that there are distinct ways in which subjects experience the world. He calls these ways "attitudes" (*Einstellungen*). An attitude is a holistic mindset, or mode, in which one engages experience that affects the sense constituting subjectivity bestows on experience. It is not an individual stance toward a particular experience. It is essential that all experience presupposes a specific attitude (*Einstellung*) toward the world.[7] In *Ideen II*, Husserl often presents the various attitudes in opposing pairs. I will discuss the personalistic and naturalistic pair below. Furthermore, a change in attitude constitutes a concomitant change in the intentional objects of experience. He writes, "A change in attitude means nothing else but a thematic transition from one direction of apprehension to another, to which correspond, correlatively, different objectivities."[8] The question is what he can mean by this.

Husserl is not saying that depending on how one views an object of experience it can be used as X or Y. For example, depending on one's needs a coffee cup can appear as something to put coffee in or it can appear as a paperweight. These are various uses of the same object, and both fall within the personalistic attitude. His claim is that a shift in attitude results in the concomitant experience of a different objectivity. He also does not mean that a shift in attitude makes an object appear that was not previously there in primal presence. Changing one's attitude does not create new objects ex nihilo. Attitudes are constitutive. They contribute to the constitution of intentional objects. They do not create them. An *Einstellung* is a comportment of the experiencing Ego toward the world

that influences the sense that subjectivity bestows on experience and hence impacts the kinds of intentional objects one experiences. It follows from this that certain types of objects appear only from within certain attitudes.

I will give two examples to illustrate this point. First, consider the following example. A professor of literature says to her class, "Tell me something about Moby Dick," while holding up a copy of the book for the class to see. She will not accept the answer, "It's in your hand," as legitimate. The teacher's question addresses the book as a higher level objectivity, qua cultural object. The student, who some would call sarcastic, is addressing the book merely qua physical object. To put it in slightly different terms, the teacher asks about the book as an object of the human sciences, and the student's answer addresses the book as an object of the natural sciences. The teacher and the student adopt different attitudes. The teacher cannot accept the student's answer as correct because the student does not occupy the appropriate *Einstellung* for a literature class. But, are student and the teacher are talking about different objectivities? Or can one say that they address the same object from different perspectives?

For Husserl, the teacher and student are not talking about the same object viewed from different perspectives. They are talking about two different objects of experience, each of which is constituted by a different attitude. In the personalistic attitude, a book is more than the paper, ink, and glue that make it up as a physical object. It is a cultural or spiritual (*geistig*) object. When I read a book, I do not experience the pages made of paper, the words printed in ink, or the letters that make up the words. When I read a book,

I 'live in the sense, comprehending it.' And while I do so, the spiritual unity of the sentence and that of the sentence-nexuses are there before me, and these in turn have their character, e.g., the determinate peculiar style impressing itself on me, a style which distinguishes this book, as a literary product, from any other of the same genre.[9]

When I experience a book, I live in it as I read it. What appears to me is the world that the author creates qua spiritual (*geistig*) object, which is indeed founded upon but not reducible to this particular example of the physical book. The book to which the student sarcastically refers, the book as a purely physical and measureable entity, is an object of the natural sciences. It is not the object one studies in a literature course.

The disagreement with the scientist from above can now be restated. The scientist holds that she experiences the same objects but from different perspectives when she is in the lab and when she is at the beach. Husserl agrees that she occupies a different perspective when in the lab than when

she is at the beach, provided that by perspective here we mean *Einstellung*. He wants the scientist to notice the different intentional objects of her experience. In the lab, her experience is of silicon dioxide and its various crystalline structures. At the beach, her experience is of sand, its softness, moisture, and tendency to find its way into picnic baskets and coolers. These are different intentional objects. They possess different properties, and different attitudes are operative in their constitution.

I now wish to discuss a second example that is directly applicable to Husserl's theory of the person and serves to further elucidate the distinction between the naturalistic and personalistic attitudes. Husserl argues that, in the personalistic attitude, our experience of other persons is an experience of them as motivated individuals not as determined objects in nature's causal nexus. In my experience of persons, I experience them as free beings, beings who nature influences but does not determine. Persons can allow nature to motivate them toward certain ends or they can choose their own ends by resisting the influence and motivation of external forces. Husserl puts it quite succinctly. "There is no question here of a causal relation," he writes, "we are altogether outside the attitude required for grasping natural causality…To introduce natural causality here would be to abandon the personal attitude."[10] The natural scientist would argue that persons are, as a matter of course, related to their world causally. They are material bodies in the world just like all other material bodies. The causal relations between material entities like this are necessary. If a person jumps off of a building, she will accelerate toward the surface of the earth at the same rate as any other object. The laws of physics, chemistry, and biology apply to human beings in the same manner as they apply to non-human objects.

The phenomenologist need not dispute this at all. The point Husserl wants to make is that the scientist occupies a specific attitude when she makes this claim. The attitude that the scientist occupies affects the sense that constituting subjectivity bestows on the experienced object. Thus, in this attitude the scientist's experience is of a different object, not simply the same object from a different perspective. To put it another way, persons, strictly speaking, do not show up in the naturalistic attitude. In the naturalistic attitude, one finds "animated Bodies, Objects of nature, themes of the relevant natural sciences. But it is quite otherwise as regards the personalistic attitude, the attitude we are always in when we live with one another, talk to one another, shake hands with one another in greeting."[11] It is in the personalistic attitude that one experiences persons. Science is conducted in the naturalistic attitude. In this attitude, human beings, or perhaps it would be better to say homo sapiens sapiens, appear as the

objects of the natural sciences. Here one does not experience persons per se, but bodies with mass and volume. One does not experience motivated, spiritual beings but causally related physical entities. In the personalistic attitude, we experience genuine others, self-conscious, embodied subjects, moral agents.[12]

The difference here is a difference of attitude, and close attention to the experiences had in differing attitudes reveals a difference in intentional object of experience. Persons are not causally related to their world because the realm in which persons exist is not constituted by causal relations. To speak of causality requires one to leave the personalistic attitude. It requires one to address natural scientific objects, not persons.

I wish now to return to the working definition of the person as subject of a surrounding world and expand on the notion of the *Umwelt*. It has already been noted that the *Umwelt* is the practical world in which persons live and act. The foregoing analysis has sought to claim that the experience of the *Umwelt* includes the experience of persons, both our own and others and is constituted by the personalistic attitude. The *Umwelt* is the intersubjective, shared world of practical action, values, feelings, morality, law, religion, and culture. It is the intersubjective space in which we lead our everyday lives. As Husserl puts it in a passage that could serve as a definition of the *Umwelt*,

The surrounding world is the world that is perceived by the person in his acts, is remembered, grasped in thought, surmised or revealed as such and such; it is the world of which this personal Ego is conscious, the world which is there for it, to which it relates in this or that way, e.g. by way of thematically experiencing and theorizing as regards the appearing things or by way of feeling, evaluating, acting, shaping technically, etc.[13]

The *Umwelt* is the space of culture and history. In the surrounding world, the personal Ego relates to other persons and to objects that have certain predicates that they can only have in relation to subjects. The surrounding world is the world where one has feelings and emotions, where one finds values and acts accordingly. It is the world in which these things (feelings, emotions, and values) emerge as real Objectivities. These objectivities arise as part of culture and have their meaning in this context. Human culture is the difference between a lump of coloured paint, and a beautiful painting by Mondrian. Even this is not completely correct because paint is an object that only gets its meaning from within a certain history and culture.

2. Person as Founded Entity

Having thus far expounded on Husserl's notion of the person as subject of a surrounding world, it is imperative to also understand his theory of the person as founded, higher order objectivity. In his article "Persons, Subjects, and Human Beings in Husserl's Ideas II," Thomas Nenon argues we should understand the overall project of *Ideen II* as an attempt to understand "the status of ourselves and others as those special kinds of entities that in the modern tradition have commonly been thought of as subjects," adding that this can further be seen as Husserl's attempt to answer Kant's question, "*Was ist der Mensch*?"[14] In *Ideen II*, read as a response to this question, we find that the person is a spiritual objectivity founded upon the lower strata of material and animal natures. In fact, the organization of *Ideen II* itself reflects the structure of the person. The book is divided into three sections on the constitution of "Material Nature," "Animal Nature," and "The Spiritual World." These strata, organized from lowest to highest, reflect the constitution of the human person.[15] The human person has a material, animal, and spiritual nature and its constitution must be understood in terms of all three. In what follows, I use this organization to discuss the founded structure of the person.

a) The Founding Relationship in General

Before looking at this structure, a few words on what it means for a relationship to be founded are in order. In order to understand this, it is useful to examine one of Husserl's own examples. He gives the example of hearing the beautiful tone of a violin and seeing it played. The long passage is worth citing in full.

> When I hear the tone of a violin, the pleasantness and beauty are given originarily if the tone moves my feelings originally and in a lively manner, and the beauty as such is given originally precisely within the medium of this pleasure, and similarly is given the mediate value of the violin as producing such a tone, insofar as we see it itself being played and grasp intuitively the causal relation which is founding here. Likewise, the beauty of the violin's external structure, its elegant form, is given immediately and originally, whereby the particularities and connection motivating the pleasure come actually to the fore in the unity of the constituting intuition and exercise their motivating power.[16]

The founded intuitions, in this case those of beauty, pleasantness, and elegance, are meaning intentions that can either be fulfilled or not by further experiences.[17] Beauty is not a natural property of material nature.

Neither are pleasantness and elegance. And yet, we do judge some tones pleasant, some objects beautiful, and some forms elegant. These higher order predicates are founded in, and dependent upon, more basic predicates of material objects. The beauty of the tone of the violin is dependent upon the violin, its bow, and the musician playing it as natural objects behaving in certain naturally and causally describable ways. The elegance of the violin is founded in the material from which it is carved and the craftsmanship of its creator. These natural objects and the relationships between them must hold in order for the higher order meaning intentions (beauty, pleasantness, etc.) to be fulfilled. However, the higher order evaluations of beauty and elegance are not reducible to the lower order sense experiences in which they are founded.

Husserl discusses the foundational relationship in the Sixth Logical Investigation. Here he is talking about categorial intuitions and observations of states of affairs, but the basics of his account of founding appear to be the same as in the later *Ideen II*. He writes, "In the sensible whole, the parts A and B are made one by the sensuously combinatory form of contact. The abstraction of these parts and moments, the formation of intuitions of A, B, and contact, will not yet yield the presentation A in contact with B. This demands a novel act which, taking charge of such presentations, shapes and combines them suitably."[18] In other words, grasping a state of affairs is essentially a different kind of intuition than perceiving an object. He calls these new intuitions categorial intuitions and juxtaposes them with sensuous intuitions.

Sensuous intuitions have their object "in a straightforward (schlichter) manner."[19] For Husserl, this means an immediate grasp of a sensuous object without its being constituted in any relational way or in connection with another object. This is the lowest level form of perception as found in his account of perception in Logical Investigations. These perceptions can, and do, build upon one another and "can serve as basic act[s] for new acts which in their new mode of consciousness likewise bring to maturity a new awareness of objects which essentially presupposes the old."[20] The new acts of which he speaks are categorial acts. Categorial intuitions are founded acts that, among other things, serve to grasp states of affairs, for example those expressed in language by the use of prepositions. To grasp the state of affairs that the book is on the table is the work of a categorial intuition. If we examine the experience of grasping the fact that a book is on a table, at the lowest sensuous level, we find 'the book,' 'the table,' and contact between the two given in experience. However, the state of affairs presents a new object to consciousness by use of the preposition 'on.' It is

grasped as part of a higher order intuition. The new object in experience is the state of affairs – that the book is on the table. To put it plainly, Husserl argues that a state of affairs is just not identical with a sensuous experience.

Categorial intuitions depend upon lower level sensuous experience in order to maintain. However, they are not reducible to the mere sensuous perception. Husserl calls this non-reducible and yet necessary relationship "founding." To return to the violin example, the founding relationship is the same. The beauty of the violin is founded in its make up vis-à-vis material nature. However, this beauty is not reducible to material predicates. Just as there is something more than sensuous experience at play when we perceive a state of affairs, so too more is at work than sensuous perception when higher order objects or predicates are given in originary perception. The beauty of the tone of the violin is given originarily in a founded perception.

b) Material and Animal Natures

I now return to the tripartite division of nature Husserl proposes in *Ideen II* and begin with material nature. The "essential feature" of material nature is extension. This includes not just its extension in space, but also extension in time. Perhaps it is better to say duration in time.[21] As Husserl frankly puts it, all of nature, "the totality of 'real' things," exists in space and in time.[22] These two most basic forms comprise the essence of material nature. I will not go into Husserl's detailed phenomenological analyses of space and time as the ultimate categories of the real. It should suffice for our purposes here to say that when Husserl talks of material nature, he is speaking of things that are inert, merely extended in space and time.

Having understood the founding relationship should help us understand Husserl's account of animal nature as founded in material nature. The person's animal nature emerges as those sets of properties that we have specifically in virtue of having a body that we live in and through and having a soul. These are founded, in the sense understood above, not material properties. We have these properties as a consequence of our psychic nature being founded in the lower order material nature. Here is Husserl.

In experience, these new properties we speak of are given as belonging to the body in question, and it is precisely because of them that it is called Body or organism, i.e., an "organ" for a soul or for a spirit. On the other hand, we have to say that these properties are precisely not material properties, and that means that by essence they have no extension, that they are not given in the way in which all properties are given which fill Bodily extension.[23]

The properties proper to animal nature include things like sensitivity and psychic life. They differ from the properties of material nature in part because of the way that they belong to bodies. For example, the colour of a thing drapes itself over the extended materiality of that thing. A property belonging to animal nature, like sensitivity, is not extended in space in the same way. The sense of touch is founded on the materiality of the body, but it is not a material property of that body.

Likewise, soulful (*seelisch*) life is founded in the material make up of the brain, nervous system, and the rest of the body. However, conscious life is not itself a material property. It has essential features, such as intentionality, which cannot be described in physical terms or reduced to the purely physical. Other animals too have properties that are founded upon the lower material stratum but are not reducible to being properties of this stratum. In this sense, the founding relationship between the properties of material nature and animal nature appears to be similar to the founding relationship between sensuous perception and categorical intuitions described in the Logical Investigations. Furthermore, these properties are taken to be essential properties of animal nature.

Constitutional analysis of animal nature must also acknowledge that, at least when it comes to human experience, the properties of animal nature present themselves to us, as subjects, in a reflective manner. "The qualities of material things as aestheta...prove to be dependent on my qualities, the make-up of the experiencing subject, and to be related to my Body and my 'normal sensibility.'"[24] For this reason, the most important constitutional analysis in the examination of animal nature – the most important for the question 'What is a person? – is the constitution of the human Body, which is constituted in sensation and operates as the centre of orientation for the living ego.[25]

The conclusion of section forty-seven of *Ideen II* leaves Husserl's analysis in a strange position. He has proposed a three-tiered stratification of nature, and has described the lowest two strata. However, in doing so he appears to have described all of nature. What is there beyond material and animal nature? Here is Husserl on this quandary. "The analysis of nature in our consideration of nature thus proves to be in need of supplementation. It harbors presuppositions and consequently points beyond to another realm of being and of research, i.e., the field of subjectivity, which is not longer nature."[26] What supplementation could he mean? What is this field of subjectivity that is no longer nature?

3. The Person and the Constitution of the Spiritual World

Husserl wants to move beyond the naturalistic attitude in which he conducted the analysis of material and animal nature. To do so, he must pass from soul to spirit. The distinction to be grasped between soul and spirit is most easily understood as the distinction between the subject of experience considered from within naturalistic attitude, as a phenomenon of nature, and the personal Ego.[27] The soul is, for Husserl, "merely a stratum of real occurrences in the Body."[28] His examination of the founding relationship between material and animal nature and his examination of the psychic in animal nature was an examination of the psychic as a part of nature. Here is Husserl on the relationship.

Thus were built on one another, with respect to the constituting basic characters of the apprehension: the experience of the physical as foundational and, resting on it and enveloping it, the experience of the Body, which is constitutive of man and animal; based on the latter, as constitutive stratum is the experience of the soul.[29]

In summary of preceding sections, he showed how nature obtains its grounding as follows: Physical nature provides the sense for everything found in it; in other words, physicality or extension is the most basic strata. Resting on this and enveloping it is the experience of the Body (*Leib*), that constitutes man and animal. Based on the Body is the experience of the soul – by which he means intellectuality conceived of as a part of nature. However, because consciousness is not simply a part of nature, but is essentially related to it, the investigations must continue to the new realm constituted by consciousness. The field of subjectivity that is no longer nature is spirit. In what follows, he investigates the difference between the pure Ego as the subject of nature and the "Ego as person or as member of a social world."[30] The first section of this article covers much of this in dealing with the person as subject of the *Umwelt*. However, I would like to return for a moment to the person as a member of the social world.

It is essential to understand that the *Umwelt* is the social world. It is essentially intersubjective. Here is Husserl commenting on what one finds in the surrounding world. "The subject finds consciously in his surrounding world not only things, however, but also other subjects. He sees them as persons who are engaged in their own surrounding world, determined by their objects, and ever determinable anew."[31] This seemingly trivial point has a critical impact on the make up of the surrounding world and on the prospects of phenomenology as an intersubjective science.

When we experience other people, we experience them as related to a surrounding world. After all, being related to a surrounding world is an essential part of what it means to be a person. However, it is not as if my surrounding world and the surrounding worlds of other persons are unrelated. On the contrary, "We are in relation to a common surrounding world."[32] Our lives are linked in and through an inseparable intentional link because we stand in relation to common objects. I am a person for you and you are a person for me. I stand in relation to your consciousness as you stand in relation to mine. We are in personal association with one another. For Husserl, the personal association is the "normal sense" of being a person, and is constituted together with the common *Umwelt*. "Correlatively spoken, the one is constituted essentially with the other. Each Ego can, for himself and for the others, become a person in the normal sense, a person in a personal association, only if comprehension brings about the relation to a common surrounding world."[33] This will mean that the common surrounding world is of necessity co-constituted with and through the other person.

This is why one can claim that the *Umwelt* is the space of history, culture, and morality. As such, at this level, we see the emergence of further higher order objects – those objects which populate our common surrounding world. These gain their determinations through "acts of personal mutual determination."[34] These acts unite us into groups as sharers of objects and languages. Persons comprehend themselves not simply as animate bodies or as part of an animal nature founded on a material nature. Persons comprehend themselves not only through body language, facial expressions, and verbal discourse, but also as active members of communities, as Husserl puts it, "as personally united."[35]

The communal, spiritual *Umwelt* is our communicative world. It is designate thus because of that fact that it is constituted in our experiences of others, which involves an experience of the process of coming to a mutual understanding with them. We form "relations of mutual understanding" through a process of communication.[36]

> [S]peaking elicits response; the theoretical, valuing, or practical appeal, addressed by the one to the other, elicits, as it were, a response coming back, assent (agreement) or refusal (disagreement) and perhaps a counter proposal, etc. In these relations of mutual understanding, there is produced a conscious mutual relation of persons and at the same time a unitary relation of them to a common

surrounding world.[37]

The surrounding world as the communicative world is constituted in our experience of others in and through understanding, agreement, misunderstanding, and disagreement all of which are understood as mutual and as pertaining to our shared *Umwelt*.

Relations of mutual understanding constitute our common surrounding world. We can disagree about the colour of a house. I believe the house to be grey, and you believe it to be blue. We communicate about it. We enter into dialogue. We go to visit the house. We compare colour swatches and finally reach an agreement. In this process of coming to a mutual understanding, we have constituted a part of our common *Umwelt*. Even if we fail to reach an agreement, we constitute part of our common surrounding world in and through communication.

Relations of mutual understanding and their importance for the constitution of a common *Umwelt* are not limited to discourse about physical objects. Insofar as our surrounding world is a spiritual one, we also come to mutual understandings regarding spiritual objects. As spiritual beings, our surrounding world includes – among other things – attitudes, beliefs, and desires. As a political activist, I may try to come to a relation of mutual understanding with you on a topic that we cannot go and visit like we went to visit the house painted the mysterious colour. For example, I may try to persuade you that a universal wage is just and that the government should implement it. In doing so, I attempt to constitute a common surrounding world in which other people share my attitudes, beliefs, and desires. These mutual understandings are just as much a part of the constitution of the personalistic world as are physical objects.

Other persons, groups of other persons, and personal associations are at the centre of Husserl's account of the constitution of the *Umwelt*. In fact, he concedes that the solitary person is only ever an abstraction.[38] An individual may reach an understanding of her own surrounding world by abstracting from all relations of mutual understanding. "In this sense there exists, therefore, 'onesided separability' of the one surrounding world in relation to the other, and the egoistic surrounding world forms an essential nucleus for the communicative one in such a way that if the former is ever to be separated off, the processes of abstraction needed for it have to come form the latter."[39] The very resources one needs in order to abstract to the case of the isolated person, argues Husserl, come from the communicative world, which is itself an intersubjective space. The processes of abstraction that we exercise as solipsistic egos, or to reach the phenomenologically

reduced solipsistic ego, have their basis in the shared communicative world. One reason for this lies in the fact that the surrounding world is constituted in language through the back and forth process required to reach mutual understanding. Even though the phenomenological method can be thought of as solipsistic, the world Husserl constitutes in and through this method is never ontologically solipsistic. For essential constitutive reasons, an ontologically solipsistic world makes no sense for Husserl.

4. Conclusion

For Husserl, there is no one simple answer to the question "*Was ist der Mensch*?" What we find in his analysis is an account of a stratified, founded way of being. The person is a spiritual being that is the subject of a surrounding world which is co-constituted by personal associations and relations of mutual understanding.

However, this is not the full story. The very question of whether or not one experiences persons depends upon the *Einstellung* one adopts towards one's experience. The holistic mindsets that underlie each of our experiences influence the sense that constituting subjectivity bestows on experience. To be in the attitude in which one experiences persons is to be in the aptly named personalistic attitude. In the natural scientific attitude, one does not experience persons. In this case, "what is introjectively posited is the other Ego, lived experience, and consciousness, built upon the fundamental apprehension and positing of material nature and apprehended as being functionally dependent on it, as an appendix of it."[40] Understood from the point of view of nature, or perhaps it is better to say from within the naturalistic attitude, the comprehension of the other subject is founded upon a comprehension of an animated, material nature, his *Leib*. What is posited is the other as a conscious Ego, having lived experiences by virtue of, and having a zero-point of orientation in, his *Leib*. The other is posited as conscious of nature, as fundamentally and causally related to that nature, and as a part of nature itself. On the other hand, as spirit and from within the personalistic attitude, "the Ego is posited as person 'purely and simply' and posited, consequently, as subject of its personal and thingly surroundings, as related to other persons by means of understanding and mutual understanding, as member of a social nexus to which corresponds a unitary social surrounding world, while at the same time each individual member has his own environment bearing the stamp of his subjectivity."[41] Spiritually, people are related to others in relations of personal associations. They are subjects of a commonly co-constituted *Umwelt*. They form

communities and constitute objects of material spirit.

Any answer to the question "*Was ist der Mensch*?" that is intellectually honest must admit the difficulty of the question itself. To give one answer and insist on it alone is to deny the complexity, the depth, and the breadth of what it means to be a human being. Husserl's complex multilayered analysis of the person in *Ideen II* recognizes this fact. Here he shows us that what it means to be a person is to be a complex phenomenon and is analysable from a great many perspectives. On this account, the person is a higher order, spiritual objectivity founded on the lower strata of material and animal nature. The person is the subject of a surrounding world that is co-constituted by and with other persons through relations of mutual understanding. It is also acknowledged that one may alter one's attitude. One may engage experience from an attitude that does not experience persons at all. In some cases, this might be necessary, as when a surgeon operates to remove a tumour from a patient or when a scientist is performing an experiment in a lab. In the natural sciences, a certain distancing shift of attitude is necessary.

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(Endnotes)

1 Luft, S. (2005). Husserl's Concept of the "Transcendental Person": Another Look at the Husserl-Heidegger Relationship. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies, 13*(2). In 2012, the first dissertation dedicated solely to Husserl's conception of the transcendental person, of which I am aware, was successfully defended by Colin J. Hahn at Marquette University. Sebastian Luft supervised the dissertation. I have not had the opportunity to read Hahn's work.

2 Although there are other texts within the Husserlian corpus that also shed light upon this topic, especially portions of *Cartesian Meditations* and *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, I have chosen to concentrate on *Ideen II* for this article because it is here that Husserl has his most sustained treatment of the person.

3 Husserl, E., Biemel, M., Ijsseling, S., & Archives Husserl à Louvain. (1991). *Husserliana : gesammelte Werke. Bd.4, Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Bd.2, Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic. In translation,

Husserl, E. (1989). *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: Second Book* (R. Rojcewicz & A. Schuwer, Trans.). Dordrecht ; London: Kluwer Academic. 185/195. Hereafter, *Ideen II*. Pages cited refer first to the German text followed by the standard English translation.

4 *Ideen II*, 186/195.

5 Nature is, in this sense, the correlate of a particular attitude, or way of approaching the world. It is the result of the particular method of natural scientific study. Cf. *Ideen II*, §1-2, 49. For a concise discussion of this topic see the entry on "nature" in Cohen, J. and Moran, D. (2012). *The Husserl Dictionary*. London ; New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

6 *Ideen II*, 210/221.

7 An *Einstellung* is not a worldview. The various attitudes in which one may engage experience are more fundamental than any particular worldview. When Husserl wishes to speak of a worldview he uses *Weltanschauung* rather than *Einstellung*.

8 *Ibid*.

9 *Ideen II*, 237/248.

10 *Ideen II*, 235/247. Emphasis in the original.

11 *Ideen II,* 183/192.

12 One could argue that it is because persons, as such, do not appear within the naturalistic attitude that it is so important for the sciences to maintain ethics committees to oversee their research. Failure to consider persons *qua* persons can be seen at the heart of so many experiments gone wrong from the Milgram experiment and the Stanford Prison experiment to the atrocious eugenics carried out in name of medicine in Nazi death camps in the Second World War.

13 *Ideen II*, 185/195. Emphasis in the original.

14 Nenon, T. (1996). Persons, Subjects, and Human Beings in Husserl's *Ideas II*. In K. S. u. M. Tichy (Ed.), *Das Andere der Identität* (pp. 49-63). Freiburg: Rombach Verlag.

15 John Drummond's article "The 'Spiritual' World: The Personal, the Social, and the Communal" first brought this symmetry to light for me. See Drummond, J. J. (1996). The 'Spiritual' World: The Personal, the Social, and the Communal. In T. N. a. L. Embree (Ed.), *Issues in Husserl's Ideas II*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

16 *Ideen II*, 186-7/196

17 I am indebted to Thomas Nenon's article, "Persons, Subjects, and Human Beings in Husserl's *Ideas II*" *op. cit.* for clarifying the nature of this relationship.

18 Husserl, E. (2001). *Logical Investigations, Vol. 2* (J. N. Findaly, Trans.). London: Routledge.

19 *Ibid*., 282. Emphasis in the original.

20 *Ibid*. Emphasis in the original.

21 *Ideen II*, 28-9/30-2.

22 *Ideen II*, 28/30.

23 *Ideen II*, 33/35-6.
24 *Ideen II*, 56/61. Emphasis in the original.
25 A detailed analysis of Husserl's constitution of the body would take me beyond the purview of this paper. Those who are interested should see *Ideen II*, especially sections 35-42.
26 *Ideen II*, 172/180.
27 *Ibid*.
28 *Ideen II*, 175/184.
29 *Ideen II*, 174/184.
30 *Ideen II*, 175/184.
31 *Ideen II*, 190/200.
32 *Ideen II*, 191/201.
33 *Ideen II*, 191/201.
34 *Ideen II*, 191/201.
35 *Ideen II*, 192/202.
36 *Ideen II*, 192/202.
37 *Ideen II*, 192-3/202-3.
38 *Ideen II*, 193/203.
39 *Ideen II*, 193/203.
40 *Ideen II*, 228/240.
41 *Ideen II*, 228-9/240.

Merricks's Eliminativism: Neither Objects Nor Persons

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Abstract

Merricks (2001) defends eliminativism about material objects such as baseballs and statues, but not persons. Section 1 of this paper discusses his Overdetermination Argument, which shows the causal redundancy of baseballs and statues but cannot do the same for persons because of consciousness's non-redundant causal powers. In Section 2 I defend Merricks's argument for the non-existence of material objects, while in Section 3 I consider arguments against his exemption of persons, concluding that this exemption fails because it relies on the false premise that consciousness is not necessitated by microphysical properties. Merricks's eliminativism about material objects is correct but must also extend to persons.

Keywords: Merricks, eliminativism, overdetermination, persons, consciousness

Section 1

1.1

Merricks's argument for the non-existence of material objects is as follows, using the example of a baseball shattering a window:

(1) The baseball - if it exists - is causally irrelevant to whether its constituent atoms, acting in concert, cause the shattering of the window.

(2) The shattering of the window is caused by those atoms, acting in concert.

(3) The shattering of the window is not overdetermined.

Therefore,

(4) If the baseball exists, it does not cause the shattering of the window (2001, p.56).

This argument generalises for many composite objects and many effects. Moreover, Merricks holds that 'everything (alleged) baseballs and other non-living macrophysical objects (allegedly) cause is caused by their proper parts at some level of decomposition,' (2001, p.80). Together with the claim that, for macrophysical objects, to be is to have causal powers[1], this entails the non-existence of all non-living macrophysical objects.

Some of Merricks's terminology may require some explanation. Firstly, by 'constituent atoms' he is not committed to the existence of atoms from modern physics. Any claims about atoms are 'placeholders for claims about whatever microscopic entities are actually down there,' (Merricks 2001, p.3). Secondly, the baseball is causally irrelevant if it is not one of its constituent atoms; it is not a partial cause of the shattering alongside the atoms; it is not an intermediate in a causal chain starting with the atoms and ending with the shattering; and it does not cause the atoms' causing of the shattering. This relates to Merricks's definition of overdetermination, that an effect is overdetermined if it's caused by more than one numerically distinct object each of which is causally irrelevant to whether the others cause it. With these definitions in mind, the Overdetermination Argument is valid, and Merricks turns to his attempt to exempt persons from the argument.

1.2

In order to defend the existence of persons Merricks must show that they have non-redundant causal powers - i.e. that persons cause things that their parts do not. His argument takes the following structure:

An object's existing and being conscious isn't necessitated by the intrinsic properties and interrelations of that object's atoms.
People cause things in virtue of being conscious.
A person's causing effect E in virtue of being conscious does not give good reason to believe that that person's constituent atoms cause E.
We have good reason to believe that a person's constituent atoms cause E, by virtue of being caused to do so by the person, so the person is causally relevant.
People are causally relevant to at least some things that their atoms cause.
Premise 1 of the Overdetermination Argument is false for persons.
Persons exist.

Merricks argues for the first premise through a reductio of:

> Consciousness (C): Necessarily, if some atoms A1...An compose a conscious object, then any atoms intrinsically like A1...An, interrelated by all the same spatiotemporal and causal interrelations as A1...An, compose a conscious object (2001, p.94).

Merricks argues that if a finger is removed from a conscious being P then P's finger complement (i.e. P minus the finger) is also a conscious being. However, if in the instant the finger is removed the atoms that compose P's finger complement are exactly the same in their intrinsic properties and spatiotemporal and causal interrelations as they were before the removal then these atoms must have composed a conscious object before the amputation. But then there must have been two conscious beings where P was before the amputation. Many more than two, in fact, considering all the many atom complements. But Merricks claims there was exactly one conscious entity in P's location before the amputation. (C) must be false and whether an object is conscious isn't metaphysically necessitated by the existence and intrinsic properties of, and spatiotemporal and causal interrelations among, that object's constituent atoms.

Merricks further assumes that humans cause things in virtue of being conscious. Combined with the denial of (C), this means that a human's causing E in virtue of being conscious 'does not all by itself give one a reason to believe that that human's constituent atoms cause E in virtue of their intrinsic properties and spatiotemporal and causal interrelations,' (2001, p.89). This means that it's possible that humans have non-redundant causal powers from consciousness. This formulation leaves open the possibility that there is another reason to believe that that human's constituent atoms cause E in virtue of their intrinsic properties and interrelations. Surprisingly, Merricks admits that such a possibility is actual - because the atoms cause E having been caused to do so by the person. That is, when a person causes anything in virtue of being conscious there is a causal chain that goes from the person, to the atoms, to the event that is caused. As Merricks says, 'in tracing back the causal origin of my arm's moving (if it is intended), we will reach a cause that is not microphysical, that just is the agent's deciding to do something,' (2001, p.110).

Merricks concludes that whenever they cause anything in virtue of being conscious, persons are causally relevant to their constituent atoms' causing anything. This is a rejection of the first premise of the Overdetermination Argument as applied to persons, and as a result persons, indeed any conscious beings, are exempt from Merricks's eliminativism.

Section 2

Having outlined Merricks's arguments, in this section I will consider several criticisms of his eliminativism about material objects that I believe fail. In Section 3 I will then argue that despite Merricks's arguments for eliminativism holding, his special exemption for persons does not, resulting in an eliminativism for all material objects, including persons.

2.1

Sider (2003b) questions premise 3 of the Overdetermination Argument, arguing that Merricks assumes that abandoning material objects is preferable to admitting systematic overdetermination. Sider suggests three possible objections to overdetermination and argues that none of them support Merricks's claims. The metaphysical objection is that overdetermination is metaphysically incoherent. However, Sider argues that none of our best theories of causation rule out the overdetermination in question. Secondly, the coincidence objection holds that it would be a staggering coincidence for every effect with a macrophysical cause to also have microphysical ones. Sider argues that it's necessary that atoms in a particular arrangement compose a baseball, so it's no coincidence that the window is shattered by both the atoms and the baseball. However, this begs the question against Merricks, who denies just such a necessary connection. Finally, the epistemic objection holds that we have no reason to believe in overdetermining entities. There is no reason to posit baseballs if their effects are already accounted for by atoms. Sider shows that Merricks goes beyond the epistemic objection, emphasising the inherent problems of overdetermination.

Merricks (2003) suggests that this disagreement can be summarised by saying that he accepts, and Sider rejects, (A):

> (A): Everything else being equal, an ontology free of systematic causal overdetermination is preferable to one that implies systematic causal overdetermination (2003, p.742)

Merricks argues that (A) is motivated by Ockham's Razor. Sider admits that Ockham's Razor justifies the epistemic objection, showing that belief in material objects cannot be justified by their causal effects. However, Merricks argues that it can be put to a stronger purpose as a metaphysical objection, as it favours ontologies without mere overdeterminers such as baseballs over those with them. These objects would do nothing other

than overdetermine events, and so would surely be ruled out by Ockham's Razor. This motivates (A), giving a reason to prefer ontologies free of systematic causal overdetermination, on the grounds that they do not the mere overdeterminers.

2.2

Carroll & Carter (2005) deny premise 1 of the Overdetermination Argument, arguing that the argument that exempts persons can be applied to trees, ships, and any composite material object. If Merricks can refute (C) then a similar argument can refute (S):

> Ship (S): Necessarily, if some atoms A1...An compose a ship, then any atoms intrinsically like A1...An, interrelated by all the same spatiotemporal and causal interrelations as A1...An, compose a ship (2005, p.5)

If a ship's plank-complement composes a ship, then there are indefinitely many ships in the same location. This is as implausible as there being indefinitely many conscious beings in P's location, so shipness isn't necessitated by the microphysical. There are then grounds to exempt ships from the Overdetermination Argument, which can be generalised to include every composite physical object, blocking Merricks's eliminativism.

The problem with this argument is that it ignores causal powers. Ships won't be exempted from the Overdetermination Argument unless it is the case both that shipness isn't necessitated by the microphysical, and that ships cause things in virtue of their shipness. Carroll & Carter only prove the former. They respond by arguing that ships do have such causal powers, suggesting a ship rescuing marooned sailors. The sailors are rescued because it's a ship that appears on the horizon; shipness is causally relevant. However, the issue is the contrast between a ship and atoms arranged ship-wise. If eliminativism is true, then the sailors would still be rescued by the atoms arranged ship-wise just as they would have been rescued by a ship. The atoms do the rescuing in virtue of their microphysical properties, and not in virtue of shipness. Carroll & Carter provide no reason to doubt this claim, and so fail to show that ships should be exempted from the Overdetermination Argument.

Section 3

I have now argued that the main criticisms of Merricks's eliminativism fail to disprove his arguments. For the purposes of this paper I will take this to mean that eliminativism about material objects is correct. What remains to be shown is that Merricks's attempt to exempt persons from this eliminativism fails, and it is to that which I now turn.

3.1

Merricks's eliminativism is secure so far, but much criticism of Merricks has focused on his exemption of persons. Carroll & Carter deny premise 2 of his argument exempting persons, suggesting that there is an instability in Merricks's rejection of the Micro-Exclusion Argument, MEA-1 (2005, p.11):

> MEA-1: since every physical event has microphysical causes, and there is no systematic overdetermination, physical events cannot have distinct mental causes.

This is a variant of Jaegwon Kim's Exclusion Argument, the reductio of the assumption that a physical event has a mental cause. Merricks rejects MEA-1, arguing that he can avoid the reductio because humans can, in virtue of being conscious, cause their atoms to cause physical events. The mental is not causally irrelevant, and there can be distinct mental & microphysical causes without overdetermination.

Carroll & Carter argue that if Merricks rejects MEA-1 he should also reject MEA-2:

> MEA-2: since every physical event has microphysical causes, and there is no systematic overdetermination, physical events cannot have distinct physical causes that consist of or involve physical properties of humans.

That is, he should hold that there are physical causes that are or involve physical properties of humans. However, there's then no obvious reason to not reject MEA-3:

> MEA-3: since every physical event has microphysical causes, and there is no systematic overdetermination, physical events cannot have distinct physical causes that consist of or involve physical properties of statues.

However, Merricks cannot accept this claim because this would be admitting that physical properties of statues have causal powers, which directly opposes the Overdetermination Argument. Carroll & Carter argue that Merricks must accept MEA-2 and MEA-3 while still rejecting MEA-1. They claim that to do so, Merricks 'should be prepared to argue that only the mental properties of human beings are implicated in the causation of physical events,' (2005, p.12), to which they offer the incredulous stare.

This incredulity seems unwarranted, as Merricks is committed to no such claim. Some confusion comes from Carroll & Carter's use of the term 'physical', when clarity might instead suggest 'macrophysical', in contrast to 'microphysical'. Merricks's rejecting MEA-1 and accepting MEA-2 only commits him to there being mental causes and microphysical causes, but no macrophysical causes. Indeed, this is perfectly in line with Merricks's own claims, and is exactly what he does accept. Merricks never suggests that only mental properties are involved in causation, or denies the causal efficacy of the microphysical, as Carroll & Carter seem to suggest. Correct or not, Merricks's view is more plausible than Carroll & Carter give it credit for, and deserves better than the incredulous stare.

3.2

There remain serious problems with Merricks's attempt to defend the existence of humans and other conscious animals, chiefly his assumption that we cause things in virtue of being conscious that our atoms don't. Merricks is banking on the assumption that microphysical closure doesn't hold, and that the mental has causal powers. Merricks is open about his reliance on this assumption, and that it is an assumption, admitting that his argument 'could be undermined by empirical evidence for the claim that every physical effect has a microphysical cause to which non-microphysical entities are causally irrelevant,' (2001, p.111). Merricks is betting that such evidence will not emerge, and this is the grounds for his whole exemption of humans from the Overdetermination Argument.

Carroll & Carter point out that denying microphysical closure is tantamount to believing that atoms behave differently in human brains to the laboratories in which they are tested. Without substantial technological advances and widespread tests on conscious humans, this claim cannot be tested. However, it's difficult to justify, and suggests that much of modern physicists' work understanding the laws of nature is misguided. Moreover, equivalent tests have not been run on a great many things outside of laboratories. The epistemic possibility that non-redundant causal powers might emerge from certain microphysical arrangements applies to other systems that are not conscious. There is no reason why human consciousness

should be the source of non-redundant causal powers rather than any other complex microphysical arrangements in the world - Merricks needs some further justification for why consciousness in particular is so special.

Ultimately, as Merricks and Carroll & Carter agree, this is an empirical question, and one that neither physicists nor neuroscientists are especially close to resolving, given the overwhelming complexity of the human brain, and the potentially grave consequences of tampering with it. However, while Merricks is betting that microphysical closure will be proven not to hold for conscious beings, I'm more inclined to join Carroll & Carter, who are putting their money down on that not being the case (2005, p.11).

3.3

Carroll & Carter's strongest criticism is that the exemption argument will not apply to unconscious persons. If a person is lying unconscious, blocking a hallway, then they have no more causal powers than a baseball. The unconscious person causes nothing, and thus does not exist (2005, pp.12-13). Merricks acknowledges this problem, and suggests three ways to account for the example of a coma patient thrown through a window causing it to shatter. Firstly, the coma patient will be 'causally upstream' of the window shattering thanks to the conscious decisions they made that partly led to their entering the coma, so caused their atoms to shatter the window via a lengthy causal chain. This ignores the issue: while in the coma, the patient has no causal powers, and thus there is no reason to posit their existence. They may have, pre-coma, been causally responsible for everything their atoms do during the coma, but that does not entail their comatose existence. In addition, if someone would have entered a coma no matter how they acted beforehand then they cannot be held causally responsible for their atoms during the coma, since they had no power to avoid it.

Merricks's second response argues that coma patients have 'potential causal control' over their atoms, comparing this to a security guard who oversleeps, missing their guard duty, causing their store to be looted. The guard can be said to cause the looting because they had a power to stop it which they did not exercise. Similarly, the coma patient has a power over their atoms that they do not exercise while unconscious. However, there are two possible requirements for potential causal control: having had control over events before they entered the coma; and having the capacity for consciousness. If the former is a requirement, then once again, someone who would have entered a coma no matter how they acted wouldn't have potential causal control over their atoms as there would be no way for them

to not be in the coma. If the latter is required, then someone who had no chance of recovery wouldn't have potential causal control. Either way, potential causal control will leave some coma patients non-existent.

The third response requires what Merricks admits to be a substantial assumption, that 'living organisms, just in virtue of being alive, constantly (and non-redundantly) cause their parts to do things,' (2001, p.150). The shattering of the window is actually many scatterings of atoms, and whether those specific scatterings happen or not depends on microscopic differences in the person's body which in turn depend on the person being alive. This maintains the non-redundant causal powers, and existence, of unconscious people. Merricks is correct that it requires a considerable assumption. Moreover, it has significant ramifications for Merricks's ontology. It commits him to the existence of all living organisms, and not just humans. It also reduces the importance of his arguments for the causal powers of consciousness - if he can show that organisms cause things in virtue of being alive then he has no need to rely on the shaky grounds of mental causation. It's surprising then how briefly Merricks discusses this claim, and how little he dwells on its significance. He clearly has limited confidence in it, or it would be a central tenet of his argument. Part of the problem is that it's unclear in what sense an organism causes anything in virtue of being alive, above and beyond what its atoms cause. The microscopic structure of the body as it hits the window depends on the properties and relations of the atoms, not on the person being alive, as it's possible for the body to have the same structure and not be alive. The burden of proof is on Merricks to show that being alive brings non-redundant causal powers, and he fails to do so.

There's another problem for Merricks here. He holds that since they aren't conscious, corpses don't cause anything, and don't exist. However, if a corpse (or atoms arranged corpse-wise) is thrown through a window, it should have the same potential causal control as the coma patient. The person could have stopped this from happening by taking actions that would have avoided their death. As discussed earlier, if the problem is the impossibility of recovery, the same is true for some coma patients. The best way for Merricks to escape this is to admit that corpses exist as well, but this expands his ontology further than he would like, so he doesn't consider it.

One option that would solve these problems for Merricks is to bite the bullet and admit that people cease to exist when they are unconscious. This requires not only denying the existence of coma patients but also holding that every time people sleep they cease to exist. This wouldn't

be metaphysically problematic, but is clearly unintuitive. Merricks doesn't pursue this option, and would likely be unwilling to accept it, but it does avoid one of the main criticisms of his arguments.

One final option for Merricks is to modify his position to hold that for macroscopic physical objects to be is to have causal powers at some time. Unconscious people can exist because they had non-redundant causal powers when they were conscious. Their previous causal powers guarantee their existence because they're still the same person that existed then and had said causal powers. Merricks doesn't consider this option at all, despite the fact that it avoids the problems raised in this section and seems no less plausible than his own position.

Merricks can only defend the existence of unconscious people by drawing on potential causal control, but this cannot explain the non-existence of corpses. This problem can be avoided through either biting the bullet and denying the existence of unconscious people, or by holding that to be is to have causal powers at some time. Merricks considers neither option but either could save his position with only minor modification.

3.4

The final objection comes from Sider (2004), who denies premise 1 of the exemption argument, suggesting that consciousness is necessitated by microphysical properties, as it is a maximal and extrinsic property. To be conscious an object must 'be conscious* and not be part of a larger conscious* being,' (2004, p.197), where consciousness* is the property which a thing has 'in virtue of having all that is required, intrinsically, for consciousness... [i.e.] consciousness stripped of any maximality requirement,' (2003a, p.10). In Merricks's example, P's finger complement is merely conscious* before the amputation, but is conscious after the amputation, as it is no longer part of the larger conscious being P. Consciousness is extrinsic, so P's finger complement can become conscious without any changes in the intrinsic properties or internal relations of its atoms. This argument still sides with Merricks in denying (C), as it admits that consciousness isn't necessitated by the intrinsic properties of an object's atoms. However, Sider could instead support:

> Consciousness* (C*): Necessarily, if some atoms A1...An compose a conscious* object, then any atoms intrinsically like A1...An, interrelated by all the same spatiotemporal and causal interrelations as A1...An, compose a conscious* object.

Since consciousness* and consciousness have the same causal powers, and consciousness* is necessitated by intrinsic atomic properties, there will be reason to believe that anything caused by a person in virtue of being conscious was in fact caused by that person's constituent atoms. As a result, Merricks can no longer hold that humans are exempt from the Overdetermination Argument.

Merricks offers three responses to this objection: that there being indefinitely many conscious* beings in the same location as P is just as bad as there being as many conscious beings; that on Sider's view consciousness supervenes on the irrelevant and trivial difference of a single atom; and that it would be impossible to know whether you are conscious or merely conscious*.

Dorr defends Sider's view from Merricks's first objection, arguing that there is a phenomenological difference between the conscious and the merely conscious*, as 'without consciousness there is no such thing as "phenomenology",' (Dorr 2003, p.713). There aren't indefinitely many beings in P's location with the phenomenology of consciousness, but only one, and so the many conscious* beings present are not objectionable.

However, Dorr's defence seems misguided. While Sider's definition of consciousness* does not commit him to it, Sider is clear that he believes that the conscious* beings have all the phenomenology of consciousness. The only difference between the conscious and the conscious* is maximality, and this cannot be wholly responsible for the phenomenology of consciousness.[2] Instead, Sider argues that all the conscious* beings have phenomenology, but that this is not a problem for his account. This is because they 'share nearly all the same parts in common, share a brain in common, and "think" all the same thoughts,' (Sider 2003a, p.11). Their experiences are not distinct or independent in any objectionable way, and so there is no problem. Furthermore, even if it's still counter-intuitive to admit these many co-located conscious* beings, it is better than the alternative: to accept Merricks's arguments and abandon the completeness of microphysics. Sider pits this as a choice between intuitions and science, and comes down on the side of science.

Merricks's second objection is that Sider's view is open to the "irrelevant triviality" objection: the significant difference between having and lacking consciousness supervenes on the intuitively trivial and irrelevant difference between having and lacking a single atom. Sider can escape this criticism, however, because while P's atom-complement's being conscious may depend on the single atom between it and P, its being conscious* does not. Whether or not P's atom-complement is attached to an extra atom, it is still

conscious*. Meanwhile, the difference of a single atom may be trivial, but is certainly not irrelevant to the question of whether or not something is conscious rather than merely conscious*. This is because this atom is the difference between satisfying or failing the maximality condition, and this is the difference between being conscious and being merely conscious*.

Sider offers his own defence against Merricks's third objection, that we would be unable to know if we are conscious or merely conscious*. He argues that reflexive thought 'is not in the first instance about I, but rather involves a distinctively reflexive this,' (Sider 2004, p.198). Rather than wondering whether I am conscious, the question should be whether this conscious being is conscious, or whether this person is conscious. The answer to the first is trivial, while if both 'person' and 'conscious' are taken to be maximal, then 'this person' will pick out the only conscious being in the vicinity.[3]

There is a related objection, however. Not all of the conscious* beings will have the same parts. Many of the conscious* beings in my vicinity will not have a left index finger, for example. As a result, since I cannot know that I am not a merely conscious* being, I cannot know that I have a left index finger as a part. In fact, given the overwhelming number of conscious* beings that do not have the left index finger as a part, the odds suggest that I don't. Sider's reflexive this solves this problem as well. There is simply no way for any merely conscious* being to pick themselves out from among the other conscious* being using first-person thoughts. It's impossible for a conscious* being to ask 'do I have a left index finger?' as they can only ask 'does this person have a left index finger?' to which there will always be a clear answer.

More problematically, Sider faces problems regarding the essentiality of indexical thoughts (Perry 1979), failing to explain why reflexive thoughts provide reasons for action. That is, the thought that 'this person's finger is about to be cut off' does not provide the same motivation to action as 'my finger is about to be cut off.' Only the latter explains why you would act to avoid the finger's removal. Even the conscious being is in the same position, as they only pick themselves out non-reflexively.

There is another problem that plagues Sider's account as well. He attempts to explain how we know that we are conscious by showing that our reflexive thoughts only refer to conscious beings. This would be fine if the question had been 'am I the reference of my first person-thoughts?' However, the real questions are 'am I the thinker of my thoughts?', or 'what am I?' Linguistic solutions cannot answer these questions because changing our language will not affect what we are, only what we refer to.

Sider's solution fails to show that we're conscious, showing only that our first-person thoughts refer to conscious beings, and so the problems remain.

Regardless of these problems, Sider's argument offers a promising response to Merricks's claims that humans exist. After all, Sider shows that holding consciousness to be extrinsic and maximal allows me to maintain that if conscious objects exist, their consciousness is necessitated by the microphysical, or at the very least their consciousness* is. As a result, humans do not cause anything that their atoms don't, and so are just as causally redundant as statues. Thus, they are vulnerable to the Overdetermination Argument, and must not exist at all. The fact that Sider's view leads to difficulties with identifying with a conscious being is moot here, because combined with the Overdetermination Argument there are no longer a great many conscious* beings in one location; and nor can one atom make the difference between a person being conscious* or conscious; because there are no longer any conscious, or conscious*, beings at all, and hence no persons.

Conclusion

There are no convincing counter-arguments to Merricks's eliminativism about material objects. Avoiding overdetermination is justified on the grounds of parsimony, and Carroll & Carter (2005) fail to show that baseballs and ships have non-redundant causal powers. Merrick's attempt to exempt humans opens his argument up to problems from his rejection of the Micro-Exclusion Argument, and the causal powers of unconscious beings, though there are defences against these objections. More significant is his reliance on the failure of Microphysical Closure, which finds little defence in modern physics, even from quantum mechanics. Most pressing, however, is his failure to show that consciousness isn't necessitated by the microphysical. Sider's criticism struggles with reflexive thought, but when combined with the successful Overdetermination Argument these problems disappear, as humans no longer exist. Merricks's eliminativism is correct, but does not go far enough. Consciousness does not grant humans non-redundant causal powers, so there is no reason to defend their existence in contrast to other composite material objects.

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(Endnotes)

1 Merricks offers limited argument for this weaker version of 'Alexander's dictum', but defends its plausibility as part of a brief defence of the claim that objects, in addition to events, cause things, drawing on causal theories of perception to justify this (2001, pp.65-6, 81).

2 Sider doesn't consider it, but this problem could be avoided by holding that a single atom needn't affect the existence of phenomenology, but merely which beings have such phenomenology, which is less troublesome.

3 A similar argument was proposed by Noonan (2010) as a defence against the 'too many thinkers' problem for personal identity. He argues that first-person thoughts only refer to persons, so when a human animal has first-person thoughts they refer to the coincident person. Noonan is vulnerable to similar objections to Sider however.

Personhood and Personal Identity in the Online World

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to argue that the best way of understanding most of the questions raised by Personal Identity Online (PIO) situations is to drop the assumption that all there is to it is a special case of the most general and well-known Personal Identity (PI) problem. On that assumption, one could merely resort to the standard approaches to PI as a reidentification question and see how well they fare in explaining PIO and there would be nothing more to it. My first claim is that many of the questions usually considered as PI questions that arise from offline situations, even though related to PI, are not really strict PI questions. As far as consensus can be achieved in the PI debates, one can safely say that it is itself a special case of a more general problem about what does it take for an object to persist from one time to another as the *same* object - a special instance of the problem of change and persistence. However, the fact of the matter that makes this problem a special case of persistence is too often neglected in the debate: the fact that its object of consideration is (or better, can qualify as) a *person.* As a result of this move, most personal identity theorists seem to bypass completely the concept of person and address persons' persistence as if it (*person*) was an unproblematic category (most of the times, just assuming that *homo sapiens* and *person* are synonyms). In these standard views, the problem of personhood is, at best, when it is actually explicitly addressed, a secondary and derivative problem of the PI problem, which is seen as the primary and basic problem to be solved. Unlike most PI theorists, I argue that it is exactly the other way around: it is only through the reflection on problem 1) (the conditions of personhood problem) that some clarification of the SPI problem (and all other problems related to the concept of person) can be expected.

Having described the different philosophical problems related to the concept of person and argued that the problem of personhood is the basic problem to be addressed, I then proceed in section II to substantiate that claim also in what regards online situations, examining a number of them (social network profiles, blogger's profiles, avatars, etc.) in the light of that methodological classification of problems. I argue that on most of those cases, the online situations are on a pair with other offline situations, some of everyday life, some of PI literature's well-known thought experiments, and that the answer to be given depends, like in those thought-experiments, on what exactly the situation and its features are. Some of them but by no means all can fall under the Standard Personal Identity problem. But a large number of interesting and important questions don't. With that problems distinction on one hand and the analysis of the online and offline situations, we can then see more clearly why the understanding of the questions raised by PIO situations requires us to drop the simplistic assumption that all there is to it is a special case of the PI problem. To be thorough, the paper finishes with a discussion on how and to what extent can we informally use the standard approaches to SPI and see how well they fare in explaining online situations – specifically, the argument goes that psychological approaches to the SPI problem and, in particular, narrativity theories, are more equipped to dealing with most of the online situations, *pace* their patent shortcomings.

Keywords: Narrativity, personal identity, personal identity online, personhood

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to argue that the best way to understand most of the questions raised by Personal Identity Online (PIO) is to drop the assumption that it is simply a special case of the more general and well-known Personal Identity (PI) problem and that, as such, one can resort to standard PI approaches to explain PIO.

I argue that this assumption be dropped because standard approaches to PI often fail to recognize that many of the questions they address are not Strict PI (SPI) issues (i.e. questions about the persistence of persons in time) but different philosophical problems related to (and in some sense even dependent on) the concept of the person and the most fundamental problem of the conditions of personhood. The misleading way in which the question is framed in offline situations, with SPI being taken as the genus

and all the other PI problems as species, has not rendered good results and we should thus be wary of simply transferring standard approaches to PI to PIO. Neither debate is as simple as that.

In Section 1 I will focus on ten questions about persons, trying to connect those with the philosophical problems that most authors usually include under the sometimes misleading heading of 'Personal Identity problems', and arguing for the fundamental status of the (conditions of) personhood problem.

Having described the different philosophical problems related to the concept of the person and argued that personhood is the fundamental problem to be addressed, I will then proceed in Section 2 to substantiate that claim with regards to online situations, examining a number of them (e.g. social network profiles, bloggers' profiles, avatars, etc.) in the light of this methodological classification. I argue that, in most cases, online situations are on a par with offline situations (some taken from everyday life; some from PI's well-known thought experiments) and that the answer to be given depends on what exactly the situation and its features are. Some (but by no means all) cases may fall under the heading of SPI, but a large number of interesting and important questions do not. With that distinction on the one hand and the analysis of the online and offline situations on the other, we can see more clearly why an understanding of the questions raised by PIO requires us to drop the simplistic assumption that all there is to it is a special case of the PI problem.

Building on this, I finish the paper with a discussion in Section 3 of how successfully certain existing approaches to PI can be applied to online situations. Specifically, I claim that psychological approaches to the PI problem may be better equipped to deal with most of online situations than their somatic counterparts. I also claim that, within the wider range of psychological approaches, narrative theories can provide a reasonable starting point to assess online situations because of their appreciation of the interpersonal dimension and the connections they can establish between the fundamental problem of the conditions of personhood and the other personhood problems.

1. Personhood, Personal Identity and Other Personhood Problems

The topic of Personal Identity (PI) is usually described by philosophers as the inquiry into what conditions must obtain in order for a person to exist as the same person at different moments in time.[2] As far as consensus can be achieved in the debate, one can say that PI is seen as a special case of a more general problem about what it takes for an object to persist from one time to another as the same object – a problem of numerical identity, a special instance of the problem of change and persistence.[3] PI, then, focuses on the persistence conditions of a special kind of object, i.e. persons. Let us call this formulation the strict personal identity problem (SPI), to clarify that its primary concern is the persistence question.

Although it seems obvious that the question of what a person most fundamentally is should logically precede the question of what conditions must obtain in order for that person to exist as the same person at different moments in time, most theorists of 'standard' PI seem to bypass completely the concept of person and address persons' persistence as if the question of personhood were an unproblematic category, most of the time assuming that homo sapiens and person are synonymous. The personhood problem is therefore all too often neglected in the debate and is, when actually explicitly addressed, considered at best a secondary and derivative problem of SPI, which is seen as the primary and basic problem to be solved.

Consider the features that we normally list as basic regarding our personal existence. In Marya Schechtman's (1996) view, those are survival, moral responsibility, self-interested concern, and compensation. Schechtman's claim is right, to an extent - those features do explain our concern with questions of PI (and of SPI) – but does not go far enough. The connection between questions of PI and those features is not exhausted at the level of characterization but goes deeper and is more fully understood at the level of the personhood question or the conditions of personhood problem.[4] It is in this question, when we wonder about what persons have and non-persons lack, that survival, moral responsibility, self-interested concern, and compensation first appear: It is the survival of persons, the moral responsibility of persons, the self-interested concern of persons, and the compensation of persons that we are interested in. Similarly, Olson (2010) includes the personhood problem – "What is it to be a person? What is necessary, and what suffices, for something to count as a person, as opposed to a non-person? What have people got that non-people haven't got" – within the "wide range of loosely connected questions" that authors

traditionally call the PI problem. One can't assume from this alone that he thinks personhood to be a derivative question of the problem of persistence but, putting together his framework in SEP with other discussions of personhood in his work, the evidence does seem to point in that direction.[5] [6]

According to the orthodox PI view the problem of personhood is, so to speak, a species of the genus SPI. Yet many problems that are usually considered PI problems (such as what sort of thing is a person; what is the practical importance of being the same person throughout time; what justifies our interest in persons; what kinds of persons there are, among many others) are in fact better framed as 'personhood problems'. By this I mean a set of metaphysical (and epistemological) problems that revolve around the concept of person. The one basic feature that all these problems have in common is that they involve our concept of the person, and this concept should thus be on the top of our priorities. I argue, unlike most PI theorists, that it is only through reflection on the personhood problem that some clarification of the SPI problem (and all other problems related to the concept of person) can be expected. Accordingly, I maintain that the issue of persistence is not the umbrella question but merely one of the questions that arises from the problem of the conditions of personhood. Many of the other questions that philosophers usually include under the label PI are not really SPI questions, and are actually more closely related to the other personhood problems.

To substantiate this claim, I will first try to identify and describe, albeit briefly, these personhood problems.[7] While many other areas of philosophy can provide us with questions regarding persons (think of the distinction between numerical identity and qualitative identity, of problems of mereology, composition, constitution, of vagueness, of universals and particulars, of the mind/body problem, or even of agency and moral responsibility), the point here is not to list every possible question one can ask regarding persons but to address those that are closest to what I call the personhood problem, or the core of personhood problems (i.e. the conditions of personhood).

***

A) Which properties or capacities must a thing have in order to be said to belong to the class of persons? (The conditions of personhood problem).

We want to know what is necessary and sufficient for something in the world to count as a person, as opposed to a non-person.[8] What do persons have that non-persons lack? The attempt to answer this question frequently takes the form of a search for the distinctive features of persons, usually encompassing traits such as rationality, self-awareness, free will, the

existence of mental states about other mental states, the existence of second-order volitions or the capacity to use language, etc. Let us take Lynne Rudder Baker's Constitution View as an example.[9] Baker (2000) argues that only a being with a first-person perspective, a being that understands itself from 'within', without the need to identify itself by means of any description, name, or other third-person referring device, can be considered a person. In order to have a first-person perspective, intentionality is required but it does not suffice: "An object x has the capacity for a first-person perspective at t if and only if x has all the structural properties at t required for a first-person perspective and either (i) x has manifested a first-person perspective at some time before t or (ii) x is in an environment at t conducive to the development and maintenance of a first-person perspective" (2000: 92).[10]

B) Which things in the world belong to the class of persons? (The extension of the concept of person).

The first and most intuitive candidate to belong to the class of persons is man, the animal member of the human species, the human animal. And it certainly is true that when we approach PI, it is usually in a special kind of persons, namely us, human beings, that we are interested. We human beings are, of course, the paradigmatic example of persons. But it might be that there are other kinds of persons - like God(s), angels, disembodied Cartesian Egos, great apes[11], artificial intelligences, etc. These examples are in fact a good way to see how questions A and B are related: by determining the conditions of personhood, that is, the properties or capacities a being should possess in order to belong to the class of persons, we are indirectly determining which (kinds of) beings in the world belong to the class of persons and contributing, so to speak, to the resolution of the extension of the concept of person problem.[12]

C) Are those properties or capacities enough in themselves to constitute a person, or is recognition necessary? If the latter, by whom and in what manner? (The conventionality of the concept of person).

Is person a qualification attributed in a conventional manner? One instance in which this question is connected with A is if we hold that interpersonal or social recognition is not just a mere expedient but a truly constitutive feature of personhood determination. Answering A by advancing interpersonal recognition as a capacity required to belong to the class of persons wouldn't necessarily imply a conventionalist answer to the current question.[13]

D) What are the criteria necessary to discover those properties or capacities? (The problem of the criteria for determining personhood conditions).

Here we have an epistemological question: How do we know that

a certain being in the world has all the properties or capacities that are needed to belong to the class of persons? Again, the answer here may vary according to the answer given to A. If one assumes Baker's view, where a first-person perspective is required, then a new debate arises, about whether it is to the data of cognitive science one should resort.[14]

E) What kinds of persons are there, if there are different kinds? (The problem of the sub-classes or sub-sets of persons).

This question is very closely related to B. If in B we were asking which beings in the world do in fact belong to the class of persons (that is, we were asking about the extension of the concept of person), here we are asking if we can still find, within the class or set of persons, some sub-classes or sub-sets. Which characteristics would persons possess, in addition to those that make them persons, that could ground such sub-classes or sub-sets? One plausible answer would be that of a physical support: Assuming, again, Baker's view, where the first-person perspective is what counts as an answer to A, we could presumably distinguish, at least conceptually, between human persons, artificial persons and even divine persons.

F) Can – and should – different things in the world be considered more or less of a person than others? (The gradualness of the concept of person).

Here again the answer to A is determinant. Had we chosen an absolutist identification of human animal and person, this wouldn't even be an acceptable question[15]: a foetus would be as much a person as a grown human animal, for instance. If our view is different, and non-absolutist, then we can not only conceive of humans that are no longer or are not yet persons but also, in recognizing the existence of beings other than human animals in the class of persons (that is, answering B and E in a non-absolutist manner), we can conceive of beings that are more or less persons than other such beings, depending on the qualities or properties stated in answering A. For instance, if one assumes sentience or rationality to be what matters in A, we can think of other animals (non-human animals) as being part of the class of persons (that is, thus answering B) and we may even consider whether the degree to which those beings possess such properties is to be taken into account.[16]

G) What are the conditions that explain that something is one and only one person in a certain moment in time? (The problem of the unity of the person).

As opposed to the following question, H, regarding the problem of the persistence of the person, sometimes called a diachronic identity problem, G is a synchronic identity problem. While H involves different moments in time, G is only concerned with a specific moment in time and

nothing else. The relata of whatever metaphysical relation one needs to look into here are not, if you will, separated by any time lapse. Supposing an absolutist stance is adopted in A – taking human animal and person as synonymous – the answer is 'easy'[17], in that each human animal is a person and only one person and vice versa. If, on the other hand, we answer A appealing to consciousness (or to a first-person perspective, like Baker) or to interpersonal recognition, we might see our answers to G as a little bit harder: How would we deal with pathological cases of fragmented and even irreconcilable consciousnesses coexisting in one human animal? Or with the possibility of a consciousness that is instantiated in different human animals? Would we be willing to separate human animal and person to this extreme? Is that a bullet such a theorist would be willing to bite?

H) What are the conditions necessary for a person to exist as the same person in different moments in time? (The problem of the persistence of the person or the traditional metaphysical problem of personal identity).[18]

This is perhaps the most debated issue when it comes to persons and the concept of personhood. My view, however, as it might be clear by now, is that this is a sub-question or a sub-issue within the wider problem of personhood. To inquire into personal identity is to inquire into the necessary and sufficient conditions of the claim that person x existing at time t1 is the same person as y, existing at time t2. An adequate answer to this question must involve an enunciation of criteria of persistence or, to put it differently, the affirmation of a criterion of personal identity. Using Baker as an example again, one can say that a person persists as that person as long as that first-person perspective is instantiated: If something has my first person perspective, then that thing is a person (response to A) and that person is me and I will persist as long as that first-person perspective persists (answer to H).

I) What are the criteria to determine those persistence conditions? (The problem of the criteria to determine persistence conditions or personal identity).

This is a very close question to H but is not quite the same. In H we ask what it takes for someone to persist through time. Here we ask how we know if that person did in fact persist - i.e., how we know the conditions laid out in H did occur. While H is a metaphysical question, I is an essentially epistemological question. In H we were wondering about the constitutive criteria of persistence, while in I we wonder about the evidential criteria of that persistence. It is a matter of proof and justification. What means do we have to determine if the person here now is the same as the person here yesterday? Memory may provide an answer, physical continuity another, or

maybe even a combination of both.[19]

J) Which features distinguish one person from another and make it unique? (The problem of the individuality of persons).

This is a question about what makes a person that specific person, about our individuality in an 'existential' way, about what makes any person unique, different from all other persons. It may be the way we see ourselves, our personal narrative, our structure of beliefs, our personality, etc. To ask about my individuality in this existential way is to wonder who I am, what defines me and makes me different from other persons. Other questions may arise in relation to this one: How could I be? Would it still be me if my personality had been different for some reason? Or if I had been born a few moments earlier or later? There is also a close connection between this question and A but I will attempt to expand on that in the next portion of the paper, regarding the way Schechtman (1996) intertwines these two questions about what makes something a person and what makes that person unique.

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I have tried to sketch the way in which the answer to A is absolutely fundamental in ascertaining the spectrum of possibilities for answering the other questions. The point is that – and this is what my first thesis amounts to – we should distinguish between these different problems that make up the set of personhood problems, granting the personhood conditions problem priority. The question of SPI is one we should address only once we have at least agreed on what exactly a person is; only once we have at least a minimal understanding of the conditions of personhood. To carve into the discussion the assumption that person and human being are synonymous, is, I think, undesirable.[20] There should be a way of asking the question in a non-contentious manner, one that makes room both for the possibility that only human beings are persons (necessarily or contingently) and for the possibility that there are other kinds of persons (necessarily or contingently). The controversial aspect of this task is, I think, how to conceive of the relation between problems A (and also B and C, which are, all things considered, an inner ring of this constellation of problems) and questions G, H and I (questions that first come to mind when one thinks of PI). The way is to carefully separate these issues, as I am trying to do here.

My claim that we should distinguish between the different problems that make up the set of personhood problems, granting the conditions of personhood priority, leads me to reject the easy assumption that Personal Identity Online (PIO) is nothing more than a special case of SPI. Although I recognize that some of the questions raised by online situations can and

even should be approached by standard theories of SPI, many are not SPI questions per se but other kinds of questions that are not chiefly concerned with persistence conditions. Just as I have argued that many of the issues usually considered as aspects of ordinary (i.e. offline) PI are not really SPI questions because the central problem around which they orbit is personhood, I go on to argue that by the same token PIO is not just a special case of SPI.

2. Personhood Problems in the Online World

I have described some of the different philosophical problems related to the concept of the person and argued that the problem of personhood is the basic problem to be addressed. I now want to substantiate that claim also with regard to online situations, examining a number of them in the light of the above methodological classification of problems.

Let us take an online situation that might raise questions the traditional approach would call PI questions: The social network profile. For convenience and standardization, let us use Facebook as an example. Given the increasing rate of Internet access and dependence and the way companies, politicians and individuals seeking to communicate and establish relationships tend to move their activities online, it is not too great a stretch to imagine a world where our interaction with all other persons is through our Facebook profiles. If such a society were to come about, would someone without Internet access or without a Facebook profile be a person in the same way all the others are? How will his personhood be affected by that fact? Will he be less of a person? This, I argue, is an instance of A, the conditions of personhood problem. The specific question here is whether Internet access or Facebook profiles are among the necessary and/or sufficient conditions of personhood.

Another example is a little more far-fetched: In this online situation, Facebook profiles interact through avatars. The sheer amount of interaction common in this futuristic situation is such that not everyone can easily attend carefully to all their friends' postings and comments and likes. Suppose some company designs an application where, based on your previous comments and posts and 'likes' and all your information, they can accurately predict how you would react to all of your friends' future posts and comments.[21] Your avatar behaves as if it were you, even when you are offline. Of course you can always resume command, as it were, and interact yourself with your Facebook friends, turning the application off or leaving it on in the background while you attend to those friends you really care

about. And you may correct some of the avatars doings in some cases, but not all: From you Facebook friends' perspectives, it was all your doing, be it good or bad.

In this case of an avatar whose behaviour is caused both by your input and by the software's doing, there are many interesting philosophical questions, particularly some regarding agency and free will. But my aim is not to explore all of this here but only to show that, in this case, the question "Is an avatar a person?" is the specific form of a question that should be answered under problem B, even if in connection with problem E. It is the same kind of question one can ask about computers and artificial intelligences in offline situations when one wishes to know if only humans are persons and therefore bearers of moral and legal rights – although the twist that the action is here somehow 'shared' grants this scenario a special point of interest. But this scenario might also lead someone to question G: If you are attending to you dearest friends' posts and the application is dealing will all your co-workers' trivial game-playing requests, a unity problem might not seem so obvious. But if you are focused on your mother's comment on your last post and the application is commenting on your mother's last post, it seems to the rest of the online world that these actions have some sort of harmony and are all coming from the same centre of consciousness and agency. "Are you and your avatar application now one person?," one might be tempted to ask – certainly a variation on the question of whether something is one and only one person in a certain moment in time.

Let us consider one last simple and plain case. 'Facebook Jim' is a profile maintained by a man named Jim. In his offline life, Jim is a quiet, peaceful individual, work-centreed, with no social life or relationships. One might even call him dull. All of Jim's relationships exist online, where Facebook Jim is (in contrast to his offline life) the soul of the party: sociable, lots of friends, dozens of update status and wall posts, comments on other Facebook friends' profiles, 'likes', etc. If one raises the question as to whether this Facebook Jim is the same person as Jim, standard PI theories – like the most accepted strand of psychological theories – cannot truly provide an answer. The reason is that this question is not, to use Schechtman's distinction (1996), about reidentification or persistence but about characterization. It is not H we have in mind here but J. We want to make sense of Facebook Jim's online life and events; we want to know which of the characteristics he exhibits in the online world are truly his. This, however, is a question to which standard theories of PI cannot respond, because they are framing the question the wrong way.

If one supposes the question as being asked in the first person by Jim (or even by Facebook Jim), one can see more clearly what is going wrong than one can from a third person perspective. Suppose Jim becomes aware of these dissonant lives he has been leading. If he poses himself the question "Am I Facebook Jim?" he will be all but satisfied with the answer a standard PI theorist has to offer for he already knows that he is somehow the same person in both cases, and a reidentification criterion is not something he is searching for. What his question actually means to ask is "Who am I online?", "Are those characteristics truly mine?", "Is Facebook Jim a part of me or the real me?", "Would I be the same if by accident Facebook Jim got deleted?" These are questions to be addressed under J, like other online situations whose motivation is a normal case of existential need for self-understanding. It is the same kind of question one can ask in times of self-introspection or existential analysis in offline situations, like "Who am I in this family?" or "What am I doing in this job?"

What these cases (be they thought experiment-like or real, existing situations) demonstrate is that most online scenarios pertaining to personal identity are not cases of SPI. Like in the offline world, traditional approaches to PI pose the wrong question and bundle different problems together. There are many other questions about PIO that are unrelated to SPI and which are, it seems to me, the ones that make it particularly interesting to consider the online world. PIO is therefore comparable with offline PI mainly insofar as both in fact revolve around personhood problems, and thus fall under the personhood questions I have discussed in Section 1. In this respect, we can say that the standard approaches to offline scenarios that motivate problems A, B, E, G and I[22] can be extended to online situations only as long as it clear that:

a) These are not truly SPI problems (whether off or online) but an array of different kinds of problems and, therefore, that

b) It is not standard PI theories that can be called upon here.

All of this is not to say that no online situations can fall under H, the SPI problem, but to recognize that a large number of interesting and important questions, as we have seen, do not. The response to be given depends, rather, on what exactly the situation and its features are.

With the distinction between standard PI approaches and personhood problems on the one hand and the analysis of online and offline situations on the other, we can now see more clearly why an understanding of the questions raised by PIO requires us to drop the simplistic assumption that it is simply a special case of the general PI question. Perhaps this result should come as no surprise: The same explanation of the inability of PI

theories to deal with our offline concerns demonstrates why these same theories do not fare any better in the online world

3. Standard Approaches to SPI and the Online World

If the formal reason why traditional theories of PI centred on the persistence of the person fail in the online setting is that the question itself is incorrectly posed, then the material problem is that they do not capture the complexity of the interpersonal/social dimension of persons in the way in which we are really interested. Drawing on the examples of the previous section, I believe we can agree that the common aspect of all those situations from the online world is the interpersonal dimension. This problem, although already present in the offline world, is particularly acute in the online world, where the social and interpersonal dimension is overwhelming. In this section, I aim to discuss how and to what extent approaches to PI can be applied to online situations in light of this social/interpersonal aspect.

In order to do so, and before beginning that evaluation, I need to recall here the discussion in Section 1 regarding the need to think the relation between human and person in a more thorough way if person is not be taken as a simple honorific.It has been said by some authors (and I agree) that when we ask about SPI, what we are really interested in is in the persistence conditions of beings like us, human animals.[23] I said that the first and most intuitive candidate to belong to the class of persons is man, the animal member of the human species, the human animal. Let's use H for human animal and P for person. What is the relation between H and P? And how can we conceive of it in ways that don't beg the question?

Let me start the description of the first logical possibility I see about the conceptual relation between H and P with this question, which relates to our motivation for SPI. If it turned out that we, beings like us, Hs, are not Ps, would we still want to know about SPI and personhood and all those personhood problems? Or would we start limiting our philosophical debates to something like human identity (HI)? I believe we would continue to ask about what a person is; what the necessary and sufficient conditions for something to be a person are; and about the persistence conditions of persons even in that case. Even if turned out that no H is, has been, ever will or could be a person, we would still be interested in problems A to J. We do not consider ourselves artifacts – at least not at the same intuitive level that we consider ourselves persons – and we don't stop asking metaphysical questions about artifacts. If anything, that might lead to a serious rethinking of our metaphysical nature, of what we are, which

is by itself a huge change. Considering all other disciplines and areas of life where personhood is relevant (theology, law, bioethics, etc.) such a conclusion would by itself foster an ever larger debate on personhood.

Another logical possibility is something like Baker's constitution view: Some humans are persons (we, normal adults) but not all (foetuses and Persistent Vegetative State patients) and some persons are not humans (there may be other kinds of persons: AIs, Gods, great apes, etc.).[24] A third possibility is that all persons are human (we, normal adults, are persons at certain stages in our life and there are no other kinds of persons) but some humans are not persons (foetuses and Persistent Vegetative State patients). Lastly, a fourth possibility: All humans are persons (we, foetuses and Persistent Vegetative State patients alike) but some persons are not humans (there may be other kinds of persons: AI's, Gods, great apes). Whatever turns out to be the case, if we don't lose our interest in SPI and all the other personhood problems if the first possibility obtains, it is much less likely that we lose our interest in those questions if the other possibilities do. Why? Because of our interest in the features that are the usual candidates as person-making properties: consciousness, use of language, free will, sentience, etc. Our philosophical and pre-philosophical interest in the usual defining features of personhood is too strong to be simply cast aside. One common trait to most or even all of those characteristics, like social/interpersonal recognition, is not also that they come in degrees and that they are not stable throughout our lives but also that they somehow depend on our psychological properties.[25] Now, if these characteristics that make something a person also play, as it is reasonable to think, a role in what makes that thing the same numerical person (that is, if the answer to A determines answers to J), then biology-based accounts, like animalism, don't seem to be a suitable candidate for a theory aiming to explain PI on the online world.

Instead, some sort of relevance must be given to psychological characteristics, which excludes animalism and other somatic approaches and forces us to the conclusion that psychological approaches, by comparison, are far better equipped than somatic theories to answer J in the online world. Within the wider spectrum of psychological approaches, I believe narrativity theories[26] have an advantage over other psychological theories when it comes to some of the online situations. It is not that I disregard the objections against narrativity[27] in general, I just think that in some online situations the distinctive feature of (a new form of) interpersonal interaction that interests us is better understood using a narrative theory, because it can best answer questions like J and it is questions like J that will probably

arise in relation to online situations (see Facebook Jim, for instance). Furthermore, narrative theories can also answer cases like the other two scenarios used in the previous section, because narrative theories can also offer an answer to question A and to question E: "An individual constitutes herself as a person by coming to organize her experience in a narrative self-conception of the appropriate form (something that individual human beings do as a result of being socialized into their culture)" (Schechtman 2000: 134) and "All of the stretching and redefining of narrative that is possible in literature, it seems, might occur in an individual's self-conception, and so many alternative narrative forms are possible" (Schechtman 2000: 102).

Consider yet another quote from Schechtman (1996: 135): "A person's identity, according to the narrative self-constitution view, is created by narrating and living a life that recognizes the general cultural conception of a person, the objective view of one's own life, and facts about the world." In the narrative self-constitution view, the connections between the different temporal portions of a person are created by the having of a self-conception that is, simultaneously, the feature that grants personhood. This points to another strength of narrative theories – the fact that the features that make something a person (that is, that answer A) also make something that specific person, both as a matter of persistence and as a matter of individuality. The narrative theory thus takes A as an important step in answering both H and J.

Lastly, the narrative theories offer the possibility, by showing us a way in which A, H and J inform each other, to achieve an understanding of personhood that might bring back an old meaning of the word person: the public person, the persona. Since "what is characteristic of being a person is leading the life of a person" (Schechtman 1996: 95), and since, in order to do this, one must have a narrative that is in synch with the views of others, personhood emerges as socially marked, as interpersonally determined. Now, regarding the origin of the term 'person', this social dimension is already present at the beginning. Its importance as a term of law, to indicate the particular status someone has regarding the legal system in which it is included, is widely known. In fact, by tracing the word 'person' back to the Latin persona, we see that although initially referring to a mask, especially as worn by an actor in theatre, the word took on the meaning of a character or social role as well as being adopted by Roman law to signify a 'bearer of legal rights'.[28] Person and persona thus have this dimension of the mask being worn by someone in the public sphere, in the public, social, and legal arena. Such a social dimension is, I believe needless to say, the distinctive feature of the online world situations being looked into in this paper.

4. Conclusion

I have tried to argue that the best way of understanding most of the questions raised by Personal Identity Online (PIO) situations is to drop the assumptions that it is a special case of the most general and well-known Personal Identity (PI) problem and that one can resort to the standard approaches to PI and see how well they fare in explaining PIO. In Section 1 I have shown that there are many other problems that the standard approaches to PI usually fail to recognize, all related to (and in some sense even dependent on) the concept of person and the most fundamental problem of (conditions of) personhood. I then proceeded in Section 2 to examine a number of online situations (social network profiles, bloggers' profiles, avatars, etc.) in light of that methodological classification of problems, arguing that in most of those cases the online situations are on a par with other offline situations, some of everyday life, some of PI literature's well-known thought experiments, and that the answer to be given depends, like in those thought-experiments, on what exactly the situation and its features are. In this last section, I have tried to show that psychological approaches to the PI problem may be better equipped to deal with most of the online situations than their somatic counterparts. I also claimed that, within the wider range of psychological approaches, narrative theories can be a reasonable starting point to assess the online situations, because of their appreciation of the interpersonal dimension and the connections they can establish between the (fundamental) problem of the conditions of personhood and the other personhood problems.

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(Endnotes)

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2 **"***The problem of personal identity over time is the problem of giving an account of the logically necessary and sufficient conditions for a person identified at one time being the same person as a person identified at another.*" (Noonan, 2003: 2)

3 Noonan 2006.

4 My point here is that Schechtman fails to notice that the four features (1996: 14) go deeper than *questions H* and *J*, they arise as relevant features precisely because they are linked to *A*.

5 In his view, when we want to determine persistence conditions of any kind of thing, we have to discover to which natural kind does that thing belongs to. That categorical ordering will tells us a things most fundamental nature, the property or properties the thing cannot cease to have without thereby ceasing to exist. On this view, trying to answer 1) and 8) are pretty much parallel tasks – it just so happens, in our case, that person counts as an answer to neither of them – see his 1997 and 2008. On Olson's dismissal of personhood, see Nichols (2010).

6 Quante (2007) is another author who tries to present us a classification of these problems. Expanding on his classification, I have of course no specific quarrel with it – it does address those problems one might call the core of personhood and PI. So his Thesis 1), that "*The philosophical problem of personal identity has to be dissolved into at least four problems (each the subject of a set of interrelated questions)*", is not one I take aim at. Nor do I take issue with his thesis 2), that "*It is impossible to solve or dissolve all problems related to personal identity within one single approach without reducing the complexity of the phenomena illegitimately to only a small segment*.

7 One such distinction, on which mine is based, has already been proposed by Michael Quante (2007: 59-63). This author distinguishes between *The Conditions-of-Personhood-Problem* [my 1)]*, The Unity-of-Person-Problem* [my 7)], *The Persistence-of-Person-Problem* [my 8)], and *The Structure-of-Personality-Problem* [roughly approached, at least in its basic form, in my 10)]. I also take Olson's (2010) enumeration of PI problems as a work basis, despite my explicit disagreement on the emphasis and centrality the SPI question takes in it, as I will show.

8 This should not be interpreted as to beg the case for essentialism here. It might be that there are no such conditions or that there is a cluster of them, organized in such a way that none is strictly necessary for something to be a person. Take DeGrazia's (2006: 42) claim that "*personhood is associated with a cluster of properties without being precisely definable in terms of any specific subset*". My aim here, however, is mostly methodological and as such I aim to remain neutral on the substantial theories that can answer the question.

9 Other personhood theories focus on different properties of the beings under analysis: for instance, Frankfurt (1971) stresses the second-order volitions,

Rovane (1998) proposes an ethical criterion, based on intra- and interpersonal relations, and Braddon-Mitchell and Miller (2004) focus on conventions. Chisholm (1976: 136) proposes that person be defined as "*an individual thing which is capable of intentional action or endeavour - in short, a possible agent*". For a more complex, "layered" view, see Dennett (1976), and for a reductionist view, see Parfit (1984).

10 Although Baker maintains that we are essentially persons and that this is the most important ontological fact about us (2000: 147), I shall argue later on that there is no need to assume from the outset that 'person' is what beings like us (human animals or human beings) most essentially are, nor that only beings like us qualify as persons (nor, needless to say, the opposite of any of these views) – all of this is open to discussion. A different question may arise, in a more or less immediate way related to 1), which is: what is the importance of being a person? This question leads to practical, ethical and legal, concerns, and, even though these are usually framed in relation to 8), the main point is that they always on depend on something being a person, as I will try to show.

11 DeGrazia (2006) puts up a compelling case for the qualification of other biological species as persons.

12 When I use "determining" in the context of the influences of one question on another, I mean that the scope of possibilities in answering the second is somehow narrowed by the answer that was given to the first, not that there is a relation of necessity between the answers to the questions.

13 See Laitinen (2007) and Braddon-Mitchell and Miller (2004) for a more detailed account of how recognition and conventions can play a role in the constitutive features of persons. Also Schechtman (1996: 95), when she emphasizes the way in which to be a person is to live the life of a person, engaging in the practices persons usually engage, making recognition lead to constraints on the "identity-constituting narrative". This also means, if I am right about the importance of 1), that we can take this "interpersonal recognition capacity as personhood-constitutive" to (at least partially) answer 10), which may counter Quante's aim to keep those questions separated but this is not the place to argue for that.

14 If one assumes an absolutist view that identifies human animal and person without further considerations, then perhaps it is merely a biologist's task to provide the answer. If, however, I deem interpersonal or social recognition as something (at least in a minimal degree) constitutive of personhood, as many authors do, it will probably be both cognitive capacities (construed in a broader way, maybe) and social and cultural practices that will be the subject of my interest.

15 To be thorough, it does seem possible, even if harder to conceive, a view that accepts a gradualness within the class of persons but denies the existence of different sub-classes or sub-sets – think of someone who would only consider human animals as persons but, in what regards these, accepts the existence of characteristics which would allow for some sort of scale, like rationality and free will. It is perhaps a more fragile position but still a conceivable one.

16 Perhaps on a strictly logical level, once we have found the presence of some minimal degree of one of those capacities deemed necessary to qualify the being as a person, there should be no relevance as to the exact extent of those capacities. But, even in that case, there would be ethical and even legal implications – in the type and extension of the moral duties or the legal rights to ascribe them, for instance. The important aspect here is that 5) and 6) are not identical – one can admit the existence of different sub-classes or sub-sets of persons (human animals and artificial intelligences, for instance, if they share the property of a first-person perspective, to proceed with the Baker's view example) and thus answering 5) in an affirmative manner and still deny that there are gradual differences within the class of persons (because one accepts it to be a simple yes or no answer, regarding the fulfillment of the characteristic thought necessary, without the need to further inquire into the degrees in which that capacity is fulfilled – a human animal and a computer might differ only in the physical support that allows for the existence of that first-person perspective but, given the existence of such perspective, there would be no other relevant difference between them)- this, I believe, is a possibility considered by Laitinen (2007: 265): once a minimum threshold is achieved, all beings that qualify as persons do so in the same relevant manner and have the same basic package of rights and entitlements.

17 Of course, depending on the exact reasons that led us to the absolutist stance in 1), the answer to 7) might not be as easy as it seems: biological continuity might prove as troublesome as any other psychological feature we might think of.

18 To stress that it refers only to the persistence question, I shall call it the strict personal identity (SPI) problem.

19 As Olson (2010) puts it, this is "The Evidence Question", that "*dominated the philosophical literature on personal identity from the 1950s to the 1970s*". A good example of the weight of this question and its influence on 8) is the discussion in Shoemaker and Swinburne (1984).

20 Of course, during our endeavors to answer SPI, we sometimes pause to consider the existence of other kinds of persons, but rarely do such considerations occur and, even when they do, they are usually framed from the onset as grounded on the human being figure.

21 There are, of course, numerous ethical questions raised by this scenario, in particular in what concerns the choice of the relevant data to build the algorithm on. For a general defense that algorithms are value-laden, see Kraemer, van Overveld and Peterson (2011).

22 It doesn't seem an impossible task to think of other online situations where one can ask specific questions about the other problems. And online situations seem to offer an extra pull towards the notion that conventionalism is more important than usually regarded and also that the gradualness of personhood might be worth a closer look, although this is not the place to argue for it.

23 Olson 1997: 25. As I said before, the motivation that explains it is connected to our practical concerns: survival, moral responsibility, self-interested concern,

and compensation.

24 As we can see, such an answer does not compromise this author with an immediate identification of the concepts of person and human animal. Quite on the contrary, Baker claims that if computers or other beings have first-person perspective, they too are persons – it is of no relevance what material something is made of, whether it is DNA or silicon: if a being has a first-person perspective, then that being is a person. In her words, "*Biology does not dictate ontology.*" (Baker 2000: 17).

25 One could, of course, counter that those psychological properties depend on biology but I think it is clear by now that such a counter-objection begs the question of what kinds of persons there are [5)] in favor of what I previously called an absolutist view that only *homo sapiens* are persons. On a wider discussion on life and mind and the relations between evolution and intelligence, see the recent Boden (2009).

26 I am including authors as diverse as MacIntyre, Dennett, or Sartre here, in that they share the assumption that there is some sort of self-creating in what regards person-making features. For my purpose here, however, I take Schechtman's 1996 view in *The Constitution of Selves* as the paradigmatic example of the potentialities of a narrative theory in addressing the online world.

27 See Strawson 2004 for a good case against narrativity.

28 On this evolution, see Trendelenberg (1910).

Allowances, Affordances, and the Collaborative Constitution of Identity

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Abstract

This paper develops a notion of allowances, a designation for speech-acts indicative of the collaborative behaviour I engage in with others. Such behaviour marks a facet of my identity that I could not create on my own. I ground this notion of allowance in the view of the self as intentional body-consciousness developed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty and John Russon. I explain the relation of this self to others on their phenomenological paradigm, and then explain the functions of speech and gesture Merleau-Ponty gives in the Phenomenology of Perception. In order to present my account of allowances, I turn to J.J. Gibson's concept of affordances. Gibson's concept provides an analogue for the notion of allowance. I then explain two examples of allowances in action: gossip and truth-telling. I conclude by drawing attention to the ways these allowances are markers of the collaborative constitution of identity.

Keywords: phenomenology, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, identity, J.J. Gibson

When I pick up again with people I knew from the past, our common history allows us to build a relationship from a shared starting point. When I choose to become romantically involved with someone with whom I have no history, our activity together becomes a kind of collaboration that, for better or worse, transforms me from acquaintance to partner or spouse. It is also the case that notions of spouse, aunt, or friend are somehow more than a mere predicate or embellishment. Rather, partner, aunt, and friend are my identity, each the result of a collaboration with others, and the result of a process that cannot be unilaterally accomplished.

One way of observing this collaboration in action is by way of my actions in the context of these relationships. I find that over time certain

behaviours become regular, habitual practice. As my connections with others deepen, we create together a kind of "shorthand" peculiar to each particular relationship. These behaviours are possible because of the quality and nature of the connection exhibited in my romantic partnership, in my family relationships, and my friendships. Put another way, my relationships with others allow for these behaviours to develop. Given these insights, the central claim of this paper is that allowances – these allowed behaviours to which I have alluded above – mark the process of collaboration, by which what it means to "be me" is articulated. Allowances, in other words, are a way of indicating the transformative effect others have on my identity.

In order to ground this notion of allowance, I begin by describing the views of self and others as articulated by Maurice Merleau-Ponty and John Russon. I then explain the functions of speech and gesture in the context of Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception. I then explain the notion of allowances, which are analogous to J.J. Gibson's theory of affordances. This theory – a theory of perception and not an ontology – argues that certain possibilities are afforded to an organism by its surroundings. Just as an affordance can point to a variety of features to be "taken up" by an animal in an environment, allowances describe myriad behaviours between partners in a relationship. I then take up the discussion of allowance by describing two allowed behaviours: gossip and truth telling are two examples of activities allowed or called for by my particular relationships with others. I conclude by drawing attention to the ways these allowances are markers of the collaborative constitution of identity.

1. Self and Other in Merleau-Ponty and Russon

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) explains phenomenology as, "... a transcendental philosophy which places in abeyance the assertions arising out of the natural attitude, the better to understand them; but it is also a philosophy for which the world is always 'already there' before reflection begins - as an inalienable presence" (p. viii). The "natural attitude" Merleau-Ponty refers to consists in assumptions that objects of experience exist independently of our perception of them, and that these objects are already fully determinate. In the Phenomenology of Perception, Merleau-Ponty explains that phenomenology – following Husserl – "brackets" or suspends the assumptions of the "natural attitude" in order to clarify the way things in the world are present to us. Methodologically, phenomenology trains its focus on the world as it is given. By taking this position toward immediate experience, phenomenology aims to avoid the kinds of analysis

that subordinate experience in favour of conceptual or abstracted views of reality. From this methodological position, phenomenology argues in favour of a view of the self that emphasizes the unavoidable directedness - or "intentionality" - of consciousness and the fundamental role of the body.

On the phenomenological view I am not a private consciousness assaulted by the world and attempting to cope with unreliable tools. Merleau-Ponty explains that the "notion of intentionality" – a cornerstone of phenomenological accounts of the self - consists in the statement, "All consciousness is consciousness of something." That is, our mechanisms for experience are not passive receptors activated by external objects, but are always already directed towards the thing experienced. Similarly, our mental life is not locked away or private. On this point, Merleau-Ponty (1964) says,

> We must abandon the fundamental prejudice according to which the psyche is that which is accessible only to myself and cannot be seen from the outside. My "psyche" is not a series of "states of consciousness" that are rigorously closed in on themselves and inaccessible to anyone but me. My consciousness is turned primarily toward the world, turned toward things; it is above all a relation to the world (pp. 116-117).

Instead of the "thing that thinks," phenomenology claims that consciousness is involved with the world. It is an activity in which I relate to the world according to certain projects and opportunities. For example, as a child my desire to be an astronaut coloured completely my trips to the elementary school library, the attitude I took to math and science, the devotion I gave to memorizing astronomical facts, and even my television habits. In a way, "astronaut" trailed around and behind me in my second grade life. One need only examine material from that time to see the way in which I parsed the world – my mental life had a public dimension, with evidence of library checkout forms, writer's workshop projects and Odyssey magazine subscriptions to mark it. My body is instrumental in this process, the process by which I put my stamp on the world around me. In short, what it means to be has an active dimension. As Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) claims, "Consciousness is not a matter of 'I think that,' but 'I can'" (pp. 158-159).

John Russon (2003) argues that the body is not divorced from consciousness, and is partly responsible for my understanding and relating to the world: "Our bodies are the determinateness, the specificity, of our

existence: the body is the point where each of us is something specific. To be a body is to be a specific identity that is open to involvement with others" (p. 21). Identity does not simply begin and end with consciousness. Our bodies mark out important identity-specific territory. That is, the body is crucial to identity, since it is through my body that I am involved with the world. For example, it is through the body that I am able to make a house my home (based on the habitual movements I make in that space), or that I am able to cook my favourite meal (because of my facility to manipulate kitchen implements). These activities are not the private province of the intellect, but require both my body and a conscious direction together toward completing the task at hand (arranging the house, using a knife) for their achievement. By these lights, what it means to be a human person is to be an embodied, intentional self with a particular orientation to the world.

In order to fully appreciate and grasp the given-ness of the world prescribed by the reduction, phenomenology contends that this embodied, intentional self is already situated in a world that requires no proof of its existence. Reality is in the living situation and daily activity of a particular human person, and this living situation is not demarcated in terms of the private self and public world of objects. Russon (2003) further cements phenomenology's challenge to the strict subject-object relation of self and world, saying:

> We must, therefore, reorient our thinking and conceive of a subject who is intrinsically situated, or an environment that intrinsically calls for someone to resolve it. What exists is a situation that is meaningful, a situation that is experienced as a range of tensions, a situation that needs certain things to be done. Human reality is this situation, this event of meaning, this happening of a subject-object pair (p. 20).

Human beings find themselves among objects to be used, facing decisions to be made, and related to the world around them. The "subject" and "object" separated on the analysis of the natural attitude are, as Russon (2003) points out, "already involved, each having a grip on the other" (p. 20). Phenomenology argues that the self is wrapped up with a tacit, immediate awareness of the environment in terms of its body's capacities for interacting with it. The self exists – first and foremost – as a "relationship to" one's own surroundings, and these surroundings call the self to action. Phenomenology's view of reality thus calls our attention to the situated nature of human experience, and the realization that the situation betrays essential details for what it is to be human. We find ourselves surrounded

and it is entirely possible that these surroundings contain other selves, but how can we know?

Merleau-Ponty argues that the situated self does not rely on an argument by analogy to gain access to other selves. It is the case that analogical reasoning can provide a clue in the hunt for other selves, but the analogy alone cannot establish the existence of others.[1] Instead, Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) argues that the self as situated, embodied consciousness is confronted with certain limitations. He claims,

> Between my consciousness and my body as I experience it, between this phenomenal body of mine and that of another as I see it from the outside, there exists an internal relation which causes the other to appear as the completion of the system. The other can be evident to me because I am not transparent for myself, and because my subjectivity draws its body in its wake (p. 410).

In order to see the implications of this claim, consider the degree of self-possession in Descartes' articulation of the cogito. The "I am" in this case admits of no ambiguity – I am a thing that thinks; I am mental substance. On this view, other selves – once they have been established – do not have access to me at the level of identity. They have access at the level of behaviour (that is, I can adjust my activities in concert with their presence), but they do not change who or what I am. However, if, as Merleau-Ponty points out, I am not "transparent for myself," there is some aspect of my being that is out of my control or out of my grasp. Merleau-Ponty explains that if there are others, they "have" the part of my identity that I do not – they can see me (just as I see them) "from the outside." This insight sets the stage onto which other selves might emerge.

When Merleau-Ponty describes the "internal relation" I have with others, he points to a limitation arising from this lack of access. If I am not in full possession of myself, then certain processes are such that I cannot achieve them on my own. That is, if our experience of ourselves is somehow not fully grasped, then it seems reasonable to suggest that our ability to fully resolve certain situations on our own is similarly unavailable.

2B. Speech, Dialogue, and Gesture

In "The Body as Expression and Speech," Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) claims that speech carries meaning with it, and he suggests that the simultaneous character of thought and speech (e.g., the work of the orator)

is a function of the embodied, intentional self. But the meaning speech offers is not fully formed. Rather, meaning is developed in the situation in which speech occurs. Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) explains the value of the situation, saying:

> And, as in a foreign country, I begin to understand the meaning of words through their place in a context of action, and by taking part in a communal life in the same way an as yet imperfectly understood piece of philosophical writing discloses to me at least a certain 'style' – either a Spinozist, critical, or phenomenological one – which is the first draft of meaning (p. 208).

In this case, meaning emerges via a communal life. I can memorize lists of vocabulary, but the usage and nuance of the words only come through in the context of meaning, the situation of speaking or hearing that foreign language. In this way, Merleau-Ponty points out that meaning-making is a public, living activity.

Above I mentioned that instead of analogical arguments for our access to others, Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) argues in favour of an "internal relation" between the self and other, which casts others as the "completion of the system" (p. 413). Since generating meaning is a public activity (as discussed in the foreign language example above), it is a candidate for this internal relation that establishes a connection between self and other.

Merleau-Ponty turns to the behaviour surrounding language and speech in "Other Selves and the Human World." He claims that in dialogue we find creative and (often) spontaneous behaviour. Language and the activities in which it is employed (dialogue and conversation, for example) are a vital means of access to others. In dialogue,

> …there is constituted between the other person and myself a common ground; my thought and his are inter-woven into a single fabric, my words and those of my interlocutor are called forth by the state of the discussion, and they are inserted into a shared operation of which neither of us is the creator (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, 2002, p. 413).

Merleau-Ponty argues that language has a kind of self-making character. In dialogue, my interlocutor and I are beholden to the demands of the situation. I may have a complete thought to offer, but when I announce that thought in the presence of another person, they respond in a way I can't

entirely predict. Merleau Ponty (1945, 2002) points out that the creative call-and-response of conversation has ontological significance:

We have here a dual being, where the other is for me no longer a mere bit of behaviour in my transcendental field, nor I in his; we are collaborators for each other in consummate reciprocity. Our perspectives merge into each other, and we co-exist through a common world. In the present dialogue, I am freed from myself, for the other person's thoughts are certainly his; they are not of my making, though I do grasp them the moment they come into being, or even anticipate them. And indeed, the objection which my interlocutor raises to what I say draws from me thought which I had no idea I possessed, so at the same time that I lend him thoughts, he reciprocates by making me think too (p. 413).

Conversation instead reveals a common stage onto which my partner and I act and move according to the requirements the conversation presents. My conversations move according to lobs and volleys, which – while possibly predictable – are not determined in advance. Even the most mundane of topics shows this kind of interwoven-ness. If my partner calls after work to ask me, "What should we have for dinner?" my response is the result of some over-the-phone triage. I may have wanted him to stop for Vietnamese food because that sounded good, but if I instead suggest that we eat in instead, my suggestion is usually based on how he sounds over the phone. I'm reading what his day was like and trying to gauge his willingness to make an extra stop. Ultimately, my suggestion here is determined by the tone of our conversation. Even though I know my partner well, his response to my suggestion of Vietnamese food is not entirely predictable. Aiming to solve the dinner problem makes us collaborators in the sense that Merleau-Ponty describes above. We may know the likely path of our interlocutor's offering, but until it is spoken, we remain – just a little – in the dark.

My experience teaching speaks to the creativity, surprise, and shared thinking that Merleau-Ponty describes are characteristics of a dialogue. There are, for example, a fairly predictable set of responses I can expect from students when I teach Descartes' Meditations. But occasionally, someone makes an offering I did not expect and could not predict. The student bothered by Descartes' dismissal of emotion exposes her belief in the value of emotions for human life. I must depart from my well-worn script to meet my student on the stage her question created. In this particular class, our exchange colours the way material is received and reveals a set of significances that weren't evident before.

When Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) says, "The spoken word is a gesture, its meaning, a world" (p. 214), he notes two critical features of speech. First,

as a gesture, speech is a verbal offering to be taken up by another. Merleau-Ponty (1945, 2002) claims, "The sense of the gestures is not given, but understood; that is, recaptured by an act on the spectator's part" (p. 215). Our body's movements are themselves offerings that others appropriate and act on according to their own "inner possibilities." He gives the example of the child who witnesses an act of sexual intercourse. If the child has not yet reached sexual maturity, he interprets this act much differently than the adolescent who sees this activity as an opportunity, behaviour it will be able to (eventually) engage in and appreciate its significance. In the same way, my speaking is "recaptured" by my interlocutor and understood according to what is possible for them. As a gesture, speech does not show or unveil fully formed meaning, but its sense is instead established as a collaboration between interlocutors (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, 2002, pp. 214-215). Second, meaning is derived from the act of speaking with another. The "world" from which meaning emerges is the living situation, the communal life I share with another person. In this way, the conversation is necessary for making sense of my thought. The significance of speech is not something I achieve on my own.

This discussion of speech identifies one among many systems that require other human selves for their completion. Merleau-Ponty's analysis of speech and gesture demonstrates the way in which these systems are part of our reality as a living situation, and that our ability to speak meaningfully requires others as "original participants" in the landscape of our world.

3. Affordance, Allowances

The preceding discussions of embodiment and speech have identified some of the ways in which the self has access to others like it. Beyond the bare fact of access to the other, how can we understand the influence others have on my identity? In this section, I will explain the way certain speech acts – namely, gossip and truth-telling – can be called on to account for the influence others have in constructing my identity. To support this claim, I introduce the notion of allowance, which I understand to be interpersonal behaviours that are made possible by - that is, allowed within the context of - certain relationships. Gossip emerges from a friendship marked by mutual trust. Telling the truth is a behaviour established in accordance with my relationship to my niece. Allowances - of which gossip and truth telling are examples - are only possible because, in a phrase, "conditions are right." That is, my situation with another person creates an environment wherein certain verbal behaviours are appropriate or allowed.

In order to understand more precisely what I mean by allowance, I draw on the work of J.J. Gibson and his theory of affordances for an analogue. This theory of perception argues that certain possibilities are afforded to an organism by its surroundings. After I discuss the theory of affordance and the way it connects to allowances, I describe three examples of allowance in ordinary conversation. I gossip with a friend because we've developed a high degree of trust on which such intimate talk can rest. I recognize that "telling the truth" is an activity that must be sensitive to the nature of my relationship with my niece and her mother. I regulate the amount of information I share with others because the intimate details of my life are best kept within the confines of my marriage. Each of these activities is allowed by my relationships with these particular human beings.

I conclude by drawing a link between these allowances and my identity. As the discussion of gesture in the previous section showed, my bodily behaviour is an offering that another human takes up according to their own "inner possibilities." I recall this discussion and introduce John Russon's concept of "projective embodiment" to explain the ways in which my identity (as partner, friend, sister, or aunt) is not entirely up to me, but rather is achieved in collaboration with these other people.[2]

3A. Affordances and Allowances

The term "allowance" is intended to describe possibilities of interpersonal behaviour made possible by my relationships with others. J.J. Gibson's theory of affordance, developed in The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception (1986), provides a template for understanding allowance more clearly.

Gibson's theory of affordance describes the relationship between animal and environment. He explains that the most primitive location, the primary situation of the animal is that of being surrounded by possibilities for action (1986, pp. 7-8). The animal must learn to navigate its surroundings by perceiving the differences among features of its environment in order to behave appropriately (i.e., survive) in the environment (Gibson, 1986, pp. 7-8). Gibson identifies these features of the environment as affordances, and he claims that affordances provide or furnish something for the animal, for good or ill (1986, p. 127). For example, a rock ledge may afford a raised position for hunting prey, but if the animal is not careful the rock ledge affords a dangerous fall.

The notion of affordance is not limited to the animal in the wild. The objects of everyday experience can also be described in terms of their

affordances. For example, the lawn chair affords me a place to sit, and affords my dog some shelter from the elements. Although my survival doesn't hinge on the lawn chair in the same way it would hinge on my behaving appropriately around a steep cliff, the ease with which I move in my backyard and among the lawn chair does depend on my perceptions of what the lawn chair does and does not offer me. Gibson's theory speaks to the relationship between organism and environment as generating certain perceptual possibilities that are simply not available to the animal on its own, nor are they features solely found in the environment. Instead, an affordance is made possible by the animal and environment together.

One other feature of Gibson's theory bears mentioning here, and that is his observation that the animal is mobile, moving in and out of different surroundings. As the animal's surroundings change, different affordances emerge for the animal from these new surroundings. The relevance of this observation for the theory of allowances is that as a situated, embodied self surrounded by objects and others, I find that my surroundings change. Like the animal I am mobile, moving in and out of relational territory. Just as the animal and environment are linked by affordances (i.e., features the environment offers the animal), our relationships allow for certain ways of speaking that shape the relationship and reinforce my place in it. My conversations must respond to changes in territory, and the responsiveness I demonstrate as a result shows the way in which my identity is sensitive to these surroundings. Allowances are best understood in action, and so now I will explain two examples of allowances in action: gossip and truth telling.

3B. Allowances in Action (1): Gossip

As I indicated above, allowances describe possibilities of verbal exchange made possible by my relationships with others. Gossip is an allowance made possible by a close relationship - friendship, for example - with another person. Karen Adkins (2002) defined gossip as "intimate, interested talk ... usually driven by the respective location of (the) participants" (2002, p. 216).[3] This definition helps to highlight the fact that gossip is a situated phenomenon - that gossip is sensitive to the way those gossiping are situated. For example, consider what happens when I catch up with a friend I haven't seen in a long time. One of the activities we engage in is a sort of litany regarding people who formed our circle in the past. We talk about people who are not present, and they form an anchor for the conversation.

What about the content of these conversations? Interested, intimate talk of this sort may involve talking about people who are not present, but we are not necessarily talking about them "behind their backs" (with all the negative or malicious connotations that phrase carries with it). If I am catching up with a childhood friend, it is natural that our connection calls for description of or talk about our childhood community. It is in this way that we locate our interest in one another. It is this shared history that allows us to stake out positions in the conversation, and identifies my relationship to this other as "childhood friend."

The character of the conversation depends on how I am situated with respect to this other person. If I am talking with someone with whom I have repeatedly reconnected, our interested talk may extend beyond mere description of those in our former community. It may allow us to evaluate or lodge opinions about the community and those in it, to say more to one another beyond describing what "so-and-so is up to these days." In this case, trust is key and gossip here becomes a way of speaking with another in which each participant has a stake (Adkins, 2002, p. 230). Gossip is intimate talk allowed and called for by a relationship marked by trust. In this way, gossip is not a display of power or an attempt to damage or gain leverage over someone with information.

In the context of friendship, gossip is possible because of a shared history or consistent connection bearing this mutual trust. There is a background against which such talk makes sense. More importantly, there is a boundary according to which this talk is constrained. I engage in intimate, private conversation with my friend with the expectation that such talk will remain "between us."[4] Put another way, to be someone's friend, is in part to be able to engage freely in interested, intimate talk about familiar features of our shared situation.

3C. Allowances in Action (2): Telling the Truth

Another concrete mode of allowance is telling the truth, which – on this interpretation – is more than language corresponding to confirmable facts about reality. In other words, telling the truth is more than a mental substance issuing information into the external world. In his unfinished essay, "What is meant by 'telling the truth'?" Dietrich Bonhoeffer claimed, "'Telling the truth' means something different according to the particular situation in which one stands" (1995, 358). By this, Bonhoeffer, means that the situation I find myself in – and, more importantly, the people with whom I am situated – shapes both the delivery and content of the truth.

Here Bonhoeffer departs from a strict correspondence view of truth, which relies on an identical match between speech and an external state of affairs. This "textbook" version of the truth does not square with our experience of telling the truth. As Bonhoeffer claims, telling the truth is instead situated interpersonal behaviour, based on my growing appreciation of the people with whom I am situated.

If my niece asks me, "Is Santa Claus real?" I could respond by saying to her, "No. Santa Claus is not real and your parents are responsible for the presents under the tree on Christmas morning." To be sure, this is a candidate for truth since I know there is no Santa Claus and I know how the presents show up under the tree. However, I don't tell her the correspondence version of the truth. While my reason for not telling this version of the truth is partially motivated by self-serving ends (i.e., I don't want to be responsible for ruining it for my niece), it is also motivated by my knowing what it is like to be surprised on Christmas morning and to wait in expectation for 364 days for that joy and surprise to arrive. In part, my "job" as her aunt consists in protecting her interests, and maintaining an opportunity for her to experience happy excitement and surprise is part of this protection. In light of these considerations, then, the truth involves me going along with the ruse as long as is necessary.

A more fundamental reason for my not telling the correspondence version of the truth is that it is not mine to tell. My exchanges with my sister's children are coloured in important ways by my relationship with my sister. In the case of Santa Claus, I must be judicious because I know my sister wants to preserve the joy and expectation surrounding Christmas for as long as possible. This understanding reflects my knowledge of my sister – she is keen to preserve old holiday traditions and perpetuate new ones with her family. To tell the textbook truth compromises not just my niece's feelings, but also my sister's entire enterprise. Although it concerns something seemingly trivial, this analysis shows that telling the truth is a serious matter that requires a great deal of sensitivity to my situation with my niece and my sister. My relationship with my niece allows me to depart from the "textbook" truth about Santa Claus in order to protect certain of her interests, and my relationship with my sister sets the boundaries within which my truth telling emerges. When it comes to Santa Claus, these situations require that I tell the truth and "tell it slant."

To further emphasize this point about the situational sensitivity required in order to tell the truth, Bonhoeffer (1995) claims, "every utterance or word lives and has its home in a particular environment. The word in the family is different from the word in business or in public" (pp. 361-362).

His point here is to show the way words function in a particular context. When I was growing up my family had a particular designation that we used for private family matters. We called it "at-home talk." This was a verbal way of marking the boundary for speech that was appropriate only in the context of the family. "At-home talk" was applied to news about my dad's major job change, or a discussion about sex with the expectation that such matters would literally stay within the walls of our home. Functionally, "at-home talk" was shorthand for private family talk. It identified the way my family talked about finances, the way my parents approached the topic of sex, and the expectation they had for how far outside the bounds of our family this form of speech would extend.

My partner and I have our own form of "at-home talk," and the way in which such speech is employed follows many of the same rules. There are certain topics that we do not discuss outside the boundaries of our shared life. But, in keeping with Bonhoeffer's observation, this behaviour is learned. The parameters for the our version of "at-home talk" have been cultivated over ten years of discussions, "over-sharing" with inappropriate parties, and ultimately a mutual recognition of the kinds of topics that must stay between us. It marks our conversations with a degree of secrecy, but a secrecy that is appropriate to an intimate couple. This is one way in which "telling the truth" shows itself. It is, as Bonhoeffer indicates, a living activity that happens in my partnership.

Here I have tried to explain the ways in which appropriate interpersonal behaviours like gossip and truth telling emerge from the particular situation my interlocutor and I occupy. These allowances are only possible because of this situated-ness. In the next section, I explain the way our being situated among and involved with others contributes to our identity. Others are key in determining what it means to "be me," because their projects in and direction toward the world help to shape my behaviour.

4. Allowances, Identity, and a Sense of the World

Allowances show that verbal behaviours like gossip or truth telling are not instruments of a fully formed self. In "Embodied Perceptions of Others as a Condition of Selfhood?" (2008), Kym Maclaren claimed, "Other people's intentionality orients us … This orienting is, moreover, not a matter of simply turning our attention and allowing us to take our own view; it actually solicits in us the same apprehensive way of attending. It calls up on us to participate virtually in the other's intentionality" (p. 80). While Maclaren offers this claim in support of the processes by which

infants connect with others, her insights bear here on the central claim of this study. Our conversations – whatever their content – are not dictated by the dimension of my embodied consciousness alone. The way any interpersonal habit is developed is solicited and influenced by this other's look on the world.

While my relationship to my sister gives us the ability to determine the truth about Santa Claus for her children, it also puts a strict boundary down with respect to the kind of verbal behaviour we engage in. That is, we don't rely on the kids to correctly interpret loose talk about Santa Claus. Instead, my sister and I carefully choose our words in service of the larger goals she has for her children. This is a concrete example of a more general point. It is not just that I take on a certain way of speaking in accordance with my sister's plans or projects, but the situation of being my niece's aunt requires this way of speaking. That is, part of what it means to be "aunt" requires some kind of buy-in on my part to the kinds of experiences my sister is trying to generate for her children. I have a hand in crafting the way she understands and interprets Christmas. Further, by participating carefully (i.e., telling the truth slant when it comes to Santa Claus) in this project, I demonstrate to her a more general care and concern appropriate to our family tie. But, none of these actions on my part obtain without a niece to direct them towards, and in this way, part of what it means to be me is not up to me, but is instead determined in collaboration with my niece and her mother.

I suggest, then, that identity is a concrete process, rather than an abstract description, and like other concrete processes (e.g., bodily self-awareness and conversation) calls for its (partial) completion in partnership with another person. As my niece grows up, she and I may develop a relationship such that she sees me as her confidante, and I bring to her life an ear willing to listen to her problems differently than her mother would. On these terms, "aunt" takes on a different significance than it did when she was four. My response to the questions, "How do I act toward/respond to my sister's daughter? What does it mean for me to be her aunt?" is determined over time, and largely by my niece and I in collaboration together.

In order to see more precisely how it is that identity requires the collaboration of others for its determination, I point to John Russon's concept of projective embodiment. Russon (2003) explains that "What is distinctive of the human identity … is the structure of projective embodiment, that is, the other is a centre of interpretive activity such that that other's subjectivity is constitutive of the significance of the things it encounters" (p. 53). For Russon, the embodied self has both a present dimension (i.e., its location

in space) and a future dimension, by which it projects itself according to plans and goals to be taken up, its expectations for the future. Just as I have this experience of my own projective embodiment – that is, I experience my present situation according to the location of my body, and interpret the world accordingly. Further, I have an expectation of what the future holds. Russon points out that the other – an embodied, intentional consciousness in their own right - has this same experience of themselves. Like me, my friends respond and interpret the world according to their present situation and future expectations.

Relevant to this study, projective embodiment identifies the structure another person relies on to experience the world. My partner's projective embodiment, for example, bears on my experience. That is, in an intimate relationship, my projective embodiment impinges on his – his present situation and future goals are held in tension with mine, and my situation and goals held in tension with his.[5] However, just like me my partner is limited in the sense that he does not "have" himself fully. He encounters the same kinds of ontological limitations that I do. He once required others to help develop a postural schema, and like me, he relies on others to discuss and determine the evening's dinner plans.

5. Conclusion

Part of what it means "to be" is to find our projects and plans require others for their resolution. Allowances – those features of conversation that are made possible by my relationships to others – show that I am beholden to the projective embodiment of others. To say that I am beholden to others and their ways of interpreting the world seems to indicate that they have some influence on what it means for me to exist among these others. If reality, on phenomenological grounds, consists in a situation that calls for action, and action is the way any self responds to their respective situation, then the preceding analysis of allowance indicates that as a situated self I cannot act any way I see fit. Rather, I act in accordance with the projective embodiment of others. My involvement with these others places strictures on the way I act and speak in my situated-ness.

My deference to my sister's Christmas projects is a way of showing how it is I am "sister"; my discretion about certain household matters indicates a way in which I am "partner"; my casual, interested talk about the past marks my friendships. Allowances signal my involvement with others in relationships, but these also point out certain limits on what I can do or

how far I can go when it comes to speaking or acting. In this way, what it means to "be me" is to speak and act in accordance with the projective embodiment of others I am involved with, whether by birth, by family ties, or by my own choosing. The point of all this is to say that our verbal behaviour is indicative of the influence certain others have in our making sense of the world. Allowances are further evidence for the conclusion that what it means to be me – to exist in a living situation among a variety of other people – is not entirely up to me.

Here I have tried to explain the ways in which phenomenology - as it is derived from Merleau-Ponty and Russon - supports the machinations of everyday experience including - and especially - the ways in which other humans influence our identity. Allowances demonstrate behaviour made possible by certain relationships. Further, allowances open the way to the more general claim that my projective embodiment must cope with the projective embodiment of another. Allowances are a way of giving an account of the role others play in accomplishing interpersonal behaviours and, by extension, their active participation in the matter of understanding what it means for me to exist in a living situation among other humans.

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(Endnotes)

1 Cf. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 410.

2 The discussion of environment and embedded-ness I offer in the subsequent sections is akin to Edward S. Casey's account of the value of the glance in "sizing up a situation," as it is presented in his essay, "The World at a Glance." His analysis on this point suggests an awareness and sensitivity to even complicated emotional transactions (cf. Casey, 149). Casey's account here invokes Heidegger and suggests the glance is "the perceptual analogue of Dasein's moodwise insertion into the world" (150). My account takes a similar mode of experience (the allowance) in the direction of Gibson's affordances.

3 Primarily, Adkins wants to explain the epistemological value of gossip and rumor, but her insights do bear some relevance to my discussion of the way identity "in progress" is marked by certain verbal behaviors.

4 Of course, this expectation is the result of some costly errors. Occasionally, we engage in talk appropriate to a friendship with the wrong person, like an acquaintance or someone we've only just met. In these situations, interested, intimate talk is uncalled for. This is because this situation lacks the interpretive mechanisms employed between friends to appropriately deal with the content of such talk. When I gossip in the wrong environment, it shows that I have failed to read my conversation partner adequately and have failed to take the right kinds of "territorial" cues.

5 While the description I've offered sounds one-sided, it should be noted that phenomenology argues that any relationship in which I am "limited" puts the same kinds of limits on my partner. For example, in a relationship governed by sexual desire, just as I desire my partner he also desires me; similarly, as he desires me, I also desire him. This is emphasized in the following paragraph, in which I explain that others "suffer" from the same ontological limitation that I do and that they rely on others in the same way I do.

Ontology of Discontinuity: Buddhism and Descartes

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Abstract

This paper proposes an alternative conception of persistence that challenges our basic presupposition about persistence of persons. We presuppose the ontology of continuity, the belief that the basic nature of existence is to continue to exist. I give arguments for the opposite view: the ontology of discontinuity, according to which the basic nature of existence is to perish unless made to continue. The arguments in support of the ontology of discontinuity come from Descartes and the Buddhist logicians, such as Dharmakīrti, Śāntarakṣita and Ratnakīrti. The main purpose of this paper is to articulate the ontology of discontinuity through the discussion of these philosophers.

Keywords: Persistence, Personal Identity, Causation, Creation, Buddhism, Descartes

Normally, we think that we continue to exist (not die) unless something horrible happens to us, such as contracting a fatal disease or getting run over by a truck. But what gives us such assurance? Is it just a matter of course that we continue to exist? Or do we have some innate efficacy that continues our existence?

Descartes says there is nothing *in us* that guarantees our continued existence. His suggestion is that our continued existence is an extraordinary phenomenon, sustained by God at every moment. Without this constant intervention by God, we would perish instantly. While Descartes' position is philosophically interesting, his idea of 'conservation' is strange. He says that conservation requires equal power for fresh creation, which seems to make the difference between 'conservation' and 'creation' only verbal. What, then, do we make of this near equation of conservation and creation? Can we entertain the idea that perhaps we are re-created at every moment,

like a very busy phoenix? A metaphysical doctrine of the Buddhist logicians supports such a view. They argue that everything that exists perishes momentarily (*kṣaṇabhaṅga*), and the continuity that seems to obtain in the world is in reality as sequence or 'stream' (*santāna*) of momentary entities, each one of which is the causal inheritor of the previous.

The purpose of this study is to discuss Cartesian and Buddhist positions regarding the continuity of persons, and to point out that they are committed to what I call an ontology of discontinuity, which is the view that the basic nature of existence is to perish. I will then address Leibniz's criticism against Descartes that he fails to account for the distinction between coma and death. By surveying an analogous issue in the Buddhist circle, I will point out that Leibniz's proposed solution is not conclusive either. I begin by introducing Descartes' position about the endurance of persons (as the I = thinking substance).

Preservation as *Quasi* Re-Creation

Descartes gives a number of arguments to prove that God exists in the Third Meditation of his *Meditations*. The second argument proves God is the only possible cause of our existence as thinking things *and* our persistence over time. Here are the parts of the argument where Descartes remarks on persistence:

> For the whole time of my life may be divided into an infinity of parts, each of which is in no way dependent on any other; and, accordingly, because I was in existence a short time ago, it does not follow that I must now exist, unless in this moment some cause create me anew as it were, that is, conserve me. In truth, it is perfectly clear and evident to all who will attentively consider the nature of duration, that the conservation of a substance, in each moment of its duration, requires the same power and act that would be necessary to create it, supposing it were not yet in existence; so that it is manifestly a dictate of the natural light that conservation and creation differ merely in respect of our mode of thinking [and not in reality].[1]

> All that is here required, therefore, is that I interrogate myself to discover whether I possess any power by means of which I can bring it about that I, who now am, shall exist

> a moment afterward: for, since I am merely a thinking thing (or since, at least, the precise question, in the meantime, is only of that part of myself), if such a power resided in me, I should, without doubt, be conscious of it; but I am conscious of no such power, and thereby I manifestly know that I am dependent upon some being different from myself.[2]

Descartes faithfully keeps to his own restrictions not to assume anything that he has not clearly and distinctly perceived. Having established only that he is a thinking thing, he cannot assume there is anything in him that would ensure his continued existence. All he can be certain about is that he exists so long as he thinks. "I am--I exist: this is certain; but how often? As often as I think; for perhaps it would even happen, if I should wholly cease to think, that I should at the same time altogether cease to be."[3] But there are other premises that he does not seem to have firmly established beforehand. One notoriously problematic premise is that conservation requires as much power as to create anew.[4] Another premise that Descartes seems to assume without justification is that he has continued existence. He certainly has not established at this point that the 'I' who writes the Third Meditation and the 'I' who wrote the First Meditation are one and the same. It is curious, moreover, why Descartes sets out to prove God as the cause of his *continued* existence. Bare existence with the innate idea of perfection seems to be sufficient for the proof: nothing but God could have created a being with the innate idea of perfection. Conservation of such an entity does not seem to make the argument stronger.[5]

Concerning the claim that conservation and creation do not differ from each other in reality, we must make a very important distinction. That is, whether conservation just *is* creation, or something very much *like* creation. If we take the former interpretation, we would regard ourselves as being re-created at every moment. If we take the latter interpretation, we would be conserved by causal power being exerted equal as to be created anew. Tad M. Schmaltz says interpretation varies among scholars.[6] He adopts the latter, conservation as *quasi* creation, because Suárez (from whom Descartes is purported to have borrowed the conservation axiom) adopts the *quasi* creation view. This also is the standard dogma of the theologians, namely that creation and conservation must be the *same* divine creative act. Thus to say that conservation is *genuine* creation is to regard conservation as a different creative act than the initial creative act, hence contradicting the standard theological interpretation. Therefore, if Descartes had really

taken the *genuine* creation view, his position would be rightly refuted by Gassendi's accusation: Descartes takes a theological axiom and makes an abomination out of it.[7]

Conservation as *quasi* creation is the efficacy whereby God preserves us in existence. This efficacy is the same efficacy as God's initial creation, which is therefore said to be continuously exerted upon us since our conception. This continuous, conserving efficacy remains at every moment quantitatively the same (i.e., in terms of magnitude) as required in the initial creation, since it is conservation *ex nihilo*.[8] But conservation *ex nihilo* is self-contradictory if taken literally. For if it is really 'out of nothing,' there is nothing conserved. If it means requiring as much efficacy as to create *ex nihilo*, then it becomes more sensible. Fixing a half-broken cup requires more than half the effort and material to make a new one; we need extra effort, such as finding the same material as the original, and extra material, such as glue. Thus, it is conceivable that conserving in the ordinary sense requires as much efficacy as to create anew. It can be argued that to conserve the Ego requires as much efficacy as to create it *ex nihilo.*

In summary, it has been made clear that for Descartes, conservation is divine gift, which we receive at every moment of our existence. The act of conservation is continuous with the act of initial conception. This is not to say that conservation just is creation out of nothing, but it is rather a causal act that requires the same amount of efficacy as to create out of nothing. Of the assumptions addressed, we have seen that the near equation of conservation with creation is not without foundation; it follows the theological view prevalent at the time.[9] Let us now begin to discuss the Buddhist doctrine, which says conservation just is new creation (though not really out of nothing).

Two Arguments for Radical Impermanence

There are two arguments for radical impermanence, and they have completely different purposes, assumptions and implications. Indeed the only thing that the two have in common may be that they are directed at proving the evanescence of existence. The first is 'argument from destruction' (*vināśitvānumāna*), which is intended to prove the radical impermanence of all things that are contingent, or created (*kṛta*). Its main assumption is that whatever is contingent or created must perish, in other words, whatever begins must end. Its main implication is that destruction is not something that happens – it is a non-phenomenon. We will explore this argument first. The second is 'argument from existence' (*sattvānumāna*),

which is intended to prove the radical impermanence of all things that are said to exist, including Spirit, World, and God. Its main assumption is the definition of existence as possession of 'causal efficacy' (*arthakriyākāritva*). The idea of stream, hence of radical re-creation, is established as following from the conclusion of this argument.

The Argument from Destruction

The argument from destruction is called so because the evanescence of perishable things is demonstrated by the fact that there is no external cause of their destruction. Perishable things are contingent things, which come to exist at determinate times and depend on external conditions for their generation. As such, the scope of the argument seems to leave out non-contingent things (e.g., God, eternal soul) from its scope. Furthermore, it appears to leave open the possible conclusion that nothing is perishable, the result of which would be eternalism.[10] What is required to forestall these problems is to first prove universal impermanence. Vasubandhu does precisely this through his own version of the argument from existence. [11] The argument proves the absurdity of the assumption: 'There exists a permanent entity'.[12] The argument from destruction presupposes the conclusion that there exists no permanent entity; therefore, it is properly about all existents despite the appearance that it is limited to perishable things. Now to introduce the argument:[13]

P1: If a thing does not need (*na apekṣate*) any other cause for certain appearance, then it is to be known that, by reason of its being generated from its own proper causes (*svahetubhyaḥ*), that the thing [appearing in that manner] is constant (*niyataṃ*).

P2: All things [i.e., produced things] are not in such need in regard to bringing about [their own] destruction (*vināśa*).

P3: Therefore, all produced entities are momentary (*kṣaṇabhaṅginaḥ*); for they stand in no need of others with regard to destruction.

One might imagine that he can do many things without assistance of others, but that is not strictly true from the Buddhist standard. For example, I take myself to require no assistance to solve an easy Sudoku puzzle. However, the Buddhist would say I need to have first been taught the rules of Sudoku, and also to have someone to provide me with the puzzle to begin with; and the list of required assistance would continue indefinitely. More broadly, for the vast majority of things that we do, we need some occasioning condition that prompts the action. For instance, I put on my shoes now because I am going outside, and I am going outside because

I have class to attend. I would not put on my shoes if these prompting occasions were absent. The underlying contention is that everything we begin to do at a certain time rather than another is conditioned by the prompting occasion. Consequently, if there is anything we do with absolutely no assistance from others, it would *not* be something that we begin to do at one certain time rather than another; it would be something that we do at all times. The Buddhist says perishing is one of those, and so we perish at all times that we exist, which is to say that we die as soon as we come to be. But it is completely unclear at this point how it comes to be that we need no assistance to bring about our own destruction. The Buddhist demonstrates the above point by arguing that there cannot be any identifiable cause of destruction, including an *internal* cause.

Before we proceed, we need to forestall a misinterpretation that is extremely easy to make (the Buddhist is guilty of misleading phrasing). The argument is not that since things do not require external assistance to bring about their destruction, they bring it *upon themselves*. The explicit removal of 'other' cause and reference to 'own' proper cause together suggest the affirmation of *self*-destruction, but Śāntarakṣita explicitly holds that there is no *direct* cause of destruction; there is only the cause of destruction in a *derivative sense,* that is, in the sense of being the generator of a thing which is bound to perish momentarily.[14] Every mother is the cause of her child's death in this derivative sense, since the child would not die unless she gives birth. But this kind of causality is only verbal, and Śāntarakṣita says this is the meaning of "own proper cause" in the argument.

So how is it that there cannot be any cause of destruction? And if there is no cause of destruction, what do we make of the phenomenon of destruction at all? Śāntarakṣita substantiates the first point by arguing that there is no such thing as genuine destruction. The first alternative is destruction as pure negation (*pradhvaṃsa*). Can there be any cause of this kind of destruction? Affirmation of this is impossible, because the cause is only identifiable in relation to a certain effect, and in this case, the effect does not exist. The second alternative is destruction as relative nonexistence (*paryudāsa)*, so that destruction would mean either absence of a certain entity preceded by its presence, or the replacement of one entity with something else. In the first option, we would no longer be talking about the destruction of an entity, but of different qualifications of a location. In the second option, we are only talking about a cause of generation of some new entity. Taken together, there is no identifiable cause of destruction. The Buddhist effectively denies any possible entity to be a cause of destruction by rendering destruction a non-phenomenon, a mere name given to the

fact that a thing that exists in one moment is no longer existent in the next moment, and this fact requires no particular causal explanation.

Ontology of Discontinuity

Here, then, we have the ontology of discontinuity as an implication of the argument. This is in stark opposition to the commonsense assumption about the persistence of things, which can be expressed as the ontology of continuity. According to the ontology of continuity, it is assumed that things continue to exist unless something breaks that continuity to alter or destroy them. The apple on the table has not been eaten for the past one hour, and we say *nothing has happened* to it. According to this view, continuity requires no cause, but change and destruction do require a cause. Continuity is not an event, but destruction is. Ontology of discontinuity assumes the opposite: it is continuity that requires causation, not destruction. Continuity happens by virtue of some conservational causal efficacy that is operative at all times. According to this view, continuity is an event, while destruction is not. For the Buddhist, the conservational causal efficacy is replicative efficacy possessed by each momentary existent. This notion is substantiated through the argument from existence.

The Argument from Existence

The argument is this (if my representation is unclear, see Roy Perrett's representation).[15] An existing thing is either momentary or non-momentary. Suppose that it is non-momentary. An existing thing is causally efficacious (*arthakriyā*), for otherwise it does not exist. A non-momentary thing is causally efficacious either a) instantaneously or b) successively. By instantaneous, it means that its effect is produced all at once. By successive, it means that the production takes time. Now, if the production is a) instantaneous, then the supposed non-momentary entity either aa) remains unproductive until the moment of production, or ab) produces whenever it exists. Option aa) is impossible, for while a thing is unproductive, it must be nonexistent by reason of the absence of causal efficacy. A nonexistent thing cannot later obtain productivity or any property whatever. Option ab) does not work either. The instantaneously productive thing either remains efficacious in the next moment or ceases to be efficacious. If it does not remain efficacious, then in the next moment it does not exist, so it is momentary. If it remains efficacious, then it is, in fact, successively productive, not instantaneous. Taken together, a non-momentary thing cannot be a) instantaneously efficacious. On the other

hand, if the production is b) successive, then it is productive either ba) repetitively or bb) gradually. To be repetitively productive is to have the *same* kind of effect at every moment that the productive efficacy is operative. To be gradually productive is to have *different* kinds of effects at each moment that the productive efficacy is operative. But the option ba) is empirically unacceptable, for it entails gross multiplicity. If a seed is causally efficacious of a sprout, then if it takes *n*-moments to complete the production, it gives rise to *n*-number of sprouts. But there should be only one sprout. The option bb) contains deep problems. If an entity is gradually productive, then it produces different effects in each successive moment; so it produces *x* at *t1*, *y* at *t2*, and so on. Now, the productive entity is capable with regard to bba) all of its effects or bbb) not all of them. If bba), then there is the problem of why certain effects are *postponed* until later than others. If some explanatory cause is absent, then the idea of gradual production would be *ad hoc.* If there is an explanatory cause, then that explanatory cause is to be identified as the producer of the effect, not the supposed non-momentary entity. So either way, bba) cannot reasonably be upheld. If bbb), then the productive entity must *acquire* different efficacies in successive moments. Again, the acquisition may or may not involve explanatory cause. If it does not, then the acquisition would be *ad hoc.* If it does, then the entity at *t*2 with efficacy toward *y* would be a product of the explanatory cause, distinct from the one productive of *x* at *t*1. Either way, therefore, bbb) cannot be upheld. As such, the option bb) is denied. With this, the result is that a non-momentary entity cannot be causally efficacious in any way. Therefore, such a thing does not exist. By disjunctive syllogism, whatever exists must be momentary.[16]

There are competing views about what constitutes a person and its persistence. A Cartesian would say it is a thinking substance preserved by God. A physicalist would say it is a neurophysiological system that persists by maintaining its physiological integrity. The Buddhist subscribes to a kind of reductionism, according to which persons are reducible to psychophysical aggregates.[17] In any case, if we allow that persons exist at all, then we must conclude that persons are momentary. The person whom I identify as myself yesterday is strictly speaking not me, despite the resemblance. The coffee that I am currently purchasing will never be tasted by me, but will be tasted by someone else: the future person who resembles me in almost every way.

Radical Re-Creation

The foregoing argument shows that persons are momentary, and so those persons we customarily and quite naturally refer to as our past and future selves are really different people. To be more precise about the 'difference', we should say that those past and future people are numerically distinct from us. But here we must ask an important question: are the past and future persons we naturally identify as ourselves as distinct as those we naturally call other persons? The answer is: yes and no. As far as numerical identity is concerned, the so-called my future self is as distinct from me as any other person (or a living thing) who is not me at this very moment. But the future self has a privileged status that is not shared by persons who are precisely not my past and future selves. How is this so? Precisely, I am the re-creation of the past me, and the future me will be my re-creation. So each momentary person is said to be causally efficacious in the re-creative way. On this basis, we can distinguish a chain of re-creations of momentary persons from those who are not involved in it; in the Buddhist language, we can distinguish one 'stream' *(santāna*) from other entities and streams. 'Stream' is the term the Buddhist uses for a causal chain of entities we can loosely count as a diachronic unit, i.e., as if it were a persisting thing. This pen before me is the re-creation of the pen that was sitting at the same place a moment ago, so I can say they make a stream that is distinct from the cell phone stream or any other streams in the world. In the same way, my stream can be distinguished from every other person-stream in the world, and to that extent the members of my stream, my future and past selves, are not distinct from me. In its simplest form, that is, insofar as the re-creative efficacy produces an exact replica, the re-creative production can be called a 'replication'. Streams that appear to be static over time are those whose momentary members are merely replicating themselves. But more often than not, streams exhibit dynamism: seeds grow into sprouts, and animals undergo a great many changes over the course of their lives. In terms of us, we feel, think and do different things all the time. These obviously involve more than replication.

To account for qualitative change, the Buddhist distinguishes between the main cause (*upādāna*) and a cooperating cause (*sahakārin*). With respect to a seed growing into a sprout, the seed is said to be the main cause while environmental factors that are necessary for giving rise to a sprout, such as nutritious soil, water and sunlight, are regarded as the cooperating causes.[18] According to the Buddhist, when necessary cooperating causes are "proximate" (*sannidhi*)[19] to the main cause, the main cause attains proper efficacy (*atiṣaya*) for qualitative difference, which is the sprout.[20]

Dynamism, then, is accounted for through the presence of proximate cooperating causes. The main cause re-creates in a replicative way in case there are no cooperating causes nearby, and re-creates with qualitative difference when cooperating causes are proximate. In terms of persons, the incessant changes in mental activity and other respects are the result of the proximity of many different cooperating causes, in each moment making the person re-create in different ways. In deep sleep, perhaps there are no cooperating causes in proximity so that the sequence is more or less static. So, person-streams consist of momentary persons re-creating incessantly, sometimes statically (replicatively) and sometimes dynamically (non-replicatively). Persistence is re-creation.

The Buddhist account of the persistence of persons thus directly contradicts Descartes' observation. For Descartes, each part of his life is *not* dependent on one another. To quote again: "the whole time of my life may be divided into an infinity of parts, each of which is in no way dependent on any other."[21] And that is precisely why, according to Descartes, the preservation of the Ego depends on God's creative act. However, we should not take the 'no way' so seriously as to imagine that, for Descartes, everything about the present part of my existence is in no way dependent upon any other part. This would be to accuse Descartes of a quite counterfactual implication that my current states are in no way dependent on my past states and actions, such as, for example, my current feeling of guilt is not due to my past entertaining of a dirty thought that is highly regrettable. On the contrary, the connection between past and present states is secured simply by the fact that persons are preserved. Thus it must be qualified that each part of a person's life is in no way *ontologically* dependent upon any other part.

The fact that the Buddhist explains personal persistence through causal law (i.e., of re-creation) is interesting if we remember the fact that for Descartes all causal or natural laws are decreed by God for the purpose of allowing us to understand ourselves and our surroundings in a coherent and systematic way. If so, Descartes can say that God creates a natural law which functions to secure the persistence of persons, so that He does not need to manually preserve us at every moment. Indeed, this seems to be the explanation for how physical things persist, even though, just like the thinking substance, the essence of physical substance is extension alone and does not contain anything that ensures persistence. But Descartes never gives a unified explanation for the persistence of mental and physical substances: persistence of the soul remains a directly divine matter, while persistence of the body is derivative, through natural law. So here we see

another important difference, that whereas the mechanism of persistence is different between mind and body for Descartes, it is the same mechanism for the Buddhist. It is interesting that Descartes *could* give a unified account, but does not.

Buddhist and Cartesian Re-Creation

We have outlined the Cartesian and the Buddhist accounts of how persons persist over time. While, as we have seen, there are some obvious disagreements, they share some very fundamental views about persistence, the most basic agreement being that persons do not *simply* persist across time. According to the Buddhist, destruction is an inevitable, natural and uncaused fate of all contingent beings. In Cartesian terminology, contingent beings are imperfect beings, which includes Man and everything that is not God. The claim that destruction is uncaused but real would not be comprehensible under the assumption of an ontology of continuity, according to which discontinuity does not occur unless it is made to happen. This reveals that the Buddhist is committed to an ontology of discontinuity, under which destruction is not a positive occurrence in need of explanation. Descartes also adopts the same principle, for otherwise the question about preservation would not have occurred in the first place.

Of the two forms of ontology of discontinuity, Descartes' version is the more genuine opposite of ontology of continuity than the Buddhist's. For Descartes, the nature of soul is such that it perishes unless actively preserved by God. For the Buddhist, on the other hand, the nature of existents is such that it perishes *and* forms continuous streams by the efficacy of perishing entities. If we express the Buddhist position using 'unless', we would have: 'a stream of momentary entities perishes unless each member of the stream successfully generates its successor'. Thus the subject of perishing or continuity becomes the streams, not the real momentary existents.

A Concern about Buddhist Conception of Persons

Here, I must address a complication about personal persistence in Buddhism. I have so far treated persons as singular momentary entities that form person-streams through causal inheritance from one person-stage to the next. In other words, I have treated persons as if they were substances, though radically impermanent and without the usual connotations of self-sufficiency and endurance. Still, Buddhism opposes substantialism of any form, and adopts instead a kind of property ontology according to which

there exist only property particulars (*dharma*) which, when cognized in collection as aggregates, are mistaken for substances with certain sets of properties or attributes.[22] Accordingly, Buddhism holds that persons are not separate substances apart from the psychophysical properties that characterize (so-called) persons at any given time, but are just the aggregates of those properties. Persons do not ultimately exist; only psychophysical aggregates do. This fact would render our project misdirected: Cartesian substance ontology is just too fundamentally different from Buddhist property ontology to allow for any meaningful comparison. And, more significantly, there would be no real point in talking about person-streams, momentary persons or their interrelations.

But while Buddhism begins with anti-substantialism, substantialist tendencies exist in Abhidharma Buddhist metaphysics. According to Shunkyo Katsumata, this move is due to two factors: classification of the five aggregates (*skandha*) of form, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness into mind (*citta*) and its associate mental occurrences (*caitta*);[23] and the effort to account for personal issues such as *karma* and rebirth, which call for some kind of subjective integrity.[24] As a result there is a stronger emphasis on the mind (*citta*) as the centre of personhood, and personal persistence becomes equated with continuity of mind-stream (*cittasantāna*). Thus, if it is permissible to speak of a mind-stream consisting of momentary minds, then we are also permitted to speak of person-streams and momentary persons, where by persons we mean minds. While such parlance is indeed deviant from the spirit of original Buddhism, our project is not entirely baseless.

The Problem of Mental Gap

Leibniz is said to have criticised Cartesianism for failing to distinguish between coma and death.

> But when a man is reduced to a state where it is as though he were in a coma, and where he has almost no sensation, he does lose reflection and awareness, and gives no thought to general truths. Nevertheless, his faculties and dispositions, both innate and acquired, and even the impressions which he receives in this state of confusion, still continue: they are not obliterated though they are forgotten. Some day their turn will come to contribute to some noticeable result; for nothing in nature is useless, all confusion must be resolved, and even the animals, which have sunk into a condition

> of stupidity, must return at last to perceptions of a higher degree.[25]

> In this matter the Cartesians have fallen into a serious error, in that they treat as nonexistent those perceptions of which we are not conscious. It is this also which has led them to believe that spirits alone are Monads and that there are no souls of animals or other Entelechies, and it has led them to make the common confusion between a protracted period of unconsciousness and actual death.[26]

For Descartes, the Ego is essentially a thinking thing, which means that absence of thinking at a certain time entails nonexistence of the Ego at that time. There is purportedly no thinking going on during a coma. Therefore, to be comatose is to not exist, to die. Moreover, in case the patient recovers from a coma, Descartes would have to pronounce him resurrected, literally brought back from oblivion. Here is a qualification. Leibniz argues that 'thinking' which marks the existence of the Ego is thinking in the sense of *apperception*, which is fully self-aware and reflective; it is consciousness. This apperception is distinguished from the "dimmer perception" which is mere awareness, pre-reflective and sub-conscious. Leibniz's own account of coma is that there still is dimmer perception going on during a coma. The restriction of Descartes' 'thinking' to apperception is fair, since for Descartes only Man thinks and other animals do not. For Leibniz, animals are capable of dimmer perception but not of apperception.

Descartes' response can be found in his reply to Gassendi's objection that the Ego should be nonexistent during deep sleep (so it is the same point as Leibniz's with a different example). Descartes is said to have argued that during such time as deep sleep, the mind "retreats" (metaphorically speaking) from the body so that, even though it is enthusiastically thinking throughout the night, its activity is not being "recorded" by the brain, hence the total absence of memory in the morning and the false judgment, "I was completely unconscious last night". [27]

Locke disagrees with the above argument. He says, "That the soul in a sleeping man should be this moment busy thinking, and the next moment in a waking man, not remember, nor be able to recollect one jot of all those thoughts, is very hard to be conceived, and would need some better proof than bare assertion, to make it be believed."[28] I think Descartes' argument is theoretically defensible, but unpersuasive. The Ego can be asserted to think at all times, even in deep sleep and in a coma. Since it does so entirely

independently of the body, its activity will not be afterwards remembered, nor be physically reflected in any way, even in brain patterns. Existence of such an Ego cannot be demonstrably rejected, precisely because there is no sign with which to infer its presence or absence. But for the same reason, the argument will persuade no one.

The Problem for the Buddhist

A similar problem involving the apparent absence of consciousness exists on the Buddhist side, but with a different motivation and emphasis. The problem concerns the state of deep meditation (*nirodhasamāpatti*), in which all mental operations are said to be halted. Since the practitioner should be able to return from his meditative state (otherwise meditation would be the same as liberation), there is the question of how the mind may reemerge from a temporary halt.[29] In a slightly modified form, we can describe the issue as concerning the case in which the mind fails to re-create itself, so meditation implies termination of a mind-stream. We then ask: can a person-stream continue in spite of a gap?

Theravada concept of *Bhavaṅga*

In the Theravāda literature, we can find suggestions that conscious activities stop functioning, as in Nāgasena's *Milindapañha*: "When someone is deeply asleep, his mind is in the *bhavaṅga* state; a mind in the *bhavaṅga* state does not function."[30] According to Noriaki Hakamaya, *bhavaṅga* is like the mind being inactive (*appavatta*) in the sense of pausing, but not ceased.[31] Katsumata points out that the concept is further developed in the *Vimuttimagga*, where it is attributed the status of root mind that is operative throughout one's life, such that the occurrence of all conspicuous mental phenomena is initiated by the activation (Pāli: *āvajjana*) of *bhavaṅga*, and the cessation of the latter is the return to the state of *bhavaṅga.* Further, Buddhaghoṣa's *Visuddhimagga* includes not only mental phenomena occurring within one's life, but also states of birth (*paṭisandhi*) and death (*cuti*) as states of *bhavaṅga*.[32]

The *bhavaṅga* idea is that mental gaps are only apparent; there is some mental activity (*sacittaka*) even during such states in which mental activity seems to have ceased. This view is contrasted from the contrary view that regards the gaps as real and that there is absolutely no mental activity (*acittaka*) during meditative states and the like.

Past Causation and Physical Causation

Some Abhidharma Buddhists maintain that mental gaps are real, but the mind can nevertheless reemerge from them. The Vaibhāṣikas claim that the mind can return on the basis of the mind before the gap, since in their metaphysical view, the past is real and therefore retrievable in the present. Another position suggests that the mind can rise from the body, which remains continuous.[33] Yaśomitra attributes the latter position to the Sautrāntikas.[34]

On Vaibhāṣika metaphysics, past and future things are just as real as present things, and the difference is that only present things are efficacious (have *karitrā*).[35] Thus, it is theoretically possible that a sentient being cease all of its mental activity without having its identity threatened, provided mental activities can coherently resume in reliance on the last mental activity before the gap that continues to be real.

Sautrāntika offers a complex theory that can be taken as endorsing both homogeneous causation (i.e., the physical does not cause the mental, or vice-versa) and heterogeneous causation. It is said that the mind reemerges in reliance on the body, but also the exact mechanism consists in the last mind-moment prior to meditation planting a 'seed' (*bīja*), a pure potentiality, in the continuous body so that in due time the seed can ripen to bear its fruit (*phāla*), which is the reemerging mind.[36] In this way, the Sautrāntika is not just endorsing heterogeneous causation but homogeneous causation with the body as a kind of vehicle.

Subtle Mind

There is also a Leibnizian solution, held by Vasumitra, which is that even though a person in meditation does not have a fully articulate consciousness, there is still continuous occurrence of subtle consciousness. [37] In this way, the states of coma and death can clearly be distinguished from each other.[38] The same sort of idea is represented in the *Mahāvibhāṣa* as "subtle mind" (*sūkṣma-citta*).[39] Griffiths refers to this same idea as "unmanifest mental consciousness" (*aparisphuṭamanovijñānam*).[40] In it, the subtle mind is asserted precisely for the sake of making a distinction between death and the state of deep meditation in which there is no occurrence of thought.

There are criticisms against the Leibnizian solution. Ghoṣaka objects that all mental activities, no matter how subtle, necessarily accompany sensation (*sparśa*). Sensation occurs with 'triple contact' (*trika-saṃnipāta*), which consists in the meeting of sense-organ (*indriya*), sense-object

(*viṣaya*), and consciousness (*vijñāna*). And finally, contact necessarily gives rise to feeling (*vedanā*), conceptualization (*saṃjñā*), and volition (*saṃskāra*).[41] As such, no mental occurrence can be subtle in the sense of being devoid of intentionality and conceptualization. This is also denial of "dim perception" as suggested by Leibniz, which purportedly goes unnoticed – all mental activity must be fully articulate consciousness.

Yogācāra concept of Storehouse

The Yogācārins also develop the idea of continuous underlying consciousness. Jeffrey Hopkins puts the matter as follows: "The Chittamātrins following Asaṅga feel that because Buddha said that the six consciousnesses of a person do not function in deep sleep and in the meditative equipoise of cessation, etc., there must be another very subtle consciousness, the continuity of which keeps the person alive."[42] The six consciousnesses refer to the five consciousnesses corresponding to the five senses plus the *manovijñāna*, whose function consists in synthesizing sensory inputs and registering nonphysical events, like Aristotle's *sensus communis*. The subtle consciousness refers to the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), whose function consists in being the substratum, though momentary as required by the doctrine of evanescence. In addition to all of these there is one more consciousness recognized by Yogācāra, called *manas*. *Manas* also persists during coma (but not during some but not all meditative states) and its function consists solely in mistaking the succession of consciousnesses for an eternal Ego. The workings of storehouse consciousness and *manas* are said to be subtle, and elude explicit awareness; on the other hand, the workings of the sensory consciousnesses and *manovijñāna* are fully available for thematic awareness. So the Yogācārins would explain that during deep meditation the storehouse consciousness remains active, while consciousness involving either inner or outer sense is inactive.[43]

Griffiths argues that the subtle consciousness in the Yogācāra system is not subject to the same problem that arises for the view supported by Vasumitra, since the function of the storehouse consciousness does not involve either sensation or conceptualization; it is not intentional in the form of 'consciousness of'.[44]

In summary, there are two general ways to explain how mental activity can resume after a gap: the *sacittaka* view, according to which there is unmanifest mental continuity so that there is really no gap to be crossed; and the *acittaka* view, which holds that there is a real lapse of mental activity but the mind can nevertheless reemerge from it. Evidently, none

of the Buddhist solutions corresponds to the kind of response had by Descartes, but some *sacittaka* views correspond with Leibniz's account. If Ghoṣaka's argument is to be taken seriously, we would need to reconsider the plausibility of Leibniz's claim.

Conclusion

We have discussed persistence of persons by outlining and comparing the philosophical tenets of Descartes and the Buddhist logicians. Through comparative analysis we have extracted the ontology of discontinuity and some arguments for this view. For Descartes it is due to the fact that we possess no intrinsic power to sustain our being, and for the Buddhist it is because momentary destruction is necessary if we are to be mortal. Of the two, Descartes' version has been found to be more a genuine opposite of the common view of ontology of continuity than the Buddhist version.

With respect to the problem of persistence during a coma, we have seen that Descartes fails to provide a satisfactory response. While it is logically possible that we remain fully rationally active during a coma or deep sleep without retaining any memory during the time, it is impossible to either affirm or deny that it really obtains. Buddhists offer numerous explanations, some of which are more plausible than others. But if the approach invoking subtle mind is on the right track, *and* if Ghoṣaka's objection is relevant, then the Yogācāra view would be less problematic than either Descartes' or Leibniz's view.

If we accept the ontology of discontinuity, we would no longer be able to take persistence for granted. Every moment of our being is something procured with the active creative efficacy of an Other (whether the divine or the predecessor), and our current being plays an important role in the characterization of the inheritors. I think that this view offers a philosophically interesting perspective, and with fuller articulation and critical assessment in juxtaposition with the ontology of continuity, we can reach a wider understanding of beliefs and assumptions about our temporal nature.

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(Endnotes)

1 René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy,* translated by John Veitch, (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2008), p. 95.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *Ibid.*, p. 80.
4 Schmaltz says this "conservation axiom" is adopted from Suárez's (1548-1617) *Metaphysical Disputations*: "no less a cause is required to conserve a thing than to produce it at first." Tad M. Schmaltz, *Descartes on Causation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 52.
5 Perhaps it could be argued that conservation must come as an implication of God's existence. That is, after acquiring certainty about God we can draw, as a corollary, that since He is no deceiver He does not deceive us about the belief that we have existed in the past; and since He promotes self-improvement on our part, He ensures that we remain in existence long enough to achieve our goals.
6 Schmaltz, p. 83.
7 Gassendi's objection is represented and discussed in Marjorie Grene, *Descartes*,

(Indianapolis: Hacket Publishing Company, Inc., 1998), p. 147.

8 Schmaltz, p. 82.

9 It can be correctly objected that Descartes contaminates his overall project, which is to establish a philosophical system with no culturally inherited prejudices, by relying on the prevalent theological view.

10 This is Uddyotakara's criticism. See Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṃgraha,* Texts 370-2.

11 See Chizuko Yoshimizu, "The Development of *Sattvānumāna* from the refutation of a permanent existent in the Sautrāntika Tradition", in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 43, 231–254. While this argument is a refutation of permanent entities, it should not be confused with Ratnakīrti's *sthirasiddhidūṣaṇa*. The latter is an argument to show that the idea of a permanent self is inconclusive. For the latter discussion, see Katsumi Mimaki, "Kōjōseihihan Shirasiddhidūṣaṇa", in *Indogaku Bukkyogaku Kenkyu*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1972, pp. 127-133.

12 For how the argument proceeds, refer to the section on the argument from existence.

13 Śāntarakṣita, *Tattvasaṅgraha,* Texts 357, 358. From *Tattvasaṅgraha of Ācārya Shāntarakṣita with the commentary 'Pañjikā' of Shri Kamalashīla,* edited by Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 1, (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 1968), pp. 167-8. Translation by Ganganatha Jha, *Tattvasaṅgraha of Śāntarakṣīta with the Commentary of Kamalaśīla*, (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1937), vol. 1, pp. 228-9. Also translation by K. N. Chatterjee, in *Tattvasaṁgraha (Sthirabhāvaparīkṣa),* (Calcutta: Vijaya-Veeṇā, 1988), pp. 4-5.

14 *Tattvasaṃgraha,* text 376.

15 Roy Perrett, "The Moment of Simples", in *Philosophy 79, 2004,* pp. 435-445.

16 Critiques such as Udayana retort that denial of non-momentary entity does not confirm the existence of momentary entities. I think this is true. However, I am content to point out that on the assumption that something exists, that something is necessarily momentary, which is the same as to say whatever that exists is momentary. The choice is then to either accept evanescence or be a nihilist.

17 For original text, see *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya,* particularly the appendix titled *ātmavāda-pratiṣedha.* The reductionist thesis is clarified in Mark Siderits, *Personal Identity and Buddhist Philosophy: Empty Persons*, (Hampshire/ Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), pp. 17-34, and Jonardon Ganeri, *The Concealed Art of the Soul: Theories of Self and Practices of Truth in Indian Ethics and Epistemology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 160-184.

18 For explanation, see Ratnakīrti's *Anvayātmikā*, texts 79.11-80.4 in Jeson Woo's translation, Jeson Woo, *The Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi – Anvayātmikā,* (UMI

dissertation services, 1999), pp. 24-29.

19 For explanation, see Rita Gupta, *Essays on Dependent Origination and Momentariness,* (Calcutta: Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar, 1990), p. 61.

20 Whether the main cause produces the sprout alone or together with the cooperating causes varies among the proponents. Śāntarakṣita holds that the main cause and the cooperating causes generate the novel effect altogether. Ratnakīrti argues that the main cause obtains all the required efficacy from proximate cooperating causes, and thereafter produces the effect singlehandedly. The primary implications are that on Śāntarakṣita's view, all causes must be proximate at the same time, and on Ratnakīrti's view, the cooperating causes can approach the main cause one by one. For Śāntarakṣita's position, see his *Tattvasaṃgraha*, texts 435-6. For Ratnakīrti's, see his *Anvayātmikā*, texts

21 Descartes, p. 95.

22 For a comprehensive summary of Buddhist ontology, see Mark Siderits, *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction,* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company Inc., 2007), pp. 105-118.

23 Two notes: firstly, the relation between *citta* and *caitta* is not one of belonging or inherence (*samavāya*) as in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika metaphysics, but is of accompaniment and correspondence (*samprayukta*). Secondly, not all Abhidharmists supported *citta-caitta* theory. Dārṣṭāntika, Buddhadeva and Harivarman oppose the theory as heretical as substantializing move that goes against the *sūtras.* Shukyo Katsumata, *A Study of the Citta-Vijñāna Thought in Buddhism*, (Tokyo: Sankibo-busshorin, 1961, 1988), p. 344. For discussion of the controversy regarding *citta-caitta* theory, see *Ibid.*, pp. 401-418.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 553.

25 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, edited by P. Remnant and J. Bennett, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 48.

26 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Monadology*, translated by George R. Montgomery, in *Discourse on Metaphysics and the Monadology,* (New York: Cosimo Inc., 2008), p. 69.

27 James Hill, "The Philosophy of Sleep: The Views of Descartes, Locke and Leibniz", in *Richmond Journal of Philosophy* 6 (Spring 2004), p. 2.

28 John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* (London: T. Tegg and Son, 1836), Book II, 14, p. 56.

29 Paul Griffiths, "On being mindless: The debate on the reemergence of consciousness from the attainment of cessation in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* and its commentaries", in *Philosophy East & West*, vol. 33, no. 4, October 1983, p. 379.

30 Quoted in Steven Collins, *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, first published 1982, reprinted last 1999), p. 240.

31 Noriaki Hakamaya, "Nirodhasamāpatti – Its Historical Meaning in the Vijñaptimātratā System", in *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 23 (1974-75) No. 2, p. 35.

32 Katsumata, pp. 535-542.
33 Ibid., p. 37.
34 Griffiths, p. 382.
35 For a summary of how the idea came to be scrutinized in Sarvāstivāda circle, see Jan Westerhoff, "Abhidharma Buddhism", in Jay L. Garfield and William Edelglass, *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 198-200.
36 Griffiths, p. 382.
37 Ibid., p. 385.
38 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, edited by P. Remnant and J. Bennett, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 48. Also, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Monadology*, translated by George R. Montgomery, in *Discourse on Metaphysics and the Monadology,* (New York: Cosimo Inc., 2008), p. 69.
39 Katsumata, p. 547.
40 Griffiths, p. 384.
41 Ibid. Also, Hakamaya, p. 39.
42 Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation of Emptiness,* (Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, first published 1983, revised edition 1996), p. 386.
43 Hakamaya provides a graph expressing which type of consciousness is active in which mental state. According to this, all eight consciousnesses are active in normal waking state, storehouse consciousness and *manas* are active and the sensory (inner and outer) consciousnesses are absent during deep sleep and coma, in a meditative state called *asaṃjñisamāpatti* both storehouse consciousness and *manas* are operative, in *nirodhasamāpatti* and in higher states up to *lokottaramārga* only storehouse consciousness is active, and in *arhat* all consciousness ceases. Hakamaya, p. 42.
44 Griffiths, p. 390. Also, Hakamaya points out that the subtle mind corresponds with *manovijñāna.* With this Vasumitra's view can be clearly and sharply distinguished from the Yogācāra idea. See Hakamaya, p. 36.

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