

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Classical philosophy which began with the ancient Greek philosophers— Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes devoted their time and intellectual energy in search of the ultimate and unchanging reality or fundamental stuff that account for change in the cosmos. Their focus was the universe and in search of the abiding or primary principle/truth behind the universe. The various speculations resulted in conflicting theories about what the primary stuff underlying all realities is. Thus, it was not so clear what exactly the persisting and abiding principle is. The causal principle which was the main goal of classical philosophers was rendered unintelligible by the conflicting theories.

However, there was a shift from the cosmic universe as object of speculation to the human person and society. This era, marked the beginning of the golden age. Philosophers that dominated this era were Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Though the question concerning the identity of the human person was not the focus of this epoch but the seed was however sown by the attempt by philosophers to provide competing answers to the following questions regarding the nature of man; what is man? What is man made up of or composed of? And what is his purpose in the society, etc? The answers provided, divided philosophers into two main camps—the materialists and the idealists. While the materialists think that man is wholly matter or physical body, the idealists think that man is spirit or immaterial being.

For Plato, man is a dual creature. We have a body that “flows”, is inseparably bound to the world of the senses, and is subject to the same fate as everything else in this world— a soap

bubble, for example. All our senses are based on the body and are consequently unreliable, but we also have an immortal soul— and this soul is the realm of reason; and not being physical, the soul can survey the world of ideas.¹ Such was the conception of the nature of the human being in the Platonic era. “Until the seventeenth century, the soul had commonly been considered as a sort of ‘breath of life’ that pervaded all living creatures”. The original meaning of the words ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’ was in fact, ‘breath’ and ‘breathing’. This was the case for almost all European languages.

To this end, the materialists conceived man as purely or essentially matter and the idealists conceived him as mind; a kind of a mental substance or entity. The metaphysical essence of man was either that he is wholly matter or wholly spirit. Though, some scholars, Aristotle for example, in the ancient era attempted to explain the nature of the human person as a combination of form and matter (Aristotle’s doctrine of *Hylemorphism*) nonetheless, Descartes’ rationalistic philosophy seems to clearly provide an apt explanation of the nature of the human person. Descartes maintains that there are two different forms of reality— or two ‘substances’; *thought* (or mind) and *extension* (or matter). The mind is purely conscious; it takes up no room in space and can therefore not be sub-divided into smaller parts. Matter, however, is purely extension, it takes up room in space and can therefore always be sub-divided into smaller and smaller parts— but it has no consciousness.²

From this dualistic conception of man, what definite identity can be ascribed to the nature of man? Of the two substances, which is the most abiding? Against this backdrop, further questions have been raised which many philosophers have hitherto tried to answer. Such questions like, who am I? Where did I come from? Am I a being or a person or human? The serious attempt to

answer these questions divided philosophers and their approaches into three distinct positions. (i) The Mental Continuity, where for example, John Locke has meticulously developed theory to buttress and sustain the psychological approach argument. (ii). The Physical Continuity and the (iii) view that completely refutes or denies both the mental and physical continuity theories.

The mental continuity theorists approach the issue of personal identity from a purely psychological position. For them, consciousness is considered as the only abiding principle that accounts for the identity of the human person. Neither the soul nor body is necessary and sufficient to account for the identity of humans. For the physical continuity theorists, no matter the amount of change that may be observed in the physical features of a person's body, there is/are however, some distinctive characteristics that remain permanent, for example, the human skin and genetic make-up. Hume represents the third approach. His argument was a categorical denial of the idea of the self or human personality. His view completely obliterates the existence and reality of the self and gave a fatal blow to the knowledge of the self and human personality. This work critically analyzes the three approaches and argues that Locke's psychological approach, hitherto, remains the most plausible and convincing as far as the identity of the self/person is concerned. This is not to say, there are no pit-falls in Locke's consciousness criterion of personal identity, rather the goal of this work is to present the inadequacies and then suggest a new approach. However, since Locke is our primary focus, it is apt to present a brief background to his argument.

For Locke, neither the soul nor the body satisfies the identity conditions of persons. Perhaps, the simple reason is that when a person experiences amnesia or loss of memory or consciousness, the soul, just as the body does not go with the memory or consciousness; it remains in the same

body. The body too does not go with the memory or consciousness. Thus, he rejected the soul's criterion on the ground that: "the same immaterial substance or soul does not alone, wherever it be, and in whatsoever state, make the same man." The soul view according to which personal identity depends on sameness of soul is inherently mysterious.

According to the soul view, personal identity depends on sameness of soul. As simple, immaterial substances, souls are not part of the natural world. Whatever exists or obtains, but not as part of the natural world, is inherently mysterious. Other peoples' souls cannot be observed either directly or indirectly. And since only the activities, and not the substance, of the soul are open to empirical investigation, there is no way to detect by observing an individual whether his soul remains the same. Hence, on the soul view, personal identity is inherently mysterious . . . so far as the verdict of history is concerned, the soul view was not just a wrong account of personal identity, it was the wrong *kind* of account.³

Locke was quite clear as to what constitutes or what the necessary and sufficient conditions for the identity of persons should be. For him, it is consciousness and consciousness alone. Locke was the first to introduce the *third term* (i.e., consciousness), departing from the ancient and medieval soul's and body's accounts of what constitute identity. He took the soul and body as substances which consciousness can inhere. "This may show us wherein personal identity consists; not in the identity of substance, but, as I have said, in the identity of consciousness."⁴ Demonstrating further that the soul view of personal identity is inconsequential and that, different substances can be united into one person when the person extends his consciousness to his past or remote actions. Locke remarked that: "But though the same immaterial substance or soul does not alone, wherever it be, and in whatsoever state, make the same man; yet it is plain consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended, should it be to ages past, unites existences and actions, very remote in time, into the same person, as well as it does the existences and actions of

the immediately preceding moment; so that whatever has the consciousness of present and past actions, is the same person to whom they both belong.”⁵

By this simple fact, it means that if a human being, let say, born 80 years ago is able to annex or extend his consciousness to his past actions, say when he was 70 years, 60 years, 50 years, 40 years and so on then he is the same person. The soul or body cannot unite remote existences into the same person but consciousness. “Nothing but consciousness can unite remote existences into the same person; the identity of substance will not do it. For whatever substance there is, however framed, without consciousness there is no person: and a carcass may be a person, as well as any sort of substance be so without consciousness.”⁶ Thus, “only insofar as we are aware of ourselves as stretching into the past are we the same self or person.”⁷ The fact that Locke carefully delineates and separates consciousness from the substances which house it; he has led many or some scholars to “argue that the criterion for personal identity is simply memory.”⁸ So far, for Locke, we can say that “a present person is identical to a past one only insofar as she remembers or it is possible for her to remember herself thinking and acting in the past.”⁹

More so, Locke’s idea of a person or self is based on his analysis of consciousness. For Locke, a person is neither a soul, body nor man. *A person is a thinking intelligent being who is conscious of itself as itself.* Here, the two underlying words are **thinking** and **consciousness**. It can be inferred that Locke’s idea of a person is something intangible and psychological. Consequently, it may be argued that Locke was mainly using the term from a conceptual standpoint. What is not easily discernable in Locke’s description of a person is that ‘thinking’ and ‘consciousnesses’ are not extrinsic features of a human being but rather intrinsic. Then, how can something intrinsic and immaterial constitute a clear and distinct defining principle or hallmark of personal identity?

As David Shoemaker has argued, “[w]e cannot track immaterial egos floating free from any particular psychological properties, so on this view we would never be justified in claiming to have re-identified anyone.”¹⁰

In all, we see that Locke’s account of personal identity was genuinely revolutionary and a germane contribution to philosophy. This, along with his agnosticism about whether the soul was material or immaterial was debated vehemently through much of the eighteenth century and at least the debates about personal identity were largely recapitulated in the twentieth century. Much of this begins with the Clarke/Collins controversy of 1707–08. Locke’s account of free agency is just as interesting and important as his account of personal identity with which it is connected. Yet it seems not to have been as controversial as Locke’s account of personal identity.¹¹

1.2.Statement of Problem

The questions— who are we, what are we and what constitutes our nature continue to beg for permanent answers. Though some efforts have been made by scholars, especially the modernist philosophers, to provide precise answer(s) to these questions, they however remain fundamentally problematic. This is because the precise identity of our being varies or changes with time. Nothing seems permanent as we age; we change both in form, size and appearance though (nevertheless) not substantially. Amidst this difficulty, several schools of thought have proposed possible theories to resolve and answer the problem. First and foremost, let us state the problem of personal identity.

What does being the person that we are; from one day to the next necessarily consist of? Who are we, and supposing there is life after death, in what form or nature would the human person attain it? More so, In order to exist after death, there has to be a person after death who is the same person as the person who died. Clearly, the problem of personal identity can be categorized into two, the diachronic problem and the synchronic problem. The diachronic problem of personal identity raises questions on the necessary and sufficient conditions for the identity of the person over time. The synchronic problem is grounded in the question of what features or traits characterize a given person at any one given time.

According to Blatti Stephan, “the problem of personal identity emerges from two incontrovertible facts about entities of our kind. First, each of us came into existence at some point in the past; each of us has persisted for some period of time; and each of us will cease to exist at some point in the future. Second, our ontological careers are marked by change. We grow and we diminish; we learn and we forget; we live and we die. The challenge is to account for these two sets of facts in an informative way: in particular, to persuasively articulate the conditions under which we come into, remain in, and ultimately go out of existence.”¹²

If Locke’s supposition that consciousness is the necessary and sufficient conditions for the re-identification of the self is taken seriously, then it raises the following germane questions— what exactly is consciousness? How and why should it be the basis or criterion for the determination of personal identity? Which mental activities are acts of consciousness? Is consciousness both a smooth and halting awareness of one’s mental state? Is there gradation or (different) levels of consciousness? Is there lower consciousness as may be found in baby/teen than the one found in

adult/old people? By what means do we say this consciousness and that consciousness are identical and the same so as to constitute the basis of personal identity?

Furthermore, how do I reconcile the intuition I have of myself as the same person who has existed from birth till now with Locke's theory that a disconnect between my present self and my past self due to forgetfulness, sleep or loss of memory implies I am no longer the same person who existed in the past and the person existing now? To recast the same point, are mine the same thing as my experiences—past and present? Yes! Locke's theory clearly suggests this. If my experience(s) is/are the same as me, why is it that when I am unable to remember some of them I do not intuitively feel I am no longer the same person? I always have the intuition that I am the same continued or persisting self even if I am unable to remember some of my past experiences. What makes me to continue to have this intuition that I am the same self from birth contrary to Locke's supposition that an interruption of my experiences either by sleep or forgetfulness makes me a different person?

Granted that the idea of consciousness alone is what makes the same person or self, also granted that the doctrine of intentionality presupposes that every mental act (of which consciousness is one) possesses an act (*a*) and a content (*c*), and that consciousness is always intended towards an object, then what is the object of consciousness if the object of the self or person is consciousness? More importantly, what confers identity to persons? Could the same self confer identity to itself or is it a different object, possibly other than myself that confers or ascribes identity to me (myself)? If secondary intentionality is valid that it is possible for the content of consciousness to be consciousness, that is, self-reflexive, then it is also valid to assert that it is the self that validates itself thus; personal identity becomes intuitively and evidently self-valid.

This raises a fundamental paradox and cast doubt on the epistemic certainty and cognition of the self as a persisting entity. If personal identity is self-valid and it is true that it is not all my past experiences or actions I can remember vividly and wholly, then why is it that when my memory is interrupted, I am not able to know that I am no longer the same self or person? Besides, why am I not aware that a different self has possessed my body and also when I stopped existing? These are what this research aims to address.

1.3.Purpose of Study

This research is an attempt to resolve the problem of personal identity building on the psychological approach theory—by arguing that a person is purely a mental being, that the characteristics of a person persist throughout his/her existence, that a conscious being is capable of reflexive continuity; the ability to firmly dissolve the misgivings of the existence of the body as created by Descartes. In all, the research, among others, is in defense of the psychological approach to the problem of personal identity.

Most importantly, the research focuses primarily on Locke's doctrine and theory of personal identity, arguing that besides establishing one's identity or re-identification of one's self by extending one's thought to past actions which Locke's work clearly stipulated, the "other" which constitutes what Heidegger would called the "shared-world" or "being-among-others" invariably constitutes a determining factor for ascertaining or defining personal identity. In addition, environment and technology can also enhance and fill the gap, especially when one is unable to extend one's memory to past thoughts.

The aim of the research is to investigate the ontological and epistemic status of a person, self and consciousness as well as the possibility of complementing or modifying Locke's psychological approach to the problem of personal identity in order to overcome the problems inherent in his position. Though neo-Lockeans have tried to respond to the questions and problems, by and large, such responses have remained unproductive. The gap which this thesis intends to fill is the proposal of a new dimension and approach— an externalist criterion, besides the memory narrative criterion that has been adduced by neo-Lockeans. The externalist criterion is hinged on the fact that the *other*, which here comprises other persons, environments, communities and technology can fundamentally and reasonably constitute and serve as re-assurance of the self and personal identity, when consciousness is interrupted by forgetfulness, sleep or loss of memory.

Hence, the purpose of this research is to find out if there are really person's stages when consciousness is interrupted either by sleep or forgetfulness. If the idea of a person is different from the idea of a human being and at which stage could a child be regarded as a person? More so, another reason for this research is to re-define Locke's psychological approach which largely is intrinsic in nature and to argue for an extended and extrinsic approach on the grounds and facts that memory as a source of reliable knowledge is somewhat dubious and fallible and as such could barely account for and constitute the persisting and abiding principle for the re-identification of the self and the human person over time. In all, the purpose of this work is to analyze the idea of the self, person and consciousness as employed in Locke's theory of personal identity, and to see if they adequately constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for the defining of a person's identity over time.

One of the fundamental reasons for embarking on this research is to explore the possibility of re-ordering or restructuring the psychological account of personal identity and if it is amenable to inward-outward (inner-outer) approach/affirmation of the self. To recast the same point, the research purpose is to attempt a revision of Locke's account of personal identity and to argue that Locke's conception or idea of consciousness, self and person though psychological, is amenable to and can possibly be subjected to social outlook. The point being made is that if Locke's idea of consciousness, self and person is intractable and unsustainable under the psychological approach to personal identity, then it is fitting to argue and push for social identity of the self instead of personal identity that is somewhat misleading and subjectively construed.

1.4. Significance of Study

The importance of this study underscores the fact that Locke's psychological approach to the problem of personal identity seems to provide a veritable explication for the understanding of the terms— self and identity in relation to humans and persons. Ever since it was adduced by Locke, it has become a vital ground for the discussion of personal identity in the field of philosophy, medicine, psychology, neuroscience and biology. In fact, Locke's discussion of personal identity, along with the rest of his essay, has had an enormous impact on the 18th century and beyond. It is primarily through Locke's use of the term consciousness in this context that the term came under general use both in England¹³ and many other places in the world. Though different interpretations have surfaced—the *physicalism* theory, the biological theory and recently the extended mind theory etc, Locke's theory appears most robust and plausibly logical. Locke's consciousness criterion has raised many issues in the possibility and the bid to provide concrete explanation for consciousness as a criterion and the determination of personal identity condition

in the human person. Though it may be branded or perceived as a branch of philosophy of mind, the subject has gained more grounds in the area of psychology, psychiatry and neuro-science.

Researchers in other fields, especially in psychology have experimented on the possibility of brain fission, that is, the splitting of the human brain into two halves and transferring them into two separate bodies and from that explore the possibility of one person existing in two human bodies. Commissurotomy which is the surgical procedure for severing the right and left hemispheres of the brain was first performed on patients with severe forms of epilepsy in 1940. Following this, Sperry has argued that “the surgery [commissurotomy] has left these people with two separate minds, that is, two separate spheres of consciousness.”¹⁴ Wilson and Lenart claim that “reports of these findings of split-brain cases were thus sometimes interpreted as cases in which there were two persons in one body”¹⁵ and it is argued further by Roland Puccetti, a Canadian philosopher that “this is proper way to think about persons and their bodies more generally.”¹⁶ Derek Parfits seems to be the first to raise this when he came out with the thought experiment and argument for split brain or consciousness theory in the debate of personal identity. The possibility of split brain theory as well as a recent theory—brain uploading, has made Locke’s account of personal identity to some extent doubtable. More fundamentally, the recipient of the brain does not intuitively feel his old self has discontinued and also, the brain donated does not intuitively recognize that he now exists in a different body.

Quite importantly, this study examines thoroughly Locke’s idea of consciousness as a determinant of personal identity. It is apt to ask the question; how does a person or individual validate his identity? How do I know that I am still the same person ten years ago? Locke simply puts it this way; a person is a thinking intelligent being; that has reason and reflection, and can

consider itself as itself.¹⁷ He applies the idea of identity to the idea of person or self using consciousness as the underlying factor. “For, since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes everyone to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity.”¹⁸ So, for Locke what goes into making personal identity is consciousness. What then makes the same person? For Locke, it is sameness of consciousness. It is not sameness of identical substance but uninterrupted consciousness that makes the same man be himself to himself. Thus:

For as far as any intelligent being can repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it had of any present action; so far it is the same personal self. For, it is by the consciousness it has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to itself now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness can extend to actions past or to come; and would be by distance of time, or change of substance, no more two persons, than a man be two men by wearing other clothes today than he did yesterday, with a long or short sleep between: the same consciousness uniting distant actions into the same person, whatever substances contributed to their production.¹⁹

1.5.Scope of Study

The scope of this work is limited only to Locke’s theory of personal identity, the theories and approaches to personal identity and the general debates the problem elicited. Within the Lockean framework, the research shall examine and analyze the idea of the self, person and consciousness as employed by Locke in his theory of personal identity and argue that his theory is inadequate and cannot sufficiently account for personal identity because of its intrinsic nature, particularly the unsettled description or resolution about the precise nature of consciousness among scholars

as well as who and what confers identity. In order to overcome this inadequacy, the research proposes, in part, an extrinsic approach.

1.6.Methodology

Discussion on personal identity is majorly a philosophical and to a large extent a non-empirical based discourse. To do justice to the crux of this discourse, the most ideal methods are analytic and hermeneutic methods. In view of this, the research therefore adopts or proposes to employ mainly two methods: the analytic and hermeneutic methods. These methods will be employed to thoroughly scrutinize, investigate and interpret the idea of ‘consciousness’, ‘self’ and ‘person’ in Locke’s psychological criterion such that and at the end the research is enabled to propose a new and radical approach to the personal identity debate.

This study adopts the analytic approach in order to provide a conceptual theoretical framework as well as to break down words and concepts to their smallest units for the purpose of clarification, presentation and understanding. Here, the research seeks to analyze the following terms— ‘consciousness’, ‘self’, and ‘person’, which are contained in the view of Locke. The goal is to see if these concepts or terms derive their meaning either existentially, contextually or objectively/subjectively.

Hermeneutic as a method enables you to make interpretations and gain an in-depth understanding of the researched phenomenon. This is because the main goal of hermeneutic approach is to explore and analyze the life world. Hence, the research engages the hermeneutic method by providing a conceptual and thematic interpretations and exposition of Locke’s use of the following terms— ‘consciousness’, ‘self’ and ‘person’ in the construct of his theory of

personal identity. Furthermore, attempt will be made to interpret the rationale or cause behind Locke's differentiation of the idea of man from the idea of the self or person and to what extent he succeeded. More so, since the term 'consciousness' has been used in different contexts to mean different things, a hermeneutic interpretation will be germane and necessary to investigate and properly situate the sense and meaning of the term as employed by Locke in his theory of personal identity.

The research shall be executed through primary and secondary materials; that is, Locke's own writing and that of other scholars in the philosophy of mind and personal identity in particular and other related areas of philosophy in general. The research intends to approach the issues raised in this dissertation in the way the research work is broken into the following chapters thus:

In the first chapter of the research, besides the general introduction, attempts will be made to summarize and explain the essential concepts of identity and personhood. It will involve the definition and meaning of the terms; consciousness, self, identity, etc, the existing notion(s) and idea of a person. The second chapter will focus on existing discussions, arguments and counter-arguments in the personal identity debates. It would involve reviewing relevant literature. These two chapters are introductory and will comprise part one of the dissertation.

The next two chapters will be devoted to the analysis of the theories of personal identity and the interpretations of John Locke's arguments and the mental continuity theory of personal identity. Chapter three will examine John Locke's psychological theory and interpretations of central notions of Locke's concept and idea of "substance", "consciousness" "man", "self" and "person". In this chapter, the research shall bring to bear the various and existing attempts made to define a person, starting from ancient to contemporary analysis and definitions of personhood.

In this chapter also, the research shall critically discuss the mental-continuity approach and examine it in the light of possibilities of Western and African notions of person, self, consciousness and death and after life (reincarnation). Chapter four will examine the theories and counter theories of personal identity. The research shall attempt to distill what the pivotal issues underlying the controversies of personal identity are. The conclusion emanating from these chapters compels one to hold the view that certain critics' interpretations of John Locke's "consciousness" criterion in the determination of personal identity are seriously flawed, and leaves open to question the sustainability of the psychological theory of personal identity.

Part Three will consist of two concluding chapters whose aim is to critically examine and resolve the controversies underlying the problem of personal identity. Chapter five will focus on the main problem my work is set out to address or argue. That is, the deconstruction of the psychological approach to the problem of personal identity. It focuses on arguments (for and against Locke's theory) and current attempts to modify Locke's psychological approach. This chapter aims at inquiring or probing the basis of Locke's theory and theories of personal identity in general and whether they satisfactorily explicate the idea of a person or not. Accordingly, the research argues that it is not only *consciousness* that constitutes the criterion and determination of a person's identity over time but also the *other*. The outcome of this chapter may lay to rest the ongoing contentions undercutting the psychological approach to the problem of personal identity. The findings shall become a new approach or a modification of the existing mental continuity approach. The chapter concludes by showing how this re-appraisal of Locke's consciousness criterion in the determination of personal identity undercuts or underpins the debate of the psychological approach proponents. Chapter six comprises the summary and conclusion of the research as well as the findings and recommendations.

1.7. Definitions of Terms

The purpose of definition cannot be over-emphasized. However, “we must bear in mind that a definition is neither a proof nor an argument but an instrument for clarification of what is hitherto unknown, vague or ambiguous.”²⁰ Essentially, a definition is the description or elucidation of the essential elements or aspects under which a given word is framed.²¹ The essential terms to be explicated and clarified in this research work are:

Consciousness: — Consciousness, according to the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, is whatever complex biological and neutral processes that go on back stage. It is that which provides the theatre where my experiences and thoughts have their existence, where my desires are felt and where my intentions are formed.²² According to Locke, it is that which goes into making personal identity; when placed in a substance (substance here means that which a thing depends on in order to exist), it is sensible or conscious of pleasure and pain, capable of happiness or misery etc. To this end, Coventry & Kriegel as well as Weinberg view consciousness as a mental state inseparable from an act of thinking though it is neither identical to reflection nor identical to ordinary perception.²³ In the view of Robert Van Gulick, “consciousness is the state or quality of awareness or, of being aware of an external object or something within oneself.”²⁴

Some of the definitions of consciousness²⁵ by *Merriam Webster Dictionary* are ‘the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself, the totality of conscious states of an individual’; ‘the condition of being mentally aware and active; the part of the mind involving thought and awareness’; ‘the totality in psychology of sensations, perceptions, ideas, attitudes,

and feelings of which an individual or group is aware at any given time or within a given time span’.

Self: — It is apt to begin the definition of the term ‘self’, by looking at the definition and clarification offered by Kierkegaard. He identified the structure of the self or selfhood in his articulation of the self’s leap into the uncharted realm or territory of faith. His most concise definition of the self is found in the psychological treatise, *The Sickness Unto Death* thus: “man is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relationship which relates itself to itself, or it is that in the relationship by which the relationship relates itself to itself. The self is not the relationship but the fact that the relationship relates itself to itself.”²⁶ According to Locke, the self is that conscious thinking thing— it is the same with his idea of a person.

Person: — It is common to see people confuse the use of the term “man” and the term “person”. Some persons even use it interchangeably to mean the same thing. However, the working definition adopted here is that of John Locke. Among the many definitions of person, is Locke’s fundamental conception of person as self-conscious being. For Locke, a person is a “thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places; which it only does by the consciousness, which is inseparable from thinking , and, as it seems to me, essential to it.”²⁷ Clearly, this definition offered by Locke implies that the idea of a person is different from the idea of a man or human being. In fact, as Beck puts it: “persons, for Locke, are not substances (as humans are); but they are presented as things in their own right, or ‘real existences’ with their own persistence conditions, and not as the self-constructs presented by appropriation theorists.”²⁸ Granted that a

person is a thinking thing, is it different from the brain? This is why this thesis is aimed at investigating the notion of person within the Lockean conceptual framework.

Identity: — The term “identity” has French and Latin origins. In French, it is *identité* and Latin, *identitat*. Both literally means ‘same and same’. Logically, going by this definition, p is p , q is q , r is r , no more, no less. That is, we cannot say p is p at one time and at another time p is not- p or that p is something else. Metaphysically, the term identity refers to the specific, unique or peculiar nature of a thing or its essence that distinguishes one thing from another. It is the defining qualities of a thing. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, it means ‘sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing’ or ‘the distinguishing character or personality of an individual’ or ‘the condition of being the same with something described or asserted.’

Though many definitions have been provided, this research considers the definition and explanation offered by Jamie Slagel, thus: “I take identity to refer to personal identity as opposed to the importance of identity of objects. Therefore, by “our identity”, I am referring to our mental selves as opposed to our physical bodies or brains. For Locke, this meant the identity of our “person.”²⁹ Furthermore, he avers that “identity is meant not in the sense of characteristics, but in the sense of the essential quality that makes me “me”. When someone points to a school photo and says “that’s me”, what about the “photo me” has been maintained such that ‘current “me” is the same as that past “me”. The something which links a present object to a past or future object is identity.’³⁰

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter considers and reviews relevant texts, materials and works that are instrumental to achieving the objective of this dissertation. For the purpose of easy comprehension, this work approaches this review under the following themes— (a) affirmations of Locke’s doctrine (b) consideration of Locke’s thesis as mistaken, confusing and failed (c) replacement for Locke’s thesis of consciousness and (d) gap identified and proposed solution

Affirmation of Locke’s Doctrine: To understand the historical trend the discussion of personal identity has gone thus far, a quotation from Raymond Martin and John Barresi (eds.) of the book *Personal Identity* (2003) will suffice:

If you stand squarely in the middle of contemporary analytic personal identity theory and look toward the past, the evolution of Western theorizing about self and personal identity can seem to divide neatly into three phases: from Plato to John Locke, from Locke to the late 1960s, and from the late 1960s to the present. During the first of these phases – the Platonic phase – the dominant view was that the self, or at least that part of the self that was thought to be highest and to survive bodily death, is a simple immaterial substance. During the second phase – the Lockean phase – the dominant view was that the self should be understood not as a simple persisting substance, whether material or immaterial, but as a constantly changing process of interrelated psychological and physical elements, later phases of which are appropriately related to earlier phases. The third, contemporary, phase features three developments. The first of these developments is that the Lockean *intrinsic* relations view of personal identity has been superseded by an *extrinsic* relation view (which is also sometimes called the *closest-continuer* or *externalist* view). According to the older *intrinsic* relations view, what determines whether a person at one time and at another are the same person is how the two are physically and/or psychologically related to *each other*. According to the most recent *extrinsic* relations view, what determines whether a person at one time and one at another are the same person is not just how the two are physically and/or psychologically related to *each other*, but how they are related to everything else – especially *everybody* else. For instance, in Locke’s *intrinsic* relations view, you-right-now are the same person as someone

who existed yesterday if you remember having experienced or having done things which that person of yesterday experienced or did. In an *extrinsic* version of Locke's view, one would have to take into account not only whether you remember having experienced or having done things which that person of yesterday experienced or did, but whether, besides you, *anyone else* remembers having experienced or having done things which that person of yesterday experienced or did.³¹

This appealing narrative introduces two ways of approaching personal identity problem —the physiological and the psychological. The first is opposed to the latter and vice versa. The physiological approach is further divided into two versions: the bodily criterion and the somatic criterion. The bodily criterion holds that the *spatio*-temporal continuity of a functioning human body constitutes personal identity.³² Advocates of this thought are Williams (1956-7; 1970) and Thomson (1997). For them the cardinal requirement for personal identity is the functioning human body. A person stage-A at t_1 is the same as a person stage-B at t_2 if both possess or have resemblance of the same body. This is also called *physicalism* theory. Bleich while reflecting on Rashi's argument states that:

Personal identity is a product of a cause and effect relationship. Change certainly does occur in the course of human development and maturation but where there is no baby, there would be no adolescent, where there is no adolescent, there would be no adult. The baby, in a very significant sense, is the cause of the adolescent and the adolescent is the cause of the adult. That causal nexus gives rise both to personal identity and to identity as a member of a species because, despite any physical change that may occur, the cause is always present in its effect. Accordingly, the mother is present in her offspring and hence the offspring shares in the species of its progenitor.³³

Though the argument seems to fall into what Martin & Barresi (2003) called the simple view of personal identity relation, the cause and effect relationship introduced into the argument to defend the bodily criterion is superbly ingenious. The somatic criterion, on the hand holds that the *spatio*-temporal continuity of the metabolic and other life-sustaining organs of a functioning

human animal constitutes personal identity.³⁴ Proponents of this view are Mackie (1999); Olson (1997a, 1997b); Snowdon (1991, 1995 & 1996). Though the similarity of the bodily criterion and somatic criterion has been argued, everything depends on how the notions of “functioning human body” and “life-sustaining organs” are understood.³⁵

Psychological criterion of personal identity on the other hand, holds that “psychological continuity relations, i.e., overlapping chains of direct psychological connections, as those causal and cognitive connections between beliefs, desires, intentions, experiential memories, character traits and so forth, constitute personal identity.”³⁶ This view is found in the thought of Locke (1689, II. xxvii, 9-29); Parfit (1971a; 1984); Perry (1972); Shoemaker (1970) and Shoemaker and Swinburne (1984). John Locke apparently is the first to share this view. For him, personal identity is a matter of psychological continuity. “According to this view, in order for a person *X* to survive a particular adventure, it is necessary and sufficient that there exists, at a time after the adventure, a person *Y* who psychologically evolved out of *X*.”³⁷ In other words, “what underpins the concept of identity and diversity is the ability to compare a thing which occupies space *s*₁ at time *t*₁ with a thing that occupies *s*₂ at *t*₂.”³⁸

Here, there must be overlapping chains of direct psychological connections—causal or cognitive, i.e., for a person stage-A at *t*₁ and a person stage-B at *t*₂ to be the same, there must be causal and cognitive link among the beliefs, desires, intentions, experiential memories, character traits of the two person-stages. Both causal and cognitive features have to match. So, a person-A at *t*₁ is the same person at *t*₂ if and only if, there exists direct psychological connections at the different time variation. Mostly, consciousness is used here as the basis.

Contrary to the belief that objects or persons persist over time, the great Anglo-American philosopher Alfred North Whitehead attributed the continued existence of objects from moment to moment to the intervention of God. Adding that without a kind of continuous creation of every entity, things would fall apart.³⁹ Similarly, the American theologian Jonathan Edwards shares the same sentiment with Whitehead when he opines that God creates every person anew from moment to moment, and is responsible for the way the world is at every instant. Willard van Orman Quine proposed that we consider an object as existing in “stages”, while Quine’s student, David Lewis argues that at every instant of time, every object disappears, ceases to exist, to be replaced by very similar new entity.⁴⁰ These philosophers give the impression that there is no abiding or persisting substance and nothing can survive change as far as persons and objects in the world are concerned. Thus, we could conclude that they deny wholly or partially the knowledge of abiding substance such as consciousness.

One of the tremendous influences on Locke’s account of personal identity may be traced to the Trinitarian doctrine— the assumption that there are three distinct self-conscious minds or persons in one God. This account is contained in John Barresi’s essay “On Earth as it is in Heaven: Trinitarian Influences on Locke’s Account of Personal Identity”. He argued that Locke’s concept of person and self as they first appeared in the 1694 essay were not original to him but had already appeared in the Trinitarian controversy in England in the early 1690s. In particular, William Sherlock, who in 1690 argued that the Trinity might be understood as composed of three distinct self-conscious minds or persons in one God, previously used not only concepts but also phrases that Locke used in his definition of person. Both Sherlock and Locke define person as a unity of mind or self that, in Sherlock’s term, extends as far as consciousness reaches.⁴¹

It is believed that Locke arrived at the notion of the self or person as the abiding principle of personal identity based on the reason that the idea of the self or person is distinct from the idea of human being on the ground that the latter is substance and the former is a thinking being who is conscious and is capable of remaining the same over time. It is on this basis Rafael De Clercq in the work, “A Criterion of Diachronic Identity based on Locke’s Principle”, explained the principle upon which Locke’s argument and criterion of personal identity is anchored on. In the work, the author sought to derive a perfectly general criterion of identity through time from Locke’s principle, which held that two things of the same kind cannot occupy the same space at the same time. In all, it tries to defend Locke’s principle against alleged counterexamples such as those produced by Leibniz, Fine and Hughes.⁴²

The implication of the above argument is that persons endure and as such possess temporal parts. This was the core of Trenton Merricks’ argument. He averred that if persons last over time by “enduring”, then no analysis or reduction of personal identity over time in *tenus* of any sort of psychological continuity can be correct. In other words, any analysis of personal identity over time in *tenus* of psychological continuity entails that persons are four-dimensional and have temporal parts. He demonstrated in his work that if we abandon psychological analysis of personal identity- as we must if persons endure--- Parfit’s argument for the claim that identity does not matter in survival is easily undenuined. In all, he offered support for the claim that persons endure and also clarifies the contrast between the doctrine that persons endure and its rival, four-dimensionalism.⁴³

Antonia Lolordo in her work, “Person, Substance, Mode and ‘the Moral Man’ in Locke’s Philosophy”, considering Locke’s account of person, responded to the work published by an

English Bishop and theologian, Edmund Law, “A Defence of Mr. Locke’s Opinion Concerning Personal Identity” in which Law attempted to explain and vindicate Mr. Locke’s hypothesis by offering a new account of Lockean persons— by which Locke’s account centers around three key claims; first persons are modes-very roughly, properties-rather than substances. Second, the relevant properties are those that make moral evaluation appropriate, thus taking seriously Locke’s insistence that ‘person’ is a forensic term. And third, the fact that persons are modes is what makes a demonstrative science of morality possible. Antonia concluded that it is unclear if Law’s interpretation actually vindicates Locke.⁴⁴

Presenting a defensible view of Locke’s consciousness criterion of personal identity, Johan Gustafsson in “Did Locke Defend the Memory Continuity Criterion of Personal Identity?”, argued that John Locke’s account of personal identity which is usually thought to have been proved false by Thomas Reid’s simple ‘Gallant Officer’ argument based on Locke’s interpretation of memories of a past person’s thought or action as a necessary and sufficient conditions for being identical to that person is mistaken. He defended a memory continuity view according to which a sequence of overlapping memories is necessary and sufficient for personal identity, concluding that Locke’s traditional memory account is not vulnerable to the Gallant Officer argument.⁴⁵

The moral underpinning of Locke’s theory of personal identity was the argument Jessica Spector provided. She pointed out that from the onset the problem of personal identity was a moral one— an attempt to trap or pin down the condition for responsibility and accountability. In her work, “The Grounds of Moral Agency: Locke’s Account of Personal Identity”, she discussed the implications of Locke’s consciousness theory of personal identity for thought about the

continuity of moral agency, arguing that Locke's treatment of personal identity is best understood in connection with his expanded discussion of liberty in the *Essay* and with his interest in the proper grounds for assessing responsibility for action. By grounding personal identity in an agent's ability to recognize her actions as her own, Locke inevitably presents a picture of moral life compatible with skepticism about further that this description (above) highlights some important features of self-awareness and personhood without resorting to any metaphysical suppositions such as soul, essence or spirit.⁴⁶

Here memory is seen as a key factor in the determination of our identity as persons. It is for this reason that Jamie Slagel underscores the importance of our memories for our identity. He reasoned that "one of the most intuitive explanations of identity is our memories."⁴⁷ Klein and Nochols in "Memory and the Sense of Personal Identity" (2012), argue that "memory for past episodes provides a sense of personal identity—the sense that I am the same person as someone in the past."⁴⁸ We may remember a lot of things, events and experiences in the past, either in our school days, previous relationships and so on. These experiences, events and things we remember form a significant part of our identity.

Furthermore, the example given by Slagel is apt thus: "'school-photo me" and "current me" share our memory of the experience of school teachers and lessons, whereas my friend and I don't share this same memory. Even if a friend has memories of the exact same teachers and lessons, theirs is from a different point of view; and they have plenty of other memories different from mine."⁴⁹ What this means is that what makes me different from my friends and other persons is the fact that we don't share exact thoughts or memories of past or future experiences. So, it is this memory or consciousness which "always accompanies thinking, and it is that that

makes everyone to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things: in this alone consists personal identity, i.e. the sameness of a rational being.”⁵⁰

This therefore implies that our unique individual thoughts are what make us who we are. In sum, Weinberg interpreted Locke’s understanding of consciousness as a psychological criterion, as not simply memory or appropriation of mental states, but as the distinct internal experience of the unity of one’s own thinking.⁵¹

Yaffe Gideon in his work “Locke on Consciousness, Personal Identity and the Idea of Duration” has come out to argue that Locke’s consciousness criterion for the determination of personal identity is undeniable and unhelpful for two reasons:

It is undeniable because he just comes out and says as much in passages like the following: “[T]he same consciousness being preserved . . . the personal identity is preserved.” It is unhelpful, for two reasons: first, it is unclear what consciousness is; what portion of a mind’s mental activity at a time is its “consciousness”? Second, even if we knew what, of all the myriad things going on in my mind now is my “consciousness” and we knew what, of all the myriad things that went on in the mind of a child who, in 1976 was forced to wear an embarrassing sailor suit, is his “consciousness”, it would still be unclear what conditions must be satisfied for the two “consciousnesses” to be the same.”⁵²

Yaffe’s comment or view is quite instructive as it points out clearly the difficulty inherent in presenting and taking consciousness as the sole criterion of personal identity. However, he quickly added that:

the simple memory theory of personal identity— the theory according to which later and earlier person-stages are stages of the same person first in case the later can remember the experience of the earlier— tries to solve both problems at once. The theory equates consciousness with any conscious act of awareness and then insists that two acts of awareness are the same in the relevant sense if they have the same content, if they are awareness of the very same thing. What makes my “consciousness” and

the sailor-suit wearing boy the same, on this view, is that, we are both aware of the same event; and in the same way.⁵³

More so, Samuel Clarke and Anthony Collins debate between 1706 and 1709 about whether souls are naturally immortal, whereby soul they agreed to mean “substance with a power of thinking” or “individual consciousness,” is an interesting contribution to the debate of personal identity.⁵⁴ Clarke argued “that in attributing sameness of consciousness over time to a material substance, Collins must really be attributing it to a “flux” of substances, which contradicts the assumption of a real property’s inseparability from its substances.”⁵⁵ To this Collins replied that memory is that faculty that guarantees the persistence of the same consciousness, and hence of the person.⁵⁶

Grice’s defense of Locke’s memory account of personal identity in his essay “Personal Identity”, where he proposed a new term— a total temporary state (t. t. s.) which he states is “composed of all the experiences any one person is having at a given time”⁵⁷ is quite instructive. As Ryan A. Piccirillo puts it:

Grice’s amendment is also brilliant in that it clarifies that memory is sufficient for personal identity only insofar as the total temporary states in a stream share some transitive element. He stipulates that the transitivity of total temporary states will not hold true if the t.t.s.’s in question do not belong to the same person. This and his assertion that, “one can only remember one’s own experiences”, protects the memory theory from critics who cite the false memory effect as a counterexample to Locke’s theory. Grice is right to conclude that the illusion of having experienced is not equivalent with actually having experienced.⁵⁸

However, Ryan concluded that, though Grice’s response is sound, it still fails to provide an adequate definition for personal identity. His amendment assesses personal identity in a Humean fashion, concluding that it is more like a bundle of interconnecting experiences and impressions

than it is an independent substance but that his response is an adequate and acceptable response to the transitive objection.⁵⁹

Consideration of Locke's Thesis as Mistaken, Confusing and Failed: Butler in his account of what personal identity means did not only point out the absurdity inherent in Locke's consciousness criterion but also "proposed that we take as primitive the idea of personal identity like the notion of equality, he said, it defies analysis. Just as by observing two triangles, he said, we can determine intuitively that they are equal, so also by observing ourselves in the present and remembering ourselves in the past, we can determine intuitively that we have persisted."⁶⁰

Analyzing the way the word 'same' has been understood and applied to things, Butler in *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed*, pointed out that the word 'same' may be applied in a loose sense to plant but to man it must be applied in the strict sense, in which nothing is the same: "in a loose and popular sense, then, the life, and the organization, and the plant are justly said to be the same, notwithstanding the perpetual change of the parts. But in a strict and philosophical manner of speech, no man, no being, no mode of being, no anything can be the same with that, with which it hath indeed nothing the same."⁶¹ It appears that there is something that persists besides consciousness as remarked by Martin and Barresi thus: "In Butler's view, even though we can determine intuitively through memory that we are the same as some person who lived earlier, our current consciousness of that fact is not the same as our consciousness in the past. Each episode of consciousness is a mode of the being who is conscious. The modes come and go. The being persists."⁶²

Furthermore, Butler, being critical of Locke, further argued that if our being just consists in successive acts of consciousness, then "it must follow, that it is a fallacy up on ourselves, to

change our present selves with anything we did, or to imagine our present selves interested in anything which befell us yesterday, or that our present self will be interested in what will befall us to-morrow; since our present self is not, in reality, the same with the self of yesterday, but another like self or person coming in its room, and mistaken for it: to which another self will succeed to-morrow.”⁶³ In other words, “in Butler’s view, if selfhood were as Locke has portrayed it, we would have no reason to be concerned either with past or future stages of ourselves, for these would be ourselves only in a fictitious sense; and, in an apparent allusion to fusion, Butler insisted that calling people to whom we are only so related ourselves would not make themselves.”⁶⁴

Responding to Butler’s criticism of Locke’s theory, Weinberg in his work “Locke on Personal Identity,” pointed out that “the problem is that an epistemic criterion for personal identity (what we can know or remember of a past self) must already be presupposing an identical self to know. That is, there is no non-circular criterion for distinguishing the representation of a past state that is an accurate memory from a representation of a past state that is a delusion or false memory. So, either there is no truth to ground the knowledge claim that I am the same person or the account commits circularity.”⁶⁵ One way to resolve the problem as suggested by Weinberg is to embrace the epistemic constitution of the self and jettison or bracket any commitment to a metaphysical understanding of what constitutes the identity of a person, i.e., myself is constituted solely epistemically by whatever thoughts and actions I can presently attribute to myself or call my own.⁶⁶ It is on this basis that Winkler Kenneth interpreted Locke as saying that the self has a “certain authority over its own constitution.”⁶⁷

In contrast to Locke's memory account of personal identity and perhaps also of Collins, stated earlier, Hume in his book *Treatise of Human Nature*, said "memory does not so much produce as discover personal identity, by showing us the relation of cause and effect among our different event perceptions . . . it is incumbent on those who affirm that memory produces entirely our personal identity, to give a reason why we can thus extend our identity beyond our memory."⁶⁸

In his objection further, Hume did not only point out how identity depends on the relations of ideas and as it is produced by them, he also argued that dispute about identity are merely verbal:

Identity depends on the relations of ideas; and these relations produce identity, by means of that easy transition they occasion. But, as the relations and the easiness of the transition may diminish by insensible degrees, we have no just standard by which we can decide any dispute concerning the time when they acquire or lose a title to the name of identity". . . "all the disputes concerning the identity of connected objects are merely verbal, except so far as the relation of parts gives rise to some fiction or imaginary principle of union."⁶⁹

Hume attacked Locke's theory of personal identity purely from an empirical ground and from his criticism of causality. Hume says we should ask from which perception, the idea of the self emanates from? The answer is that all perceptions are gotten from sense impressions. The idea of the self is nothing but bundles of impressions. That is, there is no single idea called self but collections of sense impressions. As Allison puts it:

Hume rejects the doctrine of an abiding substantial self in the light of his fundamental tenet that for every idea there must be a corresponding impression. Reflection upon one's mental life discloses only a succession of fleeting and distinct perceptions. There is no single impression from which the idea of self could be derived, hence there is no such idea.⁷⁰

It seems that Hume gave an account of personal identity that accepts both reductionist and skeptical interpretations. He denies any direct awareness of a persisting subject of experience. He put it thus:

If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same, thro' the whole course of our lives; since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable. Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other, and never all exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is derived; and consequently there is no such idea.⁷¹

That is to say, we cannot have a single impression of the self, other than collections of sense data such as heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. In fact, Hume continues:

For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. ... if any one upon serious and unprejudiced reflection, thinks he has a different notion of *himself*, I must confess I can reason no longer with him.⁷²

This argument of Hume struck at the very heart of Locke's idea of the self and consequently the basis of his theory on personal identity.

In all, "Hume may have thought that a crucial difference between Locke and himself on the question of personal identity is that whereas Locke thought that there is a fact of the matter about whether a person persists, he thought that there is a fact of the matter only about the circumstances under which the illusion of persistence is nourished."⁷³ Furthermore, Hume's claim that the self is illusion— stream of consciousness or bundle of experiences has been refuted on the grounds that there is the unity of the self. The unity of the self has been established by the fact that the individual organism— the animal— is a unit; also by the fact that each of the various ways of behaving— the items of the behavioural repertoire— is a unit, the whole repertoire forming a set of mutually exclusive alternatives; and finally the central organ of control must act as a unit (or rather, it will be more successful if it does).⁷⁴

It is relevant to note that the self is not only seen as a unity but as something that is continuous, which extends through time and in a way distinct from consciousness. Popper puts the argument thus: “we may say of the self that, like any living organism, it extends through a stretch of time, roughly from birth to death. While consciousness is interrupted by periods of sleep, we take our selves to be conscious. This means that we do not necessarily identify the self with consciousness: there are unconscious “parts” of the self. The existence of such “parts” does not, however, normally disturb what we (I suggest) all know as the unity and continuity of the self.”⁷⁵

Thomas Reid’s contribution to the debate or discussion of personal identity may be regarded first as a reaction to David Hume who had averred that succession of ideas and impressions not only remembers and is conscious, they also judge, reason, affirm, deny, even eat and drink, and are sometimes merry and sometimes sad, whereas to Reid, ideas and impressions are passive, they cannot do anything. Reid went on to argue that if the action of remembrance, consciousness, reasoning, affirmation, denial, judgment can be ascribed to Hume’s idea and impressions then, I should be very glad to know what is nonsense and that any view in which substance has no place, agency would have no place either.⁷⁶

On account of identity and personal identity, Reid argued that “the conviction which every man has of his identity, as far back as his memory reaches, needs no aid of philosophy to strengthen it; and no philosophy can weaken it, without first producing some degree of insanity.”⁷⁷ He reasoned further that there can be no memory of what is past without the conviction that we existed at the time remembered. There may be good arguments to convince me that I existed at the time remembered. There may be good arguments to convince me that I existed before the

earliest thing I can remember, but to suppose that my memory reaches a moment farther back than my belief and conviction of my existence, is a contradiction.⁷⁸

As far as Locke is concerned identity is “when we see anything to be in any place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) that it is that very thing, not another which at that same time exists in another place, how like and undistinguishable so ever if it may be in all other respects: and in this consists identity, when the ideas it is attributed to vary not at all from what they were that moment wherein we consider their former existence, and to which we compare the present.”⁷⁹

Though in Locke’s definition of identity, the idea of relation is already explicit, it becomes more evident in Reid’s account of what identity presupposes: “identity in general I take to be a relation between a thing which is known to exist at one time, and a thing which is known to have existed at another time. If you ask whether they are one and the same, or two different things, every man of common sense understands the meaning of your question perfectly . . . and that the notion of identity is clear and distinct to every man of common sense.”⁸⁰ Though Reid alleges that every man of common sense has a clear and distinct notion of identity, yet when asked the definition of identity, Reid remarks that “if you ask a definition of identity, I confess I can give none. It is too simple a notion to admit of logical definition: I can say it is a relation, but I cannot find words to express the specific difference between this and other relations, though I am in no danger of confounding it with any other. I can say that diversity is a contrary relation and that similitude and dissimilitude are another couple of contrary relations, which every man easily distinguishes in his conception from identity and diversity.”⁸¹

Like Locke who affirms that consistency of consciousness as far as a person is concerned can be interrupted by forgetfulness either by sleep, loss of memory or forgetfulness. When a person is able to extend or annex his memory to his past actions then continuity of the self and personal identity is maintained or intact. Similarly, Reid opines that continued uninterrupted existence is implied in identity. “I see evidently that identity supposes an uninterrupted continuance of existence. That which has ceased to exist cannot be the same with that which afterwards begins to exist; for this would be to suppose a being to exist after it ceased to exist, and to have had existence before it was produced, which are manifest contradictions.”⁸²

Reid added that to conceive a person as a manifest part is absurdity, because the idea of person and personality is indivisible and does not consist of parts. He expresses it thus: “when a man loses his estate, his health, his strength, he is still the same person, and has lost nothing of his personality. If he has a leg or an arm cut off, he is the same person he was before. The amputated member is no part of his person; otherwise it would have a right to a part of his estate, and be liable for a part of his engagements. It would be entitled to a share of his merit and demerit, which is manifestly absurd. A person is something indivisible, and is what Leibniz calls a monad.”⁸³

What Reid made reference to and conceives as personal identity may be metaphysical and christened self. This self to him is something which thinks, but it is not thought itself, though it deliberates, acts, suffers and resolves, it is not action. It is not feeling because thought, action and feeling can change but the self is immutable. He rendered it thus: “my personal identity, therefore, implies the continued existence of that indivisible thing which I call *myself*. Whatever this self may be, it is something which thinks, and deliberates, and resolves, and acts and suffers.

I am not thought I am not action, I am not feeling; I am something that thinks, acts, and suffers. My thoughts, and actions, and feelings change every moment: they have no continued, but a successive, existence; but that *self* or J, to which they belong, is permanent, and has the same relation to all the succeeding thoughts, actions, and feelings which I call mine.”⁸⁴

To this end, Reid raised a critical question concerning, what evidence we have that there is such a permanent self which has a claim to all the thoughts, actions, and feelings which you call yours? To this, he answered is remembrance. Remembrance is the proper evidence I have that myself is permanent, capable of thoughts and could act, feel, resolve as well as suffer. Reid affirmed that “every man in his senses believes what he distinctly remembers, and everything he remembers convinces him that he existed at the time remembered.”⁸⁵

There appears to be a slight distinction here as to what Locke referred to as personal identity as it relates to consciousness and then remembrance or memory and how Reid employed the term remembrance or memory to illustrate his idea of personal identity. For Locke, “personal identity, that is, the sameness of a rational being, consists in consciousness alone, and, as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person. So that whatever has the consciousness of present and past actions is the same person to whom they belong.”⁸⁶ This presupposes that extending one’s consciousness backwards to any past action or thought is an affirmation of the cardinal role remembrance plays in Locke’s idea of personal identity. But Reid differs a bit from Locke’s notion of remembrance as it relates to personal identity. First, Reid argues that:

although memory gives the most irresistible evidence of my being the identical person that did such a thing, at such a time, I may have other good evidence of things which befall me, but I do not remember: I know

who bare me, and suckled me, but I do not remember these events. It may here be observed (though the observation would have been unnecessary, if some great philosophers had not contradicted it), that it is not my remembering any action of mine that makes me to be the person who did it. This remembrance makes me know assuredly that I did it; but I might have done it, though I did not remember it. That relation to me, which is expressed by saying that I did it, would be the same, though I had not the least remembrance of it. To say that my remembering that I did such a thing, or, as some choose to express it, my being conscious that I did it, makes me to have done it, appears to me as great an absurdity as it would be to say, that my belief that the world was created made it to be created.⁸⁷

Secondly, in response to Locke's treatment of memory and remembrance, Reid has this to say: "this doctrine has some strange consequences, which the author was aware of such as, that if the same consciousness can be transferred from one intelligent being to another, which he thinks we cannot show to be impossible, then two or twenty intelligent beings may be the same person. And if the intelligent being may lose the consciousness of the actions done by him, which surely is possible, then he is not the person that did those actions; so that one intelligent being may be two or twenty different persons, if he shall so often lose the consciousness of his former actions."⁸⁸

It is however remarkable to affirm that though the transitivity problem of the self has been thought to be devastating to Locke's theory for many years, in the early 1950's there came a solution to the transitivity problem.⁸⁹ It is stated thus: "we need not remember every action of a past self to be identical to that self. Rather, we can establish identity with an unremembered self through an intermediate self (an ancestor) that we do remember. So, the brave officer, who remembers the flogging as a child and who is remembered by the general, serves as the ancestral link between the General and the child. Personal identity is preserved even though the General has no memory of the child's flogging."⁹⁰

While critiquing the Lockean idea that one's identity extends as far as one's consciousness extends, Hazlitt asked, "if that consciousness should be transferred to some other being? How would such a person know that he or she had not been "imposed upon by a false claim of identity"? His answer was that the idea of one's consciousness extending to someone else "is ridiculous": a person has "no other self than that which arises from this very consciousness."⁹¹ It is for this reason that Atherton Margaret avers that "persons are individuated by their consciousness and that there can be a 'unity of consciousness' that is different from the 'integrative unity' of thinking. That is, we experience a 'distinct internality' to thinking (internally distinct and idiosyncratic qualitative features) that is not identical to those mechanisms causally responsible for having thinking at all."⁹²

Kant on his part disagreed, especially concerning the criterion of personal identity over time based on similitude of consciousness. "He thought that personal identity could not simply consist in sameness of consciousness, since someone's consciousness might qualitatively be similar to that of someone else who had existed previously . . . He concluded that if personal identity is going to be something that can be determined empirically, then it cannot consist simply in psychological continuity."⁹³ We may infer that while Locke's relational view of personal identity is completely psychological, for Kant, it is both or partly psychological and partly physical. This implies a sort of psychological cum physical criterion of personal identity.

Replacement for Locke's Thesis of Consciousness: In what appears to be a new dimension or an extension of the problem of personal identity, was inadvertently introduced by Locke while trying to explain wherein personal identity consists of. Locke gave an example that: if the finger, for instance, is separated from the rest of the body, and should consciousness go with the little

finger, then the little finger that is separated from the rest of the body is the person. But if consciousness goes not with the little finger but abides or remains with the rest of the body even after the separation of the little finger, the rest of the body, other than the finger is the person. Thus, by this example, Locke inadvertently created another problem in personal identity which is known as the fission example.

Locke's fission example illustrated the possibility of having a situation whereby consciousness can be split and passed on to different substances. Similarly, the classical example of the Prince and the Cobbler, in which the soul of the Prince and that of the cobbler are interchanged or swapped, is an indication and the starting point of fission example. This was how Locke introduced the fission example into personal identity that has taken the centre stage in the discussion of personal identity among modern and contemporary philosophers.

Researchers in other fields, especially in psychology have experimented on the possibility of splitting the human brain into two and then argue the possibility of having two persons in one human being. Commissurotomy which is the surgical procedure for severing the right and left hemispheres of the brain was first performed on patients with severe forms of epilepsy in 1940. Following this, Sperry in his essay "Brain Bisection and Mechanism of Consciousness", argued that "the surgery [commissurotomy] has left these people with two separate minds, that is, two separate spheres of consciousness."⁹⁴ Wilson and Lenart claim that "reports of these findings of split-brain cases were thus sometimes interpreted as cases in which there were two persons in one body"⁹⁵ and it is argued further by Roland Puccetti, a Canadian philosopher that "this is proper way to think about persons and their bodies more generally."⁹⁶

In what seems to be a response to this fission example, Derek Parfit has argued that what matters in personal identity is not “identity” but psychological continuity or interconnectedness of consciousness as far as my survival is concerned. He argued that personal identity presupposes psychological connectedness or continuity of consciousness; this implies one-many or many-one relations. As Reid remarked: “if the same consciousness can be transferred from one intelligent being to another . . . then two or twenty intelligent beings may be the same person,”⁹⁷ whereas the idea of identity is not one-many or many-one relation but a one-one relation. This follows that:

Identity is logically a one-one relation. It is logically impossible for one person to be identical to more than one person. I cannot be one and the same person as two different people. As we have seen, psychological continuity is not logically a one-one relation. Two different future people could both be psychologically continuous with me. Since these different people cannot both be me, psychological continuity cannot be the criterion of identity. Williams then claims that, to be acceptable, a criterion of identity must itself be logically a one-one relation. It must be a relation which could not possibly hold between one person and two future people. He therefore claims that the criterion of identity cannot be psychological continuity.⁹⁸

In a similar vein, Allison in his essay “Locke’s Theory of Personal Identity: A Re-Examination”, opines that the “total repudiation of metaphysics of the substantial self is a direct outgrowth of the Lockean doctrine that the identity of consciousness must be considered apart from the identity of any substances to which it may be attached.”⁹⁹ Since Locke was led to this insight by ethical considerations, he erroneously identified this consciousness with the person, an identification which Kant as well as Leibniz repudiated.¹⁰⁰ Allison therefore concluded that “Locke, Leibniz and Kant constitute three stages in the modification of the Cartesian conception of consciousness. Moreover, of the three, Locke’s contribution is the most decisive. He was the first to separate the ‘cogito’ from the concept of a thinking substance, thereby paving the way for

the formalistic conception of consciousness suggested by Leibniz's consociate, and explicitly affirmed in Kant's transcendental unity of apperception."¹⁰¹

Reflecting on the criticisms leveled against psychological continuity theory, Simon Beck, who wrote in defense of the psychological continuity theory, held that, though the theory of personal identity hinged on psychological continuity, has come under fire from many critics on the ground that psychological continuity does not adequately explain what makes psychological states co-personal (i.e. the states of a single person), he has successfully demonstrated and argued that none of the apparent attacks against it can withstand or account for the outright rejection of psychological continuity theory as the basis of personal identity. He expressed the criticisms leveled against psychological continuity thus:

One common theme in criticisms of the widely-held psychological continuity theory of personal identity is that it fails to provide an adequate account of co-personality, that is, of what makes two psychological states both states of one person. At least, that is the generalized claim that is made when it comes to the detail, the argument is usually that the psychological continuity theory gets (some) ascriptions wrong, either ascribing certain states to someone when they are not states of that persons, or not ascribing certain states that are theirs to them. This does indeed sound like a serious problem for this theory of personal identity. Some critics take it to be a reason to reject the theory outright, others argue that any remedy involves costs that may well be too high for the psychological theorist to accept. Either way, since similar criticisms arise from a variety of sources, it seems the issue deserves some attention.¹⁰²

Relying on Derek Parfit's classical statement of psychological continuity theory; the view that "psychological connectedness is the holding of direct psychological connections; psychological continuity is the holding of overlapping chains of strong connectedness . . . For X and Y to be the same person, there must be over every day enough direct psychological connections."¹⁰³ Simon Beck remarks that "Parfit acknowledges that identity requires that psychological continuity be a

unique relation— that is, only Y must be continuous with X . . . that identity is not what matters— what matters is psychological continuity and connectedness: when we have that in a 1:1 relation, we can call it identity.”¹⁰⁴ He went on to remark further that:

the connections that play the fundamental role in all of this are the connections of commonsense psychology— connections between experiences and later memories of those experiences, continuing dispositional states like belief and desires, the formation of intention, the continued holding of that intention and its later execution, and so on. While Parfit’s account focuses on conscious mental connections, there is no reason why unconscious connections should not also feature— some of the desires and beliefs connecting an earlier self to a later one may well be unconscious ones.¹⁰⁵

Simon Beck, in his work: “Causal Co-personality: In Defense of the Psychological Continuity Theory” examines three attacks against psychological continuity theory and the alternative solutions provided as not adequate enough to erase or lead to the outright rejection of the psychological continuity theory. The first attack came from Geoffrey Madell who confronts the psychological continuity theory thus: “the following two thought experiments are equally intelligible: (a) that I might not have existed, but someone having exactly the life that I have had, might have existed instead: (b) I might have had a totally different life, even to the extent of being born centuries earlier.”¹⁰⁶

Madell’s argument is that “certain psychological states are just mine— they are not mine in virtue of being connected to other states or events, their connections to other states cannot explain why it is that they are mine.”¹⁰⁷ This is in-tandem with Paul Ricoeur’s statement that: “the factual character” of certain psychological and physical events involves a “phenomenon of mineness.”¹⁰⁸ Hence, Madell is of the view that this phenomenon of mineness cannot be reduced to impersonal causal relations between psychological states.¹⁰⁹ As a result, the solution suggested

is that the psychological continuity theory which is Locke's foundation of personal identity should be given-up in place of a non-reductionist account of co-personality.

The second attack came from Marya Schechtman. It is presented thus:

Just as Locke's original account of personal identity in terms of 'sameness of consciousnesses' failed to accurately ascribe states to people, so its successor— the psychological continuity theory fails. Locke's account would have it that (someone) remembering someone else's experience makes you that person, and not being able to remember an experience makes it not yours. The psychological continuity theory has gone some way to avoid these in plausible consequences but (in Schechtman's view) not nearly far enough.¹¹⁰

More so, if Locke's criterion of only memory should be expanded or extended to include 'enough connectedness'— such as other psychological connections alongside memory, Schechtman sees no way this can be remedied using only causal connections. Furthermore, she maintained that "Locke's memory theory was too weak in that simply remembering an experience is not enough to make you the person who had that experience. If a neurosurgeon were somehow to implant the memory of an experience had by her grandmother in my brain that would not make me her grandmother. On the other hand, it seems obvious that we can forget experiences that are ours and that remain ours. In denying this, the theory is too strong."¹¹¹ As a solution, she therefore rejected psychological continuity theory.

Having abandoned the psychological continuity theory, in its place, she (Schechtman) recommended the narrative theory— affirming that for experiences, states and actions to be yours, they must fit meaningfully into your self-conception. That meaningful fit explains why they are yours¹¹². She argued further as Rudd at some stage acknowledged that the narrative

account is not an arbitrary construction; rather it has a firm place in the hermeneutic approach to understanding people.¹¹³ In all, Schechtman believes that:

Her self-understanding view or narrative theory aptly constitutes as personal identity theory because it retains Lockean insight of the important of self-consciousness, that it attribute or deny experience to a person without recourse to substances and finally that it accounts or attribute certain unconscious experiences to a person and distinguish between experiences that were ours but are now ‘dead to us’ and those which we have repressed but which still play a role in our psychological lives.¹¹⁴

The final or third attack came from Nicholas Agar who used the case of ‘witnessed pain’¹¹⁵ to expose the inadequacy inherent in the psychological approach to personal identity. Simon Beck expresses Agar’s argument thus:

In the normal case of someone feeling pain, they believe they are in pain— the two states are co-personal, and the psychological continuity theory explains this in terms of the belief being caused by the pain. Agar envisages a case in which P is in pain and this causes Q to believe that there is pain. The causal connection obtains, but that does not make the states co-personal: the belief in question belongs to Q not P. the obvious response is for the psychological continuity theory to require that more than just this one connection needs to be present: for the belief that there is pain and the pain to be co-personal, the belief must cause (or be causally related to) a desire to alleviate the pain. But this attempt at a remedy is the start of a slippery slope, according to Agar.¹¹⁶

Agar therefore proposed the principle he called the ‘F’ as necessary condition for resolving the shortcoming in psychological continuity theory. He stated the ‘F’ principle thus: (F) A necessary condition for two states to belong to the same person is that it is possible to trace a chain of actual and potential causes between them that includes no non-psychological intermediate.¹¹⁷

Simon Beck’s objection and defense against the three attacks by— Geoffrey Madell, Marya Schechtman and Nicholas Agar against the psychological continuity theory is exceptionally instructive. Simon began by examining the non-reductionist attacked by Geoffrey Madell thus:

Consider first the case for giving it up in favour of a non-reductionist view. The non-reductionist asserts that states either are mine or are not mine and that this is not in virtue of any other facts being the case. Madell's two thought-experiments are presented as evidence: if we accept that my mental states could have been totally different, then there is no grounding for the ones that happen to be mine being mine. But that does not strike me as being relevant evidence; at least it is not evidence relevant to the issue at hand. That my life could have been utterly different or that someone else could have lived a life exactly mine tells us (if anything) something about our identity across worlds: it could be that X in world *u* is me even though X and I have nothing else in common than that. But it tells me nothing about what is or is not required for my identity across time. The utterly different life that I lead in *u* needs the events and states that make it up to be connected to each other in complex ways, otherwise it is not the life of a person at all. That is the issue we are facing here – co-personality within a world – and which is simply not addressed by Madell's conjectures. It is true that we have a strong sense of experiences being ours and a sense that certain future ones will be ours in the same way. It may also be true that we don't think of them as experiences connected to our current ones in any specific way. But that does not mean that this sense of 'mineness' is all there is to being a continuing self: having a sense of self is necessary to being a person, but it is not what makes you the same person over time. If later experiences are not causally connected to earlier ones in the right sort of way, then no sense of them being yours or not will make them yours or not. People suffering from 'thought insertion' experience certain thoughts as being those of somebody else, but that neither makes them the thoughts of that other person, nor does it make them not the thoughts of the sufferer.¹¹⁸

The point is that Madell's argument seems irrelevant to the issue of psychological connectedness as it fails to address co-personality within a world as well as the fact that it misconstrued sense of self (mineness) as a necessary requirement for personhood. Whereas, what qualifies me to being the same person over time is the ability for me to link my present thoughts to past ones— what Locke calls annexation of present memory to past memory.

Next is Simon Beck's objection to Schechtman's criticism of psychological continuity theory that the psychological continuity theory cannot account for unconscious experiences as well as the fact that it is unable to capture the difference between an experience 'that is mine because I

experienced it in the past but have now forgotten it entirely, and one that is mine because I have repressed it and am still suffering the symptoms of that repression.’¹¹⁹ In a more lucid term, Schechtman’s insistence is that the psychological continuity view cannot accommodate psychological states of which we are not conscious— such as dispositional states and repressed states— and insists that these can be integral to our identity.¹²⁰ Consequently, Schechtman substituted the psychological continuity theory with the narrative theory— the view that personhood is a matter of self construct through self-understanding or having a sense of self. Simon Beck presented her objection of the narrative theory and argues thus:

Schechtman’s claim is not just that self-understanding or a sense of self is important or even required for something to qualify as a person, but that in self-understanding we construct ourselves as persons— that we ‘determine’ our identity. One of the crucial issues between psychological continuity theories and narrative theories is whether or not personal identity is this sort of construct. It is worth noting that the issue in the discussion was originally expressed as finding out what constitutes personal identity, not as finding out it is constructed.¹²¹

This implies that Schechtman’s arguments misfire, i.e., miss the point— in that what she sets out to argue turns out to be something else. We may say she is guilty of the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion.

Finally, Simon Beck’s take on Agar’s criticism is that he failed to make his necessary condition intuitively plausible and that justifying his condition will require more intuitive appeal than he is offering and that might well involve appeal to thought-experiments like those he eschewed. Thus, of the all the alternatives considered, Simon Beck concluded that the psychological continuity theory provides the most satisfactory account of co-personality. None of the criticisms we have seen requires us to give it up in favour of another view.¹²²

A recent attempt to modify Locke's theory can be found in Michael A. Cerullo's article, titled: "Uploading and Branching Identity". He argued that brain uploading will preserve personal identity other than Locke's account of consciousness and memory. He went on further to argue that "traditional views of personal identity cannot cope with the possibilities created by advances such as uploading. Instead, we are driven to accept the possibility that personal identity can branch into multiple copies, each maintaining a continuity of consciousness with the original."¹²³

In his defence, Cerullo therefore makes a case for branching identity, a sort of a new theory or approach and demonstrated that it can resolve the paradoxes or dilemmas that are unsolvable by the traditional views. This account is particularly interesting in that research has shown that the part of the brain responsible for thinking, memory and consciousness can be split. See the case of Alzheimer's disease, dementia, false memory syndrome and amnesia as discussed by Frontino, L in his essay "Who am I? An Examination of Memory and Identity".¹²⁴ This is the reason why Cerullo has argued that "the closest continuer theory is the only identity theory that clearly sets up criteria to determine the continuity of consciousness after fission: only the part of the brain most identical to the original brain maintains continuity of consciousness."¹²⁵

If we take Cerullo's argument seriously that "we have limited intuition about things far removed from our day to day experience,"¹²⁶ it may pose a grave challenge to the intuitive conviction or assurance that I exist. But on the contrary, most times when I sleep and wake up, I do not need to pause my thinking and cast my thoughts to yesterday's experiences to be sure I am still the same person today. The moment I am awake, I immediately recognize and know that I am still the same person who laid down yesterday and he is now awake. The continuity of myself does not

need to be constantly re-validated by myself remembering past events or experiences, it is intuitively known.

Another recent reaction to Locke's theory can be found in R. A. Wilson's and B. A. Lenart's work; "Extended Mind and Identity". Wilson and Lenart have interpreted Locke's identity criterion as ratio-centrism like the one found in Aristotelian tradition, as well constituting a certain kind of individualism about the nature of persons and their identity over time. "This is because certain rational cognitive capacities are required for the autonoetic formation of episodic memories that are tied to orthodox conceptions of personal identity and personhood, and those capacities are conceptualized as depending solely on aspects of the individual. These forms of ratio-centrism and individualism remain features of neo-Lockean views of persons in the contemporary literature."¹²⁷ Despite the fact that these two features are essential in the determination of personhood in Locke's view, there abound some morally perturbing consequences. Wilson and Lenart state thus:

There are morally troubling results of both the ratio-centrism and individualism of neo-Lockean views of personal identity, especially in combination. First, such views seem to imply that individuals with certain cognitive limitations (such as, for example, a relatively limited ability to track their own personhood through time cannot claim the right-conferring status of personhood. This resultant depersonalization of the "mentally deficient" amounts to their sub-humanization and with it an abandonment of the universal ascription of fundamental human rights. Second, as a consequence of the inherent individualism of neo-Lockean views external resources— such as other people, environments or technologies— that may be intrinsic to certain cognitive (and other) capacities are viewed as extrinsic to an individual's status as a person. Such external resources may causally enhance the cognitive capacities of an individual who would otherwise fall below the cognitive threshold for full personhood set by neo-Lockean views.¹²⁸

There is no disputing the fact that Locke's consciousness criterion of personal identity not only pertinently provides answer to the possibility of Christian's resurrection, immortality, reincarnation but also provides justice in terms of ascribing wrongs to 'humans' instead of 'person'. The identity of man is the fact that it is a substance capable of inheriting or possessing soul and consciousness. However, it cannot survive change. It cannot be bodily or psychologically continuous. This is unlike the idea of person— a thinking intelligent being, that is conscious and can consider himself as himself, capable of existing from one day to another without alteration.

Williams James in his *Principle of Psychology*, wrote that "my thought belongs with my other thoughts, and your thought with your other thoughts."¹²⁹ This implies that our thoughts as they occur are not separate, not disjointed or occurring independently, but they belong certainly to other thoughts— this is what he called "the stream of thought". he then added that "the only states of consciousness that we naturally deal with are found in personal consciousness, mind, selves, concrete particular I's and you's wherein each of these keeps its own thoughts to itself."¹³⁰ Martin and Barresi sum-up James' view thus:

The core of personhood, in James' view, is the incessant presence of two elements, an objective person, known by a passing subjective thought and recognized as continuing in time. James resolves to use the word *me* for "the empirical person" and *I* for the "the judging thought". Since the "me" is constantly changing: "the identity found by the I in its me is only a loosely construed thing, an identity on the whole; just like that which any outside observer might find in the same assemblage of facts. The "I" of any given moment is a temporary slice of "a stream of thought", and know the things they knew" and "emphasize and care paramountly for certain ones among them as 'me', and appropriate to these the rest."¹³¹

So, the main part of thought which is taken to be "me" is always the bodily existence felt to be present at the time."¹³² In James' thought, the word 'me' and 'I' have two distinct connotations

thus: “while the “me” is “an empirical aggregate of things objectively known”, the “I” which “knows them cannot itself be an aggregate”. Rather, “it is a thought at each moment different from that of the last moment, but appropriative of the latter, together with all that the latter called its own.”¹³³

What follows from James’s analysis of personhood is that there are two kinds of persons— the empirical person which is denoted by the term “me” and the conscious or mental person or self which is denoted by the term “I”. This is more or less a slight departure from Descartes’ analysis of the “I” in his *cogito ergo sum*, meaning “I think, therefore I am”. Nonetheless Descartes never made such a distinction, because he did not see the self or person as two but conceives of the idea of man as two separate substances— mind and body. James’ use of the term ‘empirical person’ and ‘mental person’ is one thing and what each of the term in fact denoted (“me” and “I”) is another thing. It is like subject-object distinction. Though both stand or refer to one thing or entity, they differ in terms of their actual nature or identity.

This distinction by James, no doubt explicates overtly Locke’s misunderstanding of the term consciousness as signaling a term for self or person. However, it is from this basis of James’ analysis and interpretation that it is fitting to subject the idea of consciousness, self or person to social construct and thus re-order the idea or way of perceiving the term self or person as comprising both mental and social construct. The point being made here is that, social meaning must be attributed to the idea of a person, if its identity is to be precisely delineated. This is in tandem to John Mbiti’s famous assertion that “I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am”. Iroegbu’s analysis of this Mbiti’s phraseology of the communal-individual relational identity of the self is noteworthy: “‘I am’ is in the ‘we are’. ‘We are’ is constitutively

made by the different 'I am's'. Since we are solidarily and really, I am really in the reality of that solidarity. And as long as the 'we are' is real, 'I am' is also real. For none can exist nor be sustained without the other. Both the 'we are' and 'I am' are unified in existential co-reality. The link between them is ontological reciprocity and mutual dynamic inter-relatedness.¹³⁴

Iroegbu's definition and analysis of the term person is also instructive. For him, the "human person is the communally and self embodied being that is in search of full transcendence."¹³⁵

Gominah analyses Panteleon Iroegbu's definition of the human person thus:

Three elements stand out in Pantaleonine definition of personality. The first is communal. The community is the beginning of the person because every person is born of community, beginning from parental community. The second is the self that is the expression of the individual, autonomy and selfhood of each person. The third is the transcendent element, one that makes each person complete in the divine-oriented destiny of full life in God. In general, then, man is being born-into-the community. He is part of it, grows in it, and is made of it. He owns his flourishing to the community, for without the others, there will be no self.¹³⁶

This view of the self or person as communally oriented is seen in J. Maritain's avowal that: "for the sole fact that I am a person and that I say myself to me, I ask to communicate with the other and with the others with regard to knowledge and love. To ask for a dialogue where the soul really communicates is essential to personality."¹³⁷ This is to say that a person is not person in himself other than how he is socially and communally constructed. In other words, as Mondin affirms, man is not man in himself, independently of that which others do to render him as such.¹³⁸

Gap Identified and Proposed Solution: From the foregoing, the gap identified here is that Locke's choice of consciousness as constituting personal identity or a person's identity over time cannot be sustained given that it is not all the time in real life situation we can remember vividly

or clearly our past experiences. Consequently, Locke's theory fails to take cognizant of or look into the direction of "constructive reverse transitive consciousness", which the research has simply christened "constructive consciousness".

To begin with, how does a person or individual validate his/her identity? How do I know that I am still the same person ten years ago? From Locke's supposition it is *I* who validates my identity. If I am the one who validates my identity, there are times I may not be able to recall my past actions or events, why is it that I don't intuitively feel that I am a different person from that person years ago? The goal of psychological criterion of personal identity should be hinged on communal and collective identity. I should not be the only person who should validate my identity. The consequence is that it makes the truth/logic of personal identity subjective; and sometimes subjective experiences can be manipulated and so become devoid of objective truth. To reiterate the point that I should not be the only person who can validate my identity; if I am, then there are possibilities that I am aware that I can no longer recall past memory of an event that happened in my life, still I feel I am the same person, not another person. Thus, the problem of personal identity is no longer or not only continuity or transitivity of consciousness but also the problem of subjectivity of consciousness.

The point the research is making here is that, Locke's identification of consciousness as a criterion of personal identity treated consciousness as a subjective experience. Locke's psychological theory treated consciousness as isolated entity. Ordinarily, this should not constitute a problem but it does when it is seen as the only means of re-identification of the self. Rather, an apt approach would be "reverse transitive consciousness" or "constructive consciousness", a kind of a social and collective approach where the *other*; which comprises the

environment, technology and other persons are recognized and included as constituting means of the validation and re-identification of the self objectively. Consequently, the gap or disconnect caused by the interruption of consciousness and the attendant circular problem can be filled or erased by alluding to and recognizing the existence and place of “constructive consciousness” in the discussion of personal identity.

In all, it is fitting to understand the context of the proposed approach. As Gillon in his work “Brain Transplantation, Personal Identity and Medical Ethics” avers:

For while our sense of personal identity is essentially one of our own experience— our continuity of consciousness, stretching back into our post memory, taking in our current experiences and projected through our imagination into our future— nonetheless we also identify with our body, within which and through which we have those experiences and express our personalities; and crucially, it is through the appearance and actions of other people’s bodies that we identify those other people.¹³⁹

This is to demonstrate that my environment and social community play significant role in the knowledge and continuity of consciousness of myself. Though the body is not I (myself), though it does not constitute my identity as Locke makes us believe, it does grant epistemic certainty, aid and reinforces the continuity of myself. Because my body is unique to me; this uniqueness is informed by the epistemic cognition of my body; I have a definite knowledge of my body, I know I have a body and my knowledge of my body is accurate and I can distinguish it from other bodies; if I sleep and wake in a new body, I will be able to know it is not my old body. Though it could be argued that suppose my new body was as a result of a gradual and slow process (just like the ship of Tarsus), suppose that my new body evolves or emerges from my old body by a gradual and slow change, how can I know or be certain of the knowledge of my body? To this, I answer, so long as the change is not instantaneous or spontaneous, like the Prince and Cobbler

example of Locke, though it may be difficult to be certain about my old body but for my new body, so long it came as a gradual and slow process, did not take place outside the knowledge and consciousness I have already of my body. Just the way, I am conscious that I exist, that the world exists, that others exist, so also I am continuously conscious of my bodily activities, suppose there are such.

Any gradual or slow change in my body will not certainly and necessarily elude my knowledge and consciousness of it. I sleep and wake up in the same body every day. If I was to wake up in a new body, I will without doubt recognize it as different from my old body. Though some parts of my body may experience increase in size due to metabolic activities, I am still aware of my body. It seems there is no change that takes place in my body that I am not aware of. As a result, I have intuitive knowledge of myself and by extension my body; not just my body but also of my environment. My body is in fact part of my environment, it cannot be separated. Part of what informed my identity is the fact that I exist not in isolation but socially and communally. This is why Johnston argues that we can survive death (if we are good) by being reborn in, living on in, the values of others.”¹⁴⁰ This implies that it is not only by living or carrying on the consciousness of others but by living by and on the good values others have set before us. This is quite a novel thought in the line of the discussion of psychological continuity and criterion of personal identity. Just as Read remarks: “we find ourselves only in community; but what we find in community remains ourselves: beings that are individuals as well as “communitarians” and thoroughgoingly social.”¹⁴¹

Sequel to the above, Afangide observes that “the human person is a being-with and not a being-apart. He is one involved with and participating in his community. Hence, a person will be

regarded and well defined in as much as he primarily shares and communes with others.”¹⁴² This view is also well expressed in Maurier’s annotations that “relation is the constituent of the human person. Without it the human person is isolated and falls into nothingness.”¹⁴³ We are therefore social constructs. Aristotle’s famous assertion that we are social animal and that we recreate ourselves by interacting with others suggests that we cannot undermine the place of community and environment. I have continued to be conscious of this, I partly constitute my environment, hence as Afangide noted: “selfhood manifestly reveals itself when individuals express in a concrete manner their individuality in a community of discourse, by their opinions and discussions, even through their conflicts. All these experiences point to participation and communication.”¹⁴⁴ Thus, the content of consciousness therefore becomes what the self remembers as a member and part and parcel as a community actor. So ‘unrealistic’ body swap examples may not constitute or serve as superior argument in the personal identity’s debate. Full-fledged body swap examples seem almost impossible.

The thesis’s argument is that psychologically, myself or my consciousness constitute my identity but due to loss of memory or forgetfulness sometimes, my body and my environment not only reconstruct or reinforce my memory but they also fill the gap between myself before the loss and myself after the loss of memory or consciousness. They reinforce or reconstruct the continuity of the self. If at least I cannot remember my past actions and events, in so far I am aware or conscious of those things around me like my body, my environment, others then they help to fill the void of my past experiences that I could not remember. This then suggests the critical role my body, my environment and other persons play in the determination of personal identity. In this regard, memory could not be said to be blank; memory is having ability to re-call knowledge of past events. Those phenomena that constitute my past events or actions which remain or

continue to exist serve as the continuity of me. I am definite and certain about them. Convincingly, I (myself) should be aware (knowledge) when I take up a new self or substance; if not, the discussion of personal identity would be a mere verbal dispute meant to serve as humour to serious minded scholars.

In conclusion, Locke's argument and view of the idea of the self or person is evidently an outstanding contribution to the understanding and comprehension of the human person. The distinction he made between the idea of man and the idea of person is quite a laudable one. Locke's argument that reward or punishment will be imputed on the self or person other than on man is amazingly a new insight and perspective in the consequentialist and the non-consequentialist ethical theorems. Though his theory has been fatally criticized, it remains reasonably relevant as a psychological approach to the personal identity's debate and most importantly to the understanding of the human person. The fact that his view has gained relevance and has been given much discussion in the field of psychology, medicine, psychiatry, education and biology is a proof and indication that it cannot be dispensed with without a logical superior argument.

However, it is not the case that Locke's theory and idea of the self or person is flawless and watertight going by the works and litany of literature reviewed so far. On the contrary, though some of the works reviewed pointed out some problems and absurdities inherent in Locke's argument, they themselves are not void of one form of illogicality or the other. Considering these absurdities and paradoxes in Locke's theory of personal identity as well as the idea of the self, this research is therefore proposing a revision and hermeneutic interpretations of Locke's psychological criterion of personal identity.

In the end, attempt will be made to replace Locke's theory with a more inclusive theory that uniquely explains the identity and personality of man, call it 'extended mind theory' or 'reverse transitive consciousness theory'— a sort of a psychological and social approach to personal identity. It is the view that what makes me the same person as that person who existed many years ago, is not only that our experiences and actions are psychologically continuous or the same but also that our social constructions that define and explain my peculiar self from others have continued and remain the same. The aim is to resolve the difficulty inherent in John Locke's criterion of personal identity and to propose a new criterion that explains outright the idea of the self as persisting psychologically and socially or communally.

CHAPTER THREE

JOHN LOCKE'S THEORY OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

3.1. John Locke's Theory of Personal Identity

Locke's views and theory of personal identity are contained in his *Essay Concerning Human Understand*, chapter 27 "Of Identity and Diversity". The importance of the *Essay*, where Locke articulated the subject matter of the self and personal identity, among others cannot be over-emphasized. In fact, Locke's remark in the opening or introduction of the book is particularly instructive:

Since it is the understanding that sets man above the rest of sensible beings, and gives him all the advantage and dominion which he has over them; it is certainly a subject, even for its nobleness, worth our labour to inquire into. The understanding, like the eye, whilst it makes us see and perceive all other things, takes no notice of itself; and it requires an art and pains to set it at a distance and make it its own object. But whatever be the difficulties that lie in the way of this inquiry; whatever it be that keeps us so much in the dark to ourselves; sure I am that all the light we can let in upon our minds, all the acquaintance we can make with our own understandings, will not only be very pleasant, but bring us great advantage, in directing our thoughts in the search of other things.¹⁴⁵

It can be deduced from the above quotation that *abi nitio*, Locke had an agenda, which is to inquire into the original, certainty and extent of human understanding or knowledge. This agenda, among others, with regard to the subject matter of this research, is to give a clear and a definitive description wherein personal identity consists. So, in what follows, the research presents and analyzes Locke's argument thus:

3.2.1. Identity of Substances, Modes and Relations

First, Locke began by explicating the meaning of identity and he renders it thus:

Another occasion the mind often takes of comparing, is the very being of things, when, considering anything as existing at any determined time and place, we compare it with itself existing at another time, and thereon form the ideas of identity and diversity. When we see anything to be in any place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) that it is that very thing, and not another which at that same time exists in another place, how like and undistinguishable soever it may be in all other respects: and in this consists IDENTITY, when the ideas it is attributed to vary not at all from what they were that moment wherein we consider their former existence, and to which we compare the present.¹⁴⁶

Two things come out clearly from the above passage; first that identity is formed by the mind comparing things at any determined time and place and secondly, that in all respects, the things being compared must be alike and undistinguishable from each other. This is to say that the idea of identity is hinged on the mind's ability of comparison and logic. It is in consonance with one of the laws of thought, precisely the law of identity which states that 'everything is what it is'. According to this law A is A and not A and something else. Thus, the identity Locke was distinguishing in this section or context may be christened numerical identity in which, for example, Wesley is identical to himself at one and the same location at one and the same time, there cannot exist two different Wesleys of the same kind. So, by this principle, if two things began in two different space-time locations, they are not numerically identical. Exact resemblance in this regard in which, for instance, Wesley is identical to his twin brother, Presley does not consist or fit into Locke's kind of identity description. In all, Identity is founded on the assumption that no two things can exist at the same time in the same place. From that it can be deduced that nothing can have two beginnings and no two things can have the same beginning, thus giving something its individuality, or identity.¹⁴⁷

Furthermore, Locke asserted that we have ideas or notions of three sorts or kinds of substances—God, Finite intelligences and Bodies. For the **first** sort of substance, God, Locke maintained that

concerning His identity condition there can be no doubt, because God is without beginning, eternal, unchanging and omnipresent. For the **second** kind of substance, finite intelligences or spirits, in this case humans, Locke affirmed that so long as each had its determinate time and place of beginning to exist, the identity condition is hinged on or depended on this time and place of beginning of existence. What Locke is saying is that humans are individuated according to their beginning locations in space and time, even as far as minds are concerned. For the **third** sort of substance, bodies, in this regard material objects, Locke said what applied to finite spirits apply to them also, i.e., if one and only one particle of matter can exist at a determinate or particular location in space and time then its identity condition is anchored on the starting point of existence in relation to time and place. More so, now, each of these types of substances excludes other substances of the same type from existing at that same place and time (which means, effectively, that there can only be one God), but you can have three different substances existing at the same location in space and time (e.g.: my mind, my body and God all exist right here right now).¹⁴⁸

All other things, other than the ones mentioned above, being modes and relations terminated in substances. Hence, their identity and diversity are the same way determined, given that their existence is hinged on the particular substance. But for those things only, whose existence is in succession, especially as demonstrated by the action of finite beings; motion and thought in this regard, and continued in that trend of succession, there will be no questioning or doubt about their diversity, because they perish the moment they begin; as such they cannot exist in different times and different places, whereas permanent beings are capable of existing at different times

and distant places. Thus, no motion or thought, considered as at different times, can be the same, each part therefore having a different beginning of existence.¹⁴⁹

It is essential to note that the subject matter of Locke's inquiry is *principium individuationis*, that is, existence itself, which defines or determines a being of any kind to a definite place and inexpressible to two beings of the same kind. Here, "the idea of existence and identity is applied to compounded substances or modes. Assuming that an atom determined to be at a certain time and place in any point of its existence the same with itself must continue in the same way as long as its existence, a group of atoms would be said to exist similarly and have an identity. Should an atom be removed or added the substance changes and so does its identity for the period of time it exists as such."¹⁵⁰ Whereas concerning the identity of living things or organisms, their identity is determined differently as we shall see in the next section. In all, this section is explicitly summed up this way:

that existence is the principle of identity: as long as an atom exists, it is the same atom. (this is identity through time.) This principle can be enlarged to cover collections of atoms. Thus, a "mass" is the same as long as it consists of exactly the same atoms ("let the parts be every so differently jumbled"), but if it loses or gains even one, it is a different mass (even though the atoms themselves will not lose identity, they will remain the same atoms), however, different identity conditions must apply to living things, because an acorn becomes an oak tree while changing drastically the matter it is composed of.¹⁵¹

3.2.2. Identity of Animals and Man

For Locke, it is through a continuous organization and function that animals gain their identity. Though an animal may gain part or lose some, the end or purpose of the existence or function to which the animal is fitted defines its identity. In other words, the identity of animals consists in

continuous participation of the same life. Locke illustrated this point with an analogy with a watch or machines. For example, I am using the same rolex wrist watch I have had for a long time, though I may have changed the following— the battery, the face cover and the leather handle to new ones, it does not make it different from my old watch, because the function or end to which the watch is fitted or designed has not changed.

Concerning the identity of man, Locke renders it thus:

This also shows wherein the identity of the same MAN consists; viz. in nothing but a participation of the same continued life, by constantly fleeting particles of matter, in succession vitally united to the same organized body. He that shall place the identity of man in anything else, but like that of other animals, in one fitly organized body, taken in any one instant, and from thence continued, under one organization of life, in several successively fleeting particles of matter united to it, will find it hard to make an embryo, one of years, mad and sober, the SAME man, by any supposition, that will make it possible for Seth, Ismael, Socrates, Pilate, St. Augustine, and Caesar Borgia, to be the same man. For if the identity of SOUL ALONE makes the same MAN; and there be nothing in the nature of matter why the same individual spirit may not be united to different tempers, may have been the same man: which way of speaking must not be united to different bodies, it will be possible that those men, living in distant ages, and of different tempers, may have been the same man: which way of speaking must be from a very strange use of the word man, applied to an idea out of which body and shape are excluded. And that way of speaking would agree yet worse with the notions of those philosophers who allow of transmigration, and are of opinion that the souls of habitations, with organs suited to the satisfaction of their brutal inclinations. But yet I hogs, would yet say that hog were a MAN or Heliogabalus.¹⁵²

It is important to point out that the very idea of identity is suited to the idea it is applied to. This is the reason why we should not assume or think that the same identity conditions will work for varying or different things. It is glaring that it is not possible to locate identity on the unity of substance, the reason being simply that it is possible to have different entities— say X, Y and Z

to exist in one substance, though at different time. This unity of substance does not in any way make X, Y, and Z the same.

On the identity of man, Locke thought it imperative to debunk the idea that the meaning or definition of man is that it is a rational animal or a thinking being. He gave an example of a rational parrot or cat that could talk, rationalize and more so philosophize. Though the parrot is capable of these qualities or hallmarks of rationality, it does not make it a man. What goes into making a man are his shape, size, body and spirit. We see that concentration is made on both material and immaterial aspects of the substance called man. Some scholars think that the popular definition of man as a rational animal or thinking being in Locke's view is too broad. That even if a parrot or cat was capable of rationality or thinking does not make it a man. It may be inferred that Aristotle's definition of man as a 'rational animal' precludes or ignores certain facts about the nature of man. Hence, in Locke's view to make reference to a man, we must make reference to his material body; shape and size, and then the immaterial component-spirit.

What guarantees same man is simply sameness of body or soul. Locke used his argument here to illustrate that what is important at the resurrection is not just the body or soul but the person. He went on to distinguish between these three, stressing that the idea of man, person and spirit (soul) imply distinct entities with each having their relevance. He put his argument thus:

And thus may we be able, without any difficulty, to conceive the same person at the resurrection, though in a body not exactly in make or parts the same which he had here,—the same consciousness going along with the soul that inhabits it. But yet the soul alone, in the change of bodies, would scarce to anyone but to him that makes the soul the man, be enough to make the same man. For should the soul of a prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the prince's past life, enter and inform the body of a cobbler, as soon as deserted by his own soul, everyone sees he would be

the same person with the prince, accountable only for the prince's actions: but who would say it was the same man? The body too goes to the making the man, and would, I guess, to everybody determine the man in this case, wherein the soul, with all its princely thoughts about it, would not make another man: but he would be the same cobbler to everyone besides himself. I know that, in the ordinary way of speaking, the same person, and the same man, stands for one and the same thing. And indeed everyone will always have a liberty to speak as he pleases, and to apply what articulate sounds to what ideas he thinks fit, and change them as often as he pleases. But yet, when we will inquire what makes the same spirit, man, or person, we must fix the ideas of spirit, man, or person in our minds; and having resolved with ourselves what we mean by them, it will not be hard to determine, in either of them, or the like, when it is the same, and when not.¹⁵³

3.2.3. Personal identity and the Condition of Identity

This being the core aspect of Locke's theory of personal identity and the condition of identity,

Locke explicated the meaning of personal identity thus:

This being premised, to find wherein personal identity consists, we must consider what PERSON stands for;—which, I think, is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and, as it seems to me, essential to it: it being impossible for anyone to perceive without PERCEIVING that he does perceive. When we see, ear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will anything, we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present sensations and perceptions: and by this everyone is to himself that which he calls SELF:—it not being considered, in this case, whether the same self be continued in the same or divers substances. For, since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes everyone to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity, i.e. the sameness if a rational being: and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now it was then; and it is by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done.¹⁵⁴

Clearly, from the above quotation, it is seen that the meaning of man and the meaning of the self/person are completely different things entirely. Locke meticulously pointed out certain

definitive attributes which he considers make the idea of a person. These are ‘thinking’, ‘intelligent’, ‘reason’ and ‘reflection’. In addition, a person is a metaphysical being that is capable of considering himself as himself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places. Locke therefore establishes “consciousness” as the identity condition through time as the basis of personal identity. Once a person at t_1 extends his consciousness to his past action at t_2 , he is therefore on that ground the same person, i.e. t_1 and t_2 are the same by virtue of sharing or participating in the same consciousness. Therefore, it is not unity of substance that makes the same person but unity of consciousness.

Essentially, consciousness is the underlying and definitive feature of personal identity. As pointed out above, same consciousness means same persons and not same substance. But however, Locke himself seems to be aware of a palpable problem—the interruption of our consciousness due to forgetfulness or sleep. As he puts it:

But it is further inquired, whether it be the same identical substance. This few would think they had reason to doubt of, if these perceptions, with their consciousness, always remained present in the mind, whereby the same thinking thing would be always consciously present, and, as would be thought, evidently the same to itself. But that which seems to make the difficulty is this, that this consciousness being interrupted always by forgetfulness, there being no moment of our lives wherein we have the whole train of all our past actions before our eyes in one view, but even the best memories losing the sight of one part whilst they are viewing another; and we sometimes, and that the greatest part of our lives, not reflecting on our past selves, being intent on our present thoughts, and in sound sleep having no thoughts at all, or at least none with that consciousness which makes our waking thoughts,—I say, in all these cases, our consciousness being interrupted, and we losing the sight of our past selves, doubts are raised whether we are the same thinking thing, i.e. the same substance or no. which, however reasonable or unreasonable, concerns not personal identity at all. The question being what makes the same person; and not whether it be the same identical substance, which always thinks in the same person, which, in this case, matters not at all:

different substances, by the same consciousness (where they do partake in it) being united into one person, as well as different bodies by the same life are united into one animal, whose identity is preserved in that change of substances by the unity of one continued life. For, it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only, whether it be annexed solely to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances. For as far any intelligent being can repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far it is the same personal self. For it is by the consciousness it has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to self now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness can extend to actions past or to come; and would be by distance of time, or change of substance, no more two persons, than a man be two men by wearing other clothes today than he did yesterday, with a long or a short sleep between the same consciousness uniting those distant actions into the same person, whatever substances contributed to their production.¹⁵⁵

It is seen that the apparent problem is the interruption of consciousness, for example in sleep. Does this suggest a person ceases to exist? Does this mean that when a person's consciousness is interrupted, the person stops existing and a new person or self emerges? The answer according to Locke is that when this happens, we do not cease to exist as a substance or as a human being but as a person. In so far a person's consciousness asleep is different from when he is awake; he is no longer the same person. The probable truth is that the same person can exist within different substances.

Locke explains the possibility of having a change or alteration in the substance that accommodates consciousness without and at the same time altering or causing change in memory or consciousness. It is clear; according to Locke that consciousness is the defining feature of a person and by extension personal identity. The physical body is conceived to be a substance that is capable of change. In other words, Locke is here stating that it is possible for the body of a person or the physical component of a person to experience change but in any way

does not imply change of consciousness and therefore person. In consequence, it is only consciousness or person that is capable of surviving change, not the material body.

Though the possibility of change is certain, yet it only affects the human physical body. To buttress this change further, it is argued that in humans all the cells in their body are replaced every seven years. This implies that a complete or whole substance and not person coming into being once these cells replace the old ones. Book V of *Aristotle's Metaphysics* P1, explicates this type of change thus: "change within the same kind from a lesser to a greater or from a greater to a lesser degree is alteration: for it is motion either from a contrary or to a contrary, whether in an unqualified or in a qualified sense."¹⁵⁶

More so, as Locke rightly pointed out and also to illustrate the inconsequential nature of the physical body in the determination of personal identity, he affirms that although my hand is part of me, cut it off, so that I am no longer conscious of it, and *it is then no longer part of that which is [my] self, any more than the remotest part of matter*. Thus consciousness is just the criterion of identity through time, but also in space-what I am right now includes all that I can feel.¹⁵⁷ However, if all I can feel are parts of me [myself], what of some certain vital organs of our body that we cannot feel for example such as the liver; does this mean it is not part of me? This raises serious objections to Locke's thinking that all that I can feel are parts of myself.¹⁵⁸

With regard to the question raised by Locke, whether if the same substance which thinks be changed, it can be the same person or remaining the same or be different persons? The answer provided by Locke is instructive:

And to this I answer: first, this can be no question at all to those who place thought in a purely material animal constitution, void of an immaterial substance. For, whether their supposition be true or no, it is plain they conceive personal identity preserved in something else than identity of substance; as animal identity is preserved in identity of life, and not of substance. And therefore those who place thinking in an immaterial substance only, before they can come to deal with these men, must show why personal identity cannot be preserved in the change of immaterial substances, or variety of particular immaterial substances, or variety of particular bodies unless they will say, it is one immaterial spirit that makes the same life in brutes, as it is one immaterial spirit that makes the same person in men, which the Cartesians at least will not admit for fear of making brutes thinking things too.¹⁵⁹

The emphasis by Locke is strictly that personal identity in change of substance is preserved by consciousness which alters not. As a result, there is a difference between the idea of a person and the idea of substance. We cannot presuppose that the idea of substance and person are identical. In the Lockean sense, the former connotes or relates to the material or physical body as well as the soul and the latter consciousness. So, consciousness is not substance, rather it is the very essence and nature of the human person.

The expression that “whether in change of thinking substances there can be one person”, Locke here expresses the possibility of having same consciousness moves from one thinking substance to another, yet the same consciousness is preserved and by extension, personal identity is preserved. He puts it thus: “... it must be allowed, that, if the same consciousness (which, as has been shown, is quite a different thing from the same numerical figure or motion in body) can be transferred from one thinking substance to another, it will be possible that two thinking substances may make but one person. For the same consciousness being preserved, whether in the same or different substances, the personal identity is preserved.”¹⁶⁰ What Locke seems to argue is that if there is a possibility of the same consciousness transferred from one man

(thinking substance) to another man, though the thinking substances from which it moves from and to being two; consciousness in this process is not altered, but remains the same. In other words, Locke explicitly affirms that “consciousness of the past, or “a present representation of a past action” can be transferred from one thinking substance to another, and, therefore, he detached himself from Descartes’ theory of personal identity by rejecting the sameness of immaterial substances as the criterion for personal identity.”¹⁶¹

Therefore, it is apt to say that if it is the same consciousness that operates in Peter is transferred into James, though Peter and James are two men, it is actually one person that is involved here. It may seem that two thinking substances (Peter and James) are involved; they are actually the same person, because it is the same consciousness that is transferred from Peter to James, not two persons, though they be two thinking substances. More so, “if a soul or mind is like a hard drive, which is blank when we’re born but acquires information as we grow, then if the *information on the hard drive* (our memories) is transferred to another hard drive (a different mind/soul) then the person goes with the memories, and you have a case of the same person having two different minds or souls at different times. Thus, same soul is not *necessary* for same person.”¹⁶²

In all, Locke maintains that it is consciousness alone that unites actions into the same person. There is no doubt that man is a being that thinks and cogitates; therefore he is conscious of his environment. As a result, man is conceived as a rational being that acts and reacts in certain organized ways to things in his immediate or remote environment. The ability to reflect on his action; good or bad and the actions of others, makes him much better or are advanced and better still a higher animal in the animal kingdom. According to the existentialists, man is accountable

for his actions, to this end, excuses are not allowed, except on the ground that those actions were done unconsciously or involuntarily. Consequently, ethicists and moralists divided human actions into two— act of man and human act. In the former, a person has little or no control over his or her actions and in the latter, he or she is responsible for his/her actions. Locke, perhaps aware of this (as well as the fact that same immaterial substance or soul does not make the same person but same consciousness) attributed or took consciousness to be that which is capable of uniting all actions—whether present or past into the same person. Locke explicates his view thus:

But though the same immaterial substance or soul does not alone, wherever it be, as in whatsoever state, make the same man; yet it is plain, consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended—should it be to ages past—unites existences and actions very remote in time into the same person, as well as it does the existences and actions of the immediately preceding moment: so that whatever has the consciousness of present and past-actions, is the same person to whom they both belong. Had I the same consciousness that I saw the ark and Noah's flood, as that I saw an overflowing of the Thames last winter, or as that I write now, I could no more doubt that I who write this now, that saw the Thames overflowed last winter and that viewed the flood at the general deluge, was the same self—place that self in what substance you please—than that I who write this am the same myself now whilst I write (whether I consist of all the same substance material or immaterial, or no) that I was yesterday. For as to this point of being the same self, it matters not whether this present self be made up of the same or other substances—being as much concerned, and as justly accountable for any action that was done a thousand years since, appropriated to me now by this self-consciousness, as I am for what I did the last moment.¹⁶³

What Locke wants us to believe is that; substances are inconsequential or unnecessary for personal identity. For Locke to reason that my consciousness can be placed in any substance implies he logically permitted or allowed the biological or medical process of brain transfer or transplant. The serious implication this had on his theory will be considered in a subsequent

chapter. It is pertinent to affirm that Locke holds as true the possibility of transferring consciousness from one substance to another. This means that if I was the same kid ten years ago that broke bottles in the store-room and led to the lost of one of my toes, and as an adult now am able to remember that incident or experience, then the kid ten years ago and the adult who is me now are the same person. But in the event where I am unable to remember or extend the incident as an adult now, though the lost of one of my toes is still very visible or seen in my body, Locke's analysis is that it is only consciousness that can unite all actions into the same person. If I cannot link or extend that action of breaking bottles in the store-room to my present self, then I am no longer the same person but a different person. The absence of one of my toes in my body does not in any way warrant bodily criterion as the determinant of personal identity. The question here is, is it not possible that though I could not remember the incident, the absence of the toe could cause me to know that I am still the same person or triggers my memory to remember it later?

Locke grounded personal identity on consciousness. The example given below clearly underpins Locke's basis of personal identity hinged on consciousness: "I think I am the same person as I was yesterday because I who am aware of myself now also remembers being me yesterday. For exactly the same reason, if I could remember Noah's flood, then that was *me* experiencing it, even if I had to get a new body to live this long. And if I remember being Cain killing Abel, then I am responsible for that, and can be held responsible."¹⁶⁴ To this end, any action that one cannot be accountable for, though done by the same substance, it presupposes that a different consciousness is responsible—by extension a different person. Take for example; assuming I was not consciousness of the action of stabbing my neighbour who fought with me yesterday

since both of us passed-out but only to wake up today to realize what we have done, presupposes that prior to the fight which I remembered vividly, I was a different person from the person who actually stabbed my neighbour.

Locke's main argument is that personal identity consists in identity of consciousness, no more, no less. He stated it thus:

This may show us wherein personal identity consists: not in the identity of substance, but, as I have said, in the identity of consciousness, wherein if Socrates and the present mayor of Queenborough agree, they are the same person: if the same Socrates waking and sleeping do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same person. And to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never consciousness of, would be no more of right, than to punish one twin for what his brother-twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like, that they could not be distinguished; for such twins have been seen.¹⁶⁵

This demonstrated Locke's virile resolve and affirmation of consciousness as the basis of personal identity and by extension the definition of a person. Substance may be identical or different, like the example of the identical twins; and Socrates and Mayor of Queenborough respectively but Locke does not think it to be the basis of personal identity. But those who argued for substance-based personal identity see or take the body as the necessary and sufficient conditions for explicating the idea of a person. Though the body according to them may sometime undergo change or mutation, the change or mutation is only insignificant; as in any case there are abiding bodily attributes that survive change. Howbeit, Locke's departure from bodily criterion of personal identity may be that the idea of consciousness presupposes thought or reflection; and this is the basis of man's moral and ethical responsibility or consideration. The

body is not capable of these actions; hence he rejected it. As shall be seen later in chapter five, Butler raised a fundamental paradox which apparently discredited the argument of Locke.

Locke accentuated further that absolute oblivion separates what is thus forgotten from the person, but not from the man. Here, Locke made a clear distinction between the idea of a person and the idea of a man. Though in our ordinary supposition, we mistake these two terms as one but when we examine the possibility of amnesia and forgetfulness, we see that Locke is right to separate the meaning and understanding of the two terms. Suppose, James and John are two friends; James committed a crime stealing fish from the pot of soup and John was completely oblivious of this crime. Suppose further that the consciousness of James is transferred into John and that of John into James', James here is only taken or seen as the man who committed the crime of stealing but not the person. The person who committed the crime is John. Locke added forgetfulness; in this case, it is not that I completely forgot the crime I committed years back. Though I am the same substance and the same man, since I could not recall or remember committing the crime then I am a different person. In fact, Locke explains it this way:

Suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thoughts that I once was conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, that we must here take notice what the word *I* is applied to; which, in this case, is the *man* only. And the same man being presumed to be the same person, I is easily here supposed to stand also for the same person. But if it be possible for the same man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times, it is past doubt the same man would at different times make different persons; which, we see, is the sense of mankind in the solemnest declaration of their opinions, human laws not punishing the mad man for the sober man's actions, nor the sober man for what the mad man did,— thereby making them two persons: what is somewhat explained by our way of speaking in English when we say such an one is 'not himself', or is 'beside himself'; in which phrases it is

insinuated, as if those who now, or at least first used them, thought that self was changed; the selfsame person was no longer in that man¹⁶⁶.

Locke here again reiterated the differences between the idea of a person and that of a man and added that the results or consequences of one's action should not be attributed to the latter but the former. He gave credence to this by arguing that the human law already though somewhat does not allow or permit the human law to punish or apportion blame to a mad man. Generally, in ethical practice, it is a common knowledge that an insane or mad person is considered as amoral; this implies that a mad person cannot be judged to be morally responsible for his actions, — either good or bad. This is because; the mad person is generally perceived to act or carryout any action not from his personal volition or consciousness. This also applies to a drunkard and babies/children. If a baby or a child, let say three years old was to pull the trigger of a gun such that the bullet hits someone and the person, having suffered from the bullet injury, died, the human law does not and will not allow the three years old child to suffer the consequence of his/her action; rather it is believed or assumed that the child did not carry-out such action intentionally, deliberately or consciously.

But the paradox here is that how is it possible for one consciousness to be transferred into another; and the wrongs committed by this one is rightly judged or imputed to the body and humanness of the new body? Why should my body, for example, that is innocent of a crime committed by another person be the one to suffer the consequences whereas the body with which the consciousness committed the crime did not go with the consciousness into the new body? If my body is maimed or disfigured as a result of what another consciousness did before coming into it, of which my body was completely innocent or ignorant of, does it not amount to punishing the wrong substance for what another did? Is it possible for consciousness alone to

suffer without the body? This may be impossible to answer. However, our task in this chapter is to present and critically analyze John Locke's theory of personal identity and to unravel the foundation with which his argument is rooted.

In the final analysis, John Locke thinks that he may have made some suppositions that look strange but however a careful and meticulous analysis of what a person is in the real or actual sense, not going by or judging from common sense perspective, we will discover that these suppositions though strange are pardonable in our ignorance.

I am apt enough to think I have, in treating of this subject, made some suppositions that will look strange to some readers, and possibly they are so in themselves. But yet, I think they are such as pardonable, in this ignorance we are in of the nature of that thinking thing that is in us, and which we look on as ourselves. Did we know what it was; or how it was tied to a certain system of fleeting animal spirits; or whether it could or could not perform its operations of thinking and memory out of a body organized as ours is; and whether it has pleased God that no one such spirit shall ever be united to any but one such body, upon the right constitution of whose organs its memory should depend; we might see the absurdity of some of those suppositions I have made. But taking, as we ordinarily now do (in the dark concerning these matters,) the soul of a man for an immaterial substance, independent from matter, and indifferent alike to it all; there can, from the nature of things, be no absurdity at all to suppose that the same soul may at different times be united to different bodies, and with them make up for that time one man: as well as we suppose a part of a sheep's body yesterday should be a part of a man's body to-morrow, and in that union make a vital part of Meliboeus himself, as well as it did of his ram.¹⁶⁷

The supposition is something like this: "it might be the case that consciousness could never be separated from soul or body, in which case the same man would always be the same body, and vice versa. But, given our state of ignorance, we can distinguish them, and thus can justifiably imagine cases of two different persons in the same man or two different men being the same person."¹⁶⁸ This indeed to some may look strange.

From the above, we see that Locke's argument of personal identity is easily reducible to and christened psychological approach, in that he laid emphasis on the idea of person as a non-physical, incorporeal, conscious and thinking being. However, it is not to say, as we shall see in the later chapter that Locke may have given us a clear and distinct basis upon which we draw or may arrive at the identity of person, but many theorists have argued that Locke's theory and suppositions are deficient in many regards, because it does not constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for arriving at a person's identity over time and thus they advocated that it should be jettisoned.

In all, Locke has shown that sameness of body or soul makes the same man but sameness of consciousness makes the same person. To this end, the identity of a person is determined neither by his physical body nor by his immaterial soul but by consciousness alone; a sort of a psychological entity. Locke's thesis is fundamental and germane in the sense that it aptly provided an exclusive understanding of the meaning of the terms; "consciousness", "self" and "person". The understanding that a person is just a material being only, conversely, that a person is only a spirit, and lastly that he is both somehow has been clarified by Locke. We see that the idea of "human being", "man", "Socrates", for instance, and "person" are different things altogether. Thanks to Locke for the unique distinction. It has provided a better approach to the understanding and study of the human person. However, what accurately accounts for our identity over time remains unclear.

3. 3. The Notion of a Person, Self and Consciousness

In this section, the research focuses on the idea of the self/person and consciousness. Attempt shall be made to provide or furnish a conceptual analysis of the terms— self, person and

consciousness. This is against the backdrop of the fact that the idea of personhood and personal identity plausibly rests on the idea of person/self and consciousness. It is not sufficient to discuss or debate about what personal identity is without a clear and distinct understanding of what the idea of person, self and consciousness are. The research shall therefore examine the idea of self/person and consciousness from Western and African world views. This is to furnish a contextual explication of the idea of person and the self and to find out if Locke's and other thinkers' speculations or theorizations necessarily satisfy the conditions these entities are postulated or assumed to possess.

The research shall proceed first to examine the concept and the idea of self and then the idea of person from ancient to contemporary period and this will be done across all philosophical-cum-social cultural contexts or landscapes/divides. The research shall also examine and analyze the idea of consciousness. This no doubt will clearly provide background information and useful insights into Locke's idea of person and personhood as well as personal identity. The aim also is to expose the shortcomings inherent in Locke's conception of person, especially given that the term has sundry contextual and phenomenological interpretations across all the world-views and belief-systems of the world. It should be pointed out here that there is no much difference in the meaning of the term "self" and "person" but for a detail explication of their use, the research shall consider them separately beginning with the idea of the self.

3.3.1. On the Meaning of the Self

The concept of the self greatly underpins the meaning and discussion of personal identity as an approach; especially the one that is metaphysical in outlook— if psychological criterion is to make sense. In this regard, the research shall attempt a conceptualization of what the self is and

thereafter analyze its place or role in the discussion of Locke's theory of personal identity. Like Popper averred "a discussion of the self, of persons and of personalities, of consciousness and of the mind, is only too liable to lead to questions like "what is the self?" or "what is consciousness?"¹⁶⁹ Hence, what is the self?

Though, there is no straightforward definition of the term, it can simply be defined "as an individual person as the object of his or her own reflective consciousness. This reference is necessarily subjective, thus self is a reference by subject to the same subject."¹⁷⁰ As Zahavi argued, the sense of having a self or selfhood— should not be confused with subjectivity.¹⁷¹ This is because the term subjectivity is a central philosophical concept, related to consciousness, agency, personhood, reality and truth.¹⁷² However, the definition of subjectivity may not necessarily imply the notion of the self. This is affirmative of the three common definitions of subjectivity thus: "something being a subject, narrowly meaning an individual who possesses conscious experiences, such as perspectives, feelings, beliefs and desires."¹⁷³ Secondly, something being a subject, broadly meaning an entity that has agency, meaning that it acts upon or wields power over some other entity, perhaps an object.¹⁷⁴ Thirdly, some information, idea, situation, or physical thing considered true only from the perspective of a subject or subjects.¹⁷⁵

From a philosophical perspective, the philosophy of the self seeks to describe essential qualities that constitute a person's uniqueness or essential being. Hence, the self can be considered as that being which is the source of consciousness, the agent responsible for an individual's thoughts and actions, or the substantial nature of a person which endures and unifies consciousness over time.¹⁷⁶ From Lockean perspective, as reported by Conway, the self is seen as a product of episodic memory.¹⁷⁷ Episodic memory in this sense was coined by Endel Tulving in 1972, used

to refer to the distinction between knowing and remembering. While the former conveys something factual (semantic), the later conveys a feeling that is located in the past (episodic).¹⁷⁸ Thus, episodic memory means the memory of autobiographical events, (time, places, associated emotions, and other contextual who, what, when, where, why knowledge) that can be explicitly stated or conjured. It is the collection of past personal experiences that occurred at a particular time and place. An example is the ability for one to remember a past event, let us say, 5th birthday or college graduation. Episodic memories allow an individual to figuratively travel back in time to remember the event that took place at that particular time and place.¹⁷⁹

However, besides the concept of the self grounded or anchored on episodic memory, research upon those with amnesia— a kind of a deficit in memory caused by brain damage, disease, or psychological trauma¹⁸⁰— find they have a coherent sense of self based upon preserved conceptual autobiographical knowledge.¹⁸¹ This “sense of self” which the Freudian tradition has subjectively called, is for Jungian analytic psychology, where one’s identity is lodged in the personal or ego and is subject to change in maturation.¹⁸² Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, the founder of analytical psychology hinted that “the self is not only the center, but also the whole circumference which embraces both conscious and unconscious; it is the center of this totality...”¹⁸³ More so, the self in Jungian psychology is “the archetype of wholeness and the regulating center of the psyche;... a transpersonal power that transcends the ego.”¹⁸⁴ Accordingly, the self as an archetype cannot be seen directly but by ongoing individuating maturation and analytic observation, can be experienced objectively by its cohesive wholeness making factor.¹⁸⁵ In all, semantic and episodic memory both contribute to self that is not a unitary construct comprising only the individual as he or she is now, but also past and possible selves.¹⁸⁶

Examining the religious view of the self, there are two types of self commonly considered— the self that is the ego and the self that is sometimes called the “true self”. The first self, the ego is also known or called the learned, superficial self of mind and body. This self is an egoistic creation. The second is contrary to the first and it is also sometimes called the “observing self” or the “witness”.¹⁸⁷ Whether these selves exist together in human beings or they take their turns pending which is willed or desired is a different argument altogether. However, the point must be made that human beings have self. This is the reason why humans are able to reflect or look back on themselves as both subjects and objects in the cosmic universe. Which in the end raises questions about who we are and the nature of our own importance.¹⁸⁸

It is difficult to have a holistic definition of the self in that the meaning one attributes or attaches is always culture dependent or bond. Sundry comparisons, especially between Western cultures versus African cultures or Western cultures versus Eastern cultures demonstrate that there are cultural differences among the self and the idea of the self. It is in view of this, the self is redefined as a dynamic, responsive process that structures neural pathways according to past and present environments including material, social, and spiritual aspects.¹⁸⁹ The major conceptual difference of the self across many cultures and environment is that in the West, the self is usually seen as abstract, private, individual, and separates itself from the rest of the group. Whereas in the Eastern culture, the self is presented as open and flexible,¹⁹⁰ for the Africans hold a collective view of the self, different from Western’s individualism outlook.

It should be pointed out from the outset that words such as ‘self’, ‘person’, ‘soul’ and similar words are not synonymous as some schools of thought may have us believe or see. On the contrary, they have different meanings in sensitive English usage. For example, “soul” is often

used, in contemporary English, with the implication that it is a substance which can survive death, whereas in German, the word “Seele” is used differently, more like the English word “mind”.¹⁹¹

The self has been given varied meanings. According to Galen Strawson, the self is seen to be best described as a cognitive, i.e. ‘distinctively mental’ phenomenon. He asserted further that the mental sense of self comes to every normal human being in childhood and comprises the sense of being a mental presence, of being alone in one’s head, with the body ‘just a vessel or vessel for the mental thing that is what one really or most essentially is’.¹⁹² In this sense, the self is distinctively a mental phenomenon separated from the body. To describe the self as something cognitive is to subscribe to the *cognivists*’ belief of the utter distinction of the self from the body and the theory of mind which sees mental states as absolutely internal to the mind.

The most remarkable question is not what the self is. Rather it is imperative to first and foremost find out if the self exists before asking question about what it is essentially. The first question to pose is, does the self exist? Some philosophers have remarked that self is nothing but illusion. Hume described it as bundle of impressions— some sort of thing we cannot and never catch or be aware of but Popper’s remarks seem contrary and apt thus: “we are not only aware of being alive, but each of us is aware of being a self; aware of his identity through considerable periods of time, and though breaks in his self-awareness due to periods of sleep, or to periods of unconsciousness; and each of us is aware of his moral responsibility for his actions.”¹⁹³

For Popper, unlike Hume, the self not only exists but is something we are aware of. This must be logically true to some extent if Hume’s idea of the self is to be followed strictly. Logically, one cannot give a vivid description of something one is not aware of. One must be aware that one

exists before one can say or affirm that that thing is or is not. Admittedly, though arguable, Hume logically accepted the existence of the self before commenting on what it is. To have an idea of what a thing is or is not, is to affirm its existence. Hume in the long-run affirmed the existence of the self before denying it. Hume was aware of what the self is— hence he called it “bundle of impressions” but denied that one can have impression of one’s self. By extension, Hume denied or doubted the existence of his own self. Consequently, it is somewhat strange to doubt that “people exist; and each of them is an individual self, with feelings, hopes and fears, sorrows and joys, dreads and dreams, which we can only guess since they are known only to the person himself or herself.”¹⁹⁴

As obvious as the existence of the self may seem, Hume’s denial is coming from his commonsense view and empiricist background. His empiricism no doubt led him to the doctrine and conclusion that all knowledge are derived from sense experience— we can know nothing except from sense impressions and the ideas derived from sense impressions. Hume, for instance, would ask from what impression is the idea of the self? There is no sense impression where the idea of the self can be derived, hence there is no such a thing as the self. He went on to argue against “some philosophers who imagine that we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our self”,— unluckily all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience, which is pleaded for them, nor have we any idea of self . . . For from what impression could this idea be derived? This question it is impossible to answer without manifest contradiction and absurdity . . .”¹⁹⁵

Hume’s denial has caused or led to problems and paradoxes of the self existence to say the least. There are firm followers of Hume who hitherto believed that there is no such thing as the self.

In what seems like a self-contradiction and absurdity Popper has pointed out that Hume himself has implicitly accepted through the back door the existence of the self or affirm its existence. Popper remarks thus: “yet Hume himself, in a slightly different context, asserts the existence of selves just as emphatically as he here denies it. Thus he writes in Book II of the *Treatise*: “it is evident, that the idea, or rather impression of ourselves is always intimately present with us, and that our consciousness gives us so lively a conception of our own person, that it is not possible to imagine, that anything can in this particular go beyond it.” This positive assertion of Hume’s amounts to the same position that he attributes in the more famous negative passage quoted before to “some philosophers,” and that he there emphatically declares to be manifestly contradictory and absurd.”¹⁹⁶

Popper did not only point out the manifest contradiction and absurdity in Hume’s notion of the self, he also provided passages in Hume’s work that supported the idea of selves, especially under the name of “character” thus:

But there are lots of other passages in Hume supporting the idea selves, especially under the name of “character”. Thus we read: “there are also characters peculiar to different ... persons... The knowledge of these characters is founded on the observation of an uniformity in the actions, that flow from them...”

Hume’s official theory (if I may call it so) is that the self is no more than the sum total (the bundle) of its experiences. He argues— in my opinion, rightly— that talk of a “substantial” self does not help us much. Yet he again and again describes actions as “flowing” from a person’s character. In my opinion we do not need more in order to be able to speak of self.”¹⁹⁷

Popper went further to point out that the use of language to describe reality may not imply that those qualities are in-here in them. He alluded to ‘ownership theory’ which he said were incorporated in our language and that we do not have to accept as true the theories that are incorporated in our language. He puts it thus:

Hume, and others, take it that if we speak of the self as a substance, then the properties (and the experiences) of the self may be said to “inhere” in it. I agree with those who say that this way of speaking is not illuminating. We may, however, speak of “our” experiences, using the possessive pronoun. This seems to me perfectly natural; it need not give rise to speculations about an ownership relation. I may say of my cat that it “has” a strong character without thinking that this way of talking expresses an ownership relation (in the reverse direction to the one when I speak of “my” body). Some theories— such as the ownership theory— are incorporated in our language. We do not, however, have to accept as true the theories that are incorporated in our language, even though this fact may make it difficult to criticize them. If we decide that they are seriously misleading, we may be led to change the aspect of our language in question, otherwise, we may continue to use it, simply bear in mind the fact that it should not be taken too literally (for example the “new” moon). All this, however, should not prevent us from always trying to use the plainest language we can.¹⁹⁸

3.3.2. How do we come to know ourselves?

How do we know that we are selves or persons other than bodies? This is an epistemic question that requires thorough analysis in order to arrive at what constitutes the identity of the self or person. It seems that the knowledge of the self cannot be reached by method of extra-sensory perception or arrived at innately or transcendently. As Popper remarks: “it seems to me of considerable importance that we are not born as selves, but that we have to learn that we are selves; in fact we have to learn to be selves.”¹⁹⁹ It seems that Popper’s argument about learning to be a self is anchored on the fact that self-knowledge is logically prior to self-observation, and that self-consciousness develops by paying interest in and having a kind of understanding of the other persons. Here, the environment is keyed, as it constitutes the time and space of all objects. Popper’s argument is put thus:

How do we obtain self-knowledge? Not by self-observation, I suggest, but by becoming selves, and by developing theories about ourselves. Long before we attain consciousness and knowledge of ourselves, we have, normally, become aware of other persons, usually our parents. There seems to be an inborn interest in the human face: experiments by R. L. Fanz [1961] have shown that even very young babies fixate a schematic

representation of a face for longer periods than a similar yet “meaningless” arrangement. These and other results suggest that very young children develop an interest in and a kind of understanding of other persons. I suggest that a consciousness of self begins to develop through the medium of other persons: just as we learn to see ourselves in a mirror, so that child becomes conscious of himself by seeing his reflection in the mirror of other people’s consciousness of himself. (I am very critical of psychoanalysis, but it seems to me that Freud’s emphasis upon the formative influence of social experiences in early childhood was correct) for example, I am inclined to suggest that when the child tries actively “to draw attention to himself” it is part of this learning process. It seems that children, and perhaps primitive people, live through an “animistic” or “hylozoistic” stage in which they are inclined to assume of a physical body that— it is animate— that it is a person— until this theory is refuted by the passivity of the thing.²⁰⁰

The child learning about his environment must include persons as they constitute the most important objects. The child’s learning is conditioned by time, thus: “the child learns to know his environment; but persons are the most important objects within his environment; and through their interest in him— and through learning about his own body— he learns in time that he is a person himself.”²⁰¹

Most importantly, “in order to be a self, must has to be learned; especially a sense of time, with oneself extending into the past (at least into yesterday”) and into the future (at least into ‘tomorrow’)... so the self is, partly, the result of the active exploration of the environment, and of the grasp of a temporal routine, based upon the cycle of day and night,”²⁰² This seems to imply Hegelian type of consciousness or self where the self continues to evolve to achieve or attain his teleological goal.

On the case of the theory of “pure self” which Kant has exposed in his philosophical work to be real, which seems to suggest there exist two kinds of self— self prior to experience and self

contaminated by experience has been denied by Popper as non-existence and at best a mistaken theory:

... I do not agree with the theory of the “pure self”. The philosophical term “pure” is due to Kant and suggests something like “prior to experience” or “free from (the contamination of) experience”; and so the term “pure self” suggests a theory which I think is mistaken: that the ego was there prior to experience, so that all experiences were, from the beginning, accompanied by the Cartesian and Kantian “I think” (or perhaps by “I am thinking”; at any rate by a Kantian “pure apperception”). Against this I suggest that being a self is partly the result of inborn dispositions and partly the result of experience, especially social experience. The newborn child has many inborn ways of acting and of responding, and many inborn tendencies to develop new responses and new activities. Among these tendencies is a tendency to develop into a person conscious of himself. But in order to achieve this, much must happen. A human child growing up in social isolation will fail to attain a full consciousness of self.²⁰³

What is obvious from this passage is that the self is partly a result of innate dispositions and partly the result of experience. Thus, the self is a mixture of innate characteristics and social characteristics. So, what we called the self is neither purely spiritual nor purely or wholly social. More so, where perhaps a human creature or being is to grow up to maturity or adulthood in a solitary place, without social interaction and without any communication with his own kinds or species, is impossible to develop into a self.

3.3.3. Self as a Physical Entity/Body

The contention that we are body and that the self is identified as physical body has been somewhat argued by Popper to be incorrect and misleading. He emphasized that we cannot simply identify our personal selves with our bodies since it is possible to distinguish between bodies and mind; and whatever the self is, is to a large extent in-dependable to the body. He buttressed the point thus: “we learn to distinguish between parts of our body that are sensate and

others (nail, hair) that are not. This is still part of what we may describe as the “naturally” developed world-view. But then we learn about surgical operations: we learn that we can do without appendix, gall bladder, parts of our stomach, without limbs, without eyes; that we can do without our own kidneys, and even without our own heart. All this teaches us that our bodies are, to a surprising and even shocking extent, expendable. And this teaches us that we cannot simply identify our personal selves with our bodies.”²⁰⁴

On the contrary, when Locke argues that self depends on consciousness, not on substance, this claim elicited criticisms. Locke in his work maintains that the idea of the self is embedded on the idea of consciousness; thus, what we call self is actually consciousness, vice versa. Wherever consciousness is located or present, the self is there. Hence, the self and consciousness are inseparable and by extension; it is that which defines or makes the idea of a person. Going by mereological analysis thesis, which is whole-part analysis, we are justified to assert that the idea of a person constitutes what we may term moment rather than aggregates, as it comprises an inseparable parts—self and consciousness. So, the attempt to define a person without recourse to self or consciousness is certainly aimless. We may sum that substance has no place in the definition and constitution of the self or person; rather substance is simply that which the self or consciousness inhabits or is what substance is made up of:

Self is that conscious thinking thing—whatever substance made up of, (whether spiritual or material, simple or compounded, it matters not)—which is sensible or conscious of pleasure and pain, capable of happiness or misery, and so is concerned for itself, as far as that consciousness extends. Thus every one finds that, whilst comprehended under that consciousness, the little finger is as much a part of himself as what is most so. Upon separation of this little finger, should this consciousness go along with the little finger, and leave the rest of the body, it is evident the little finger would be the person, the same person; and self than would have

nothing to do with the rest of the body. As in this cast it is the consciousness that goes along with the substance, when one part is separate from another, which makes the same person, and constitutes this inseparable self: so it is in reference to substances remote in time. That with which the consciousness of this present thinking thing can join itself, makes the same person, and is one self with it, and with nothing else; and so attributes to itself, and owns all the actions of that thing, as its own, as far as that consciousness reaches, and no further, as everyone who reflects will perceive.²⁰⁵

For the psychological approach proponents, especially those who believe or associate consciousness with the self or personal identity, the seat of consciousness is the brain; the brain is referred to something that is physical, that is, as part of the body, though this remains arguable. Suppose the brain is the seat of consciousness, this means that consciousness transfers from one body to another is possible as it is possible to do brain-transplant— for example, an experiment that has been carried out to repair and cure or effect treatment in epilepsy patients. Let us assume the case of a patient who had a brain damage requiring surgery. Assuming or granted that the brain is physical and transferable to another person's physical body, this implies that the transfer will requires two bodies— *A* and *B*. The pertinent question therefore is, the eventual body that receives the body *B* will possess what identity? In other words, the brain is transferred from one body *A*, let us say the donor, the other body *B* that will receive it will be the receiving body- then what identity will the new body have- bearing in mind that it carries with it some parts of *A*'s body and some parts of *B*'s body?

The supposed answer will be inconclusive. It will be difficult to reach or ascertain the actual identity. This is much easier if the brain was to be something mental. If *B*'s brain is completely dead and it is replaced with *A*'s, then the outcome remains as *A* because nothing has changed, except for the change of physical body which in this instant has no importance as far as identity is concerned. But this is a separate issue if part of *A*'s brain was to be used to repair or fix part of

B's brain. This means that the new object carries with it part of A and part of B. The identity of the new object will be determined by the amount of degree and weightings of dimension it has in relation to the old properties. In other words, what amount of A is in B and what amount of B remains when A was added? Nozick has attempted an answer to this. It is called the closest continuer theory.

The theory is expressed thus: "the closest continuer view presents a necessary condition for identity; something at t_2 is not the same entity as x at t_1 if it is not x 's closest continuer. And "closest" means closer than all others; if two things at t_2 tie in closeness to x at t_1 , then neither is the same entity as x . However, something may be the closest continuer of x without being close enough to it to be X . How close something must be to x to be x , it appears, depends on the kind of entity x is, as do the dimensions along which closeness is measured."²⁰⁶ Going by this theory, we can therefore resolve that the new object— call it C , is identical to either A or B depending on the weight of property C possesses in relation to either A 's or B 's properties. When C possesses 70% of A 's property than B , then it can be said that C is the closest continuer of A . similarly, if C possesses 70% of B 's property than A , then it can be said that C is the closest continuer of B . The circumstance where C possesses 50% of A 's property and 50% of B 's property, it is said not to be identical to neither A nor B . The closeness or identity of C to A or B can be explicated by the degree of causal connection.

Furthermore, "the closest continuer view holds that y at t_2 is the same person as x at t_1 only if, first, y 's properties at t_2 stem from, grow out of, are causally dependent on x 's properties at t_1 and, second, there is no other z at t_2 that stands in a closer (or as close) relationship to x at t_1 than y at t_2 does."²⁰⁷ Closeness in this sense implies not merely the degree of causal connection, but

also the qualitative closeness of what is connected, as this is judged by some weighting of dimensions and features in a similarity metric.²⁰⁸ Nozick examined and applied his theory to some relevant cases and concluded that "... I do not believe there is some one metric space in which to measure closeness for each of our identities. The content of the measure of closeness, and so the content of a person's identity through time, can vary (somewhat) from person to person. What is special about people, about selves, is that what constitutes their identity through time is partially determined by their own conception of themselves, a conception which may vary, perhaps appropriately does vary, from person to person."²⁰⁹

If the self is assumed or taken to be distinct from consciousness, then what is self and what is consciousness? Going by the explanation thus far, it may be appropriate to affirm that the self is that which forms the unity of all our experiences and the owner or seat of consciousness, perhaps the brain. Though a lot has been said about the nature and meaning of the self, it remains somewhat a mystery what exactly the nature of consciousness is. What is intriguing or captivating here is that the self which is largely assumed to be non-physical is described as object having parts. These are the conscious self and the unconscious self. In other words, these are the two parts the self comprises. Much of the illustration of these two types of consciousness is rendered thus:

The self, or the ego, has often been compared to an iceberg, with the unconscious self as the vast submerged part and the conscious self as the tip projecting from the water. Although there is little basis for estimating magnitudes here, it nevertheless appears that at any given moment what is selected, filtered, and admitted to full consciousness, is only a small fraction of all that which we act upon and which acts upon us. Most of what we "learn", what we acquire and integrate into our personality, our self, what we make use of in action or in contemplation, remains unconscious or subconscious. This has been confirmed by interesting psychological experiments. They show that we are always ready to

learn— in some cases quite unconsciously— new skills, such as the skill of avoiding something unpleasant (an electric shock, for example). It may be conjectured that such unconscious skills, including the ability to speak a language.

I think that the views of Gilbert Ryle and of D. M. Armstrong can throw much light on the unconscious self which is indeed largely dispositional, and at least partly physical. It consists of dispositions to act and of dispositions to expect: of unconscious expectations. Our unconscious knowledge can well be described as a set of dispositions to act, or to behave, or to expect. It is very interesting that these unconscious and dispositional states may, somehow, become retrospectively conscious, if our expectation is disappointed; remember that we may hear that the clock has just stopped ticking. It may mean that a new, unexpected problem arises which demands our attention. This illustrates one of the functions of consciousness.²¹⁰

Whether the self is something physical or not, demands much investigation. Many scholars are divided over this and much of their stands depend on their orientation and conception of what reality is. Philosophers who are oriented towards the belief that the whole of reality is matter would like to accept or see the self to be such. Also, many scholars who believed that the whole of reality is mind or spiritual will take the self as such. The argument that is more plausible and convincing is certain to gain more acceptability and attract wider audience and adherents.

So far, we have been able to explore the nature of the self, its meanings and analyze some scholars' perception of the self. The next is to examine the nature or idea of person and to see if it is different from the idea of the self. Though they are somehow thought to be different, it largely depends on contextual usage. It is however, not certain if one can be used to interchange the other. By and large, it is assumed that what makes the idea of a person is partly the self. No philosophical discussion of the idea of a person can be successfully granted without the idea of the self.

3.4. The Idea of a Person

The concept or idea of a person can be very challenging to explicate or define. Often times, the attempt to define a person ends up mostly in descriptive basis. We cannot precisely say this and that is what a person is. The question— what is a person is more metaphysically demanding than who is a person, which is more or less epistemological. Almost all the attempts to define a person end up in both metaphysical-cum-moral underpinnings. This research therefore makes a historical examination of the notion of person from ancient to contemporary era as well as conduct a comparative analysis of the term— Western and African view of person. The reason is that what makes a person count as a person differs widely among cultures and contexts. This section will begin with the attempt to define and explicate the meaning of the term “person” historically— from ancient to contemporary epoch.

3. 4. 1. On the Meaning of the term “Person”

According to De Craemer, a person is a being that has certain capacities or attributes such as reason, morality, consciousness or self-consciousness, and being a part of a culturally established form of social relations such as kinship, ownership of property, or legal responsibility.”²¹¹ This definition brings out essential features that portray a person. Remarkably, a person is also pictured here as someone with a social colouration and someone who has legal and social responsibilities.

Similarly, humans or persons have been described as “social animals” who have an inescapable moral and spiritual dimension, adding that persons are profoundly morally oriented.²¹² Hardly is there any conception of person that does not have as its foundation metaphysical and moral underpinnings. In Western as well as African ontology, the idea of person is majorly tailored towards rational and moral or ethical concernment, in some cases both.

3.4.2. The Western Notion of a Person

Boethius in “De Persona et Duabus Naturis”, viewed or defined person as *naturae rationalis individual substantia*; i.e. an individual substance of a rational nature.²¹³ Boethius used the term substance to describe a person in the sense that it does not include accidents, because according to him, “accident cannot constitute person.”²¹⁴ To expatiate further the sense with which the term “substantia” is used to describe person, Boethius remarked that “Substantia is used in two senses: of the concrete substance as existing in the individual, called *substantia prima*, corresponding to Aristotle’s *ousia prote*; and of abstractions, substance as existing in genus and species, called *substantia secunda*, Aristotle’s *ousia deutra*.”²¹⁵

Person in the definition of Boethius is the only being that is predicated of *rationalis naturae*, i.e. intellectual being. From this definition the following five notes is said to comprise the idea of a person: “(a) *substantia*— this excludes accident; (b) *Completa*— it must form a complete nature; that which is a part, either actually or “aptitudinally” does not satisfy the definition; (c) *Per se Subsistens*— the person exists in himself and for himself; he is *sui juris*, the ultimate possessor of his nature and all its acts, the ultimate subject of predication of all his attributes; that which exists in another is not a person; (d) *Separata Secunda*, which has no existence apart from the individual; (e) *rationalis naturae*— excludes all non-intellectual *supposita*.”²¹⁶

Boethius denied that the soul is the same thing as person. John Locke also expresses this thought in his theory of personal identity. According to Boethius, the human soul belongs to the nature (of person) as a part of it, and is therefore not a person. In other words, as illustrated above, a person must form a complete nature; the soul on the other hand is only a part of his nature, i.e. it is only a part of the nature of person.

In a more recent line of discourse, especially with regard to the moral status of persons and in the abortion's debate arena, attempts have been made by scholars to describe and conceptualize the idea of person— making a distinction between what it is and what is not. The aim is to draw a line or differentiate between humans that are categorized as persons and humans that are categorized as non-persons. For Locke and other psychological approach proponents of the personal identity debate, the conclusion that what defines a person's identity is memory or consciousness, inevitably raises the question who is a person? Against this backdrop, "several factions in the abortion argument have drawn battle lines around various proposed criteria for determining what is and what is not a person."²¹⁷

A prominent figure in this regard is Mary Anne Warren. She listed five characteristics or criteria and rendered the argument thus: "the traits which are most central to concept of personhood... are, very roughly, the following: 1. Consciousness... and in particular the capacity to feel pain; 2. Reasoning (the developed capacity to solve new and relatively complex problems); 3. Self-motivated activity (activity which is relatively independent of either genetic or direct external control); 4. The capacity to communicate by whatever means, messages of an indefinite variety of types...; 5. The presence of self-concepts, and self-awareness..."²¹⁸ Anne Warren submitted that at least some of these are necessary, if not sufficient criteria for personhood, thus eliminated fetuses from the category of person. Included also in this elimination are those who have lost their capacity for rational thought or have become permanently unconscious.

More so, Warren seems to believe that reasoning is both a necessary and sufficient conditions for personhood. This raises not only the intriguing possibility that some non-human animals like chimps and dolphins might qualify as persons but also the disturbing implication that some

human beings would not qualify. In other words, if we set the bar as high as Warren has, we logically exclude portions of vulnerable human population from the category of persons, and thus exclude them from the rights we ascribe to persons. This could be very troubling.²¹⁹ It therefore follows that “human beings can only sensibly be said to be persons to the extent that they are capable of conscious experience. That capacity first emerges in the human foetus between 20 and 32 weeks gestation, and can be irreversibly lost if the cerebral cortex permanently stops working, even if the brainstem continues to function with respirator support.”²²⁰

Warren’s argument is quite plausible because a cardinal requirement which Locke thought is the hallmark of a person’s identity over time is consciousness. Locke may have settled for consciousness as the defining quality of a person’s identity over time since it is intuitively implausible to see a person who possesses the other four qualities of personhood without consciousness. It therefore implies that to aver that a person is conscious, is in other words, to affirm that he/she is rational, self-motivated, able to communicate and possesses self-awareness. To this end, Warren may have listed these other qualities for the sake of emphasis.

Strawson conceives a person from a corporeal stand point. Much as he acknowledged that a person is a conscious being. Strawson defines a “person” as “a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation, etc are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type.”²²¹ Annotating to this, Herbert Feigl holds that where mentalistic terms are appropriate, the basic and underlying reality is mental, and physicalistic terms refer to this mental reality.²²² Jerome A. Shaffer, reflecting on Feigl’s submission reasoned that “Feigl seems to admit a dualism of

attributes, mental and physical. Yet, his is an identity theory both in the sense that the basic subjects of consciousness are bodies and in the sense that certain mentalistic and physicalistic terms have one and the same referent, pointing out that although some of these terms will have a mental referent.²²³ In all of these, the argument seems to deny that personal identity consists in identity of an immaterial substance alone as well as the view that personal identity consists in bodily identity alone. Rather, it is both mental and physical; a sort of a middle approach to the personal identity debate.

3.4.3. The African Notion of a Person

In the African understanding, an individual or person is by nature a social and communal being. Besides these attributes, he possesses other attributes which inevitably constitute his nature. From this African idea/conception, a person then must be understood as possessing not just an ontological status but also moral status and communal status. It is along this light that Menkiti avers thus: “the various societies found in traditional Africa routinely accept this fact that personhood is the sort of thing which has to be attained, and is attained in direct proportion as one participates in communal life through the discharge of the various obligations defined by one’s stations. It is the carrying out of these obligations that transforms one from the it-status of early child-status of later years; marked by a widened maturity of ethical sense— an ethical maturity without which personhood is conceived as eluding one.”²²⁴

In what follows, Africans accord identity to person based on the level of participation in the community life. A person is not viewed as an isolated member of the community; to be relevant as a person and to attain personhood, one must participate in communal life. Hence, Menkiti argues that an individual or person “becomes persons only after a process of incorporation... into this or that community.”²²⁵ The process of incorporation involves performing some rites. Thus, a

person is a person if and only if he has gone through different rites of incorporation. According to Menkiti, a person becomes “a full person in the eyes of the community”, only after undergoing the process of socialization in the African society and going through different rites of incorporation.

Apart from performing these rites, as a requirement to becoming a person, there is also normative requirement. To be a person, one must be a moral agent. Therefore, we can sum up the African understanding of a person in two ways: (i) participation in community life and (ii) properly groomed and living up to the moral values and virtues of the society. Gyekye delineated the moral features of personhood in Akan thought by examining the meaning of the term “person” in Akan language. According to Gyekye, “the word used for “person” in Akan is *onipa*. But this word also means “human being”, and the plural form of it can also mean “people”. Thus, *onipa* is a highly ambiguous word. As with ambiguous words in many other languages, it depends on context for its meaning. Thus, the meaning of the word in reference to “person” can be delineated from the context of its use, and analysis of a concept of a person linked to that meaning can be made.”²²⁶

The ambiguity, in terms of the words used in many cultural settings to refer to the idea of a person beckons for attention and clarity. However, the meaning of the various words is easily deciphered when examined in the context of their usage. There appears to be a common denominator, which cut across the meaning of words in all African cultures, this is that the term “person” is associated with moral norm or behavioural conduct. It is for this reason that the Akan people of Africa made a separation of the understanding of the term “person” from “human being”. According to Gyekye:

when an individual's conduct consistently appears cruel, wicked, selfish, or ungenerous, the Akan would say of that individual that "he is not a person" (*onnye onipa*). Two important things can be said to be implicit in this statement. The first is that, even though that individual is said not to be a person, he is nevertheless acknowledge as a human being, not as a beast or a tree. A clear distinction between the concept of a human being and a concept of a person is thus deeply embedded in that statement: an individual can be a human being without being a person.

Second, implicit in that statement is the emphatic assumption that there are certain basic norms and ideals to which the behaviour of an individual, if he is a person, ought to conform. The language expresses the notion that there are moral virtues that an individual is capable of displaying in his conduct. Considering the situations in which the judgment "he is not a person" is made about individuals, these moral norms and virtues can be said to include kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, and respect and concern for others; in short any action or behaviour conducive to the promotion of the well-being of others. And the reason for that judgment is that that individual's actions and conduct are considered as falling short of the standards and ideals of personhood. I must add, though, that the individual to whom the judgment "he is not a person" is applied would be one whose conduct is known to the community to be generally unethical, not one who occasionally experiences moral lapses or failure of moral commitment. There is no implication, however, that an individual considered "not a person" loses her rights as a human being or that she loses her citizenship or that she ceases to be an object of moral concern from the point of view of other people's treatment of her. Only that she is not a morally worthy individual.²²⁷

What is distinct here is the analysis made between the concept of a "person" and "human being", otherwise, the understanding of a person as a moral agent is also embedded in John Locke's analysis of the idea or concept of a person as a forensic agent; one who is capable of moral worth:

Person, as I take it, is the name for this self. Wherever a man finds what he calls himself, there, I think, another may say is the same person. It is forensic term, appropriating actions and their merit; and so belongs only to intelligent agents, capable of a law, and happiness, and misery. This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness,—whereby it becomes concerned and accountable; owns and imputes to itself past actions, just upon the same ground and for the same reason as it does the present. All which is founded in a concern for happiness, the unavoidable concomitant of consciousness; that which is

conscious of pleasure and pain, desiring that that self that is conscious should be happy. And therefore whatever past actions it cannot reconcile or appropriate to that present self by consciousness, it can be no more concerned in than if they had never been done: and to receive pleasure or pain, i.e. reward or punishment, on the account of any such action, is all one as to be made happy or miserable in its first being, without any demerit at all. For, supposing a man punished now for what he had done in another life, whereof he could be made to have no consciousness at all, what difference is there between that punishment and being created miserable? And therefore, conformable to this, the apostle tells us, that, at the great day, when everyone shall 'receive according to his doings, the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open'. The sentence shall be justified by the consciousness all persons shall have, that they themselves, in what bodies soever they appear, or what substances soever that consciousness adheres to, are the same that committed those actions, and deserve that punishment for them.²²⁸

There seems to be an agreement or consonance in the African understanding of a person and the Western understanding in terms of moral and ethical grounds. Another explicit agreement which resonates in Aristotle's analysis of man and society and also African understanding of person is that "if a human being lives an isolated life, a life detached from the community, he would be described not as a person but as an individual. A life detached from the community would be associated with an egoistic life. An individual detached from the community would not be considered a responsible moral agent. Thus, a distinction is made also between the notion of a person— a concrete being situated in a social context— and that of an individual— a being detached from the community."²²⁹ The schema or logical position is rendered thus, "that: for any *P*, if *P* is a person, then *P* ought to display in his conduct the norms and ideals of personhood."²³⁰

This therefore means that to affirm that "he is a person" means, 'he has good character,' 'he is peaceful— not troublesome', 'he is kind', 'he has respect for others,' 'he is humble,'"²³¹ Thus, a moral conception of personhood is held in African thought: personhood is defined in terms of moral achievement."²³²

3.5. On the Meaning of Consciousness

Adam Zeman noted that the term consciousness is ambiguous to explicate for the reason that it can refer to (i) the waking state; (ii) experience; and (iii) the possession of any mental state. He added that the same applies to self-consciousness particularly with reference to the difficulty or ability to detect our own sensations and recall our recent actions; self-recognition; the awareness of awareness; and self-knowledge in the broadest sense.²³³ The assertion that a person is a conscious being in relation to the above context and the idea of personal identity need further elucidation. It is even more problematic when the term ‘unconscious’ being is used to describe a person or ascribe to a human person. To aver that a person is a conscious being requires us to properly situate the context for which our description or inference is made. It is in the light of this, that this research will exam the term consciousness here briefly.

To begin with, it is germane to ask the question, does consciousness have any concept? In other words, what is the concept of consciousness? According to Zeman, there are two conceptions of consciousness— (a) the etymology of ‘consciousness’ and (b) the meaning of ‘consciousness’. The first, which is the etymological origin of consciousness means that the word ‘consciousness’ has its Latin root in *conscio*, formed by the coalescence of *cum*, meaning ‘with’, and *scio*, meaning ‘know’. In its original Latin sense, to be conscious of something was to share knowledge of it, with someone else, or with oneself. This can be explained using three senses— knowledge with another, knowledge shared with oneself and, simply knowledge.²³⁴

On the meaning of consciousness, Zeman distinguished three principal meanings or senses of consciousness; they are consciousness as the waking state, consciousness as experience and consciousness as mind. These three senses of consciousness provide apt insight into the understanding of consciousness as employed by Locke as a constitutive term in the

determination of a person and the idea of personal identity in general. For this reason, this research shall analyze the three senses of consciousness above beginning with consciousness as the waking state.

(i) Consciousness as the Waking State

This is the capacities or abilities of a person to perceive, interact and communicate with the environment and with others in the integrated manner which wakefulness normally implies.²³⁵

Consciousness, here, is equated with waking state in the sense of one being able to recognize or attain awareness or understanding of others and his/her environment. In other words, it is the awareness we have of others and the environment, especially with the use of our senses. When we are aware of other persons, places, things and our environment in such a manner that we can communicate as well as interact with such using our five senses presupposes that we are in a state of wakefulness or consciousness. "Consciousness in this sense is a matter of degree: a range of conscious states extends from waking through sleep into coma. These states can be defined objectively, using behavioural criteria like those supplied by Glasgow Coma Scale."²³⁶ Thus, we speak of consciousness dwindling, waning, lapsing and recovering; it may be lost, depressed and regained. To be conscious in this sense is to be awake, aroused, alert or vigilant".²³⁷

(ii) Consciousness as Experience

This is somewhat similar to waking state, however it differs in terms of the reference to content of experience. In the normal waking state, one is conscious of things around him; other persons and the environment. These constitute the content of a person's experience. It is the consciousness we have of objects and things which comprise or form the content of experience

from moment to moment: what it feels like to be a certain person now, in a sense in which we suppose there is nothing it feels like to be a stone or lost in dreamless sleep.²³⁸ The content of consciousness which this experience refers to is more inward than the first sense of consciousness which is waking state. Here, focus is on the qualitative and subjective dimension of experience. Because of its subjective nature, philosophers sometimes use the term ‘qualia’ to refer to it.²³⁹

In all, Zeman highlighted consciousness as experience thus:

There is a broad consensus that, in addition to its qualitative character, the following features are central: consciousness is personal, involving a conscious subject with a necessarily limited point of view; its contents are stable for short periods, lasting from hundreds of milliseconds to as few seconds, but characteristically vary over longer intervals. Its contents are unified at any one time; they are continuous over time, in the sense that memory normally allows us to connect consciousness of the past; consciousness is selective, with a foreground and background, and a limited capacity at a given moment; over time, however, it ranges over innumerable contents, with potential contributions from each of the senses, and from all the major psychological processes, including thought, emotion, memory, imagination, language and action planning.²⁴⁰

It is instructive to note that most states of phenomenal experiences are intentional. In the phenomenological sense, consciousness as experience implies reference to an intentional object. Consciousness under this sphere is always directed towards the world, that is, objects or things in the phenomenal world. It is “aspectual”, determined by the perspective which our conscious viewpoint affords.²⁴¹

(iii) Consciousness as Mind

Descartes’ distinctive analysis and division of the human person into body and mind, implies that mind is synonymous with consciousness. However, Zeman’s interpretation of this sense of

consciousness vis-à-vis Descartes' varied remarkably and conversely. According to Zeman, any mental state with a proportional content can be said to be conscious— anything that we believe, hope, fear, intend, expect, desires, etc.²⁴² This is when a person's mental content is pre-occupied or occupied by the believe, hope or expectation he is having about something.

From the preceding analysis, the closest approximation deduction we may arrive to Locke's notion from the above senses of the concept of consciousness is the waking state. For a person to persist therefore from one day to the next, he or she must maintain the same waking state continuously. Coma, which is a state of continuous 'eyes-closed' unconsciousness, in the absence of a sleep-wake cycle²⁴³ is capable of distorting the ability of a person to maintain a continuous waking state that guarantees self persistence overtime.

One of the reasons Locke's theory of personal identity is christened 'psychological' is that, he conceives the idea of a person as consciousness and what is required for the same person to be the same person from one day to the next is that the person must maintain the same consciousness. The difficulty of Locke's theory and the reason why it attracted wide criticism is the idea that consciousness alone is what is capable of uniting the past self or person with the present self or person. Locke emphasized in clear and distinct terms that it is consciousness and consciousness alone that can unite remote existences into one person, not substance in whatever form or manner it is formed. Not even the identity of substance, because one may be experiencing or having different consciousness—one in the day and another in the night. In Locke's term, both consciousnesses are incommunicable and acting on the same body or soul:

Nothing but consciousness can unite remote existences into the same person: the identity of substance will not do it; for whatever substance there is, however framed, without consciousness there is no person: and a

carcass may be a person, as well as any sort of substance be so, without consciousness.

Could we suppose two distinct incommunicable consciousness acting the same body, the one constantly by day, the other by night; and, on the other side, the same consciousness, acting by intervals, two distinct bodies: I ask, in the first case, whether the day and the night—man would not be two as distinct persons as Socrates and Plato? And whether, in the second case, there would not be one person in two distinct bodies, as much as one man is the same in two distinct clothings? Nor is it at all material to say, that this same, and this distinct consciousness, in the cases above mentioned, is owing to the same and distinct immaterial substances, bringing it with them to those bodies; which, whether true or no, alters not the case: since it is evident the personal identity would equally be determined by the consciousness whether that consciousness were annexed to some individual immaterial substance or no. For, granting, that the thinking substance in man must be necessarily supposed immaterial, it is evident that immaterial thinking thing may sometimes part with its past consciousness, and be restored to it again: as appears in the forgetfulness men often have of their past actions; and the mind many times recovers the memory of a past consciousness, which it had lost for twenty years together. Make these intervals of memory and forgetfulness to take their turns regularly by day and night, and you have two persons with the same immaterial spirit, as much as in the former instance two persons with the same body. So that self is not determined by identity or diversity of substance, which it cannot be sure of, but only by identity of consciousness.²⁴⁴

Similarly, what Locke is arguing is that the same consciousness cannot inhere or reside in two substances at the same time or conversely two similar consciousnesses inhering or residing in one substance at the same time. But it is only possible for two consciousnesses to inhere or reside in one substance at different intervals—where this is the case—we have same substance but different persons. Take, for example, the idea that John is a man, if consciousness *A* resides in John in day time and consciousness *B* resides in John at night, following these intervals—while John is just one man or substance, consciousness *A* and *B* are two different persons inhering in John. But a mere look at the material substance named John presupposes that John is one person. Thus, the term person is not to be tied only either to a material substance or a spiritual/immaterial

substance, the soul for example. Locke is saying that though it is common place to link the idea of person to John, but the identity of John overtime is not dependent on his physical/material entity (body) nor spiritual/immaterial entity (soul) but the psychological entity which is consciousness.

Difficulties nevertheless inhere as to what exactly he meant by ‘consciousness’ or by ‘having the same consciousness’? Interpretations vary: consciousness is interpreted as identical to memory, as identical to a first personal appropriation of mental states, and as identical to a personal distinctive experience of the qualitative features of one’s own thinking.²⁴⁵

Popper had attempted to decipher the origin of consciousness in human beings. Popper revealed that consciousness has biological origin; owing to some four biological functions or experiences of a person. As he puts it: “as a wild conjecture I suggest that it is out of four biological functions that consciousness emerges: pain, pleasure, expectation and attention. Perhaps attention emerges out of primitive experiences of pain and pleasure. But attention is, as a phenomenon, almost identical with consciousness: even pain may sometimes disappear if attention is distracted and focused elsewhere.”²⁴⁶

With regard to the question how far can we explain the individual unity of consciousness, or our selfhood, by an appeal to biological situations, i.e. the fact that we are animal, Popper presented three domains that inform or explain the unity of the self or consciousness thus:

(1) the individual organism— the animal— is a unit; (2) each of the various ways of behaving— the items of the behavioural repertoire forming a set of mutually exclusive alternatives; (3) the central organ of control must act as a unit (or rather, it will be more successful if it does). Together these three points (1), (2), and (3), make even of the animal an active, problem solving agent: the animal is always actively attempting to control its

environment, in either a positive sense, or, when it is “passive”, in a negative sense. In the latter case it is undergoing or suffering the actions of an (often hostile) environment that is largely beyond its control. Yet even if it is merely contemplating, it is actively contemplating: it is never merely the sum of its impressions, or of its experiences. Our mind (and, I venture to suggest, even the animal mind) is never a mere “stream of consciousness”, a stream of experiences. Rather, our active attention is focused at every moment on just the relevant aspects of the situation, selected and abstracted by our perceiving apparatus, into which a selection programme is incorporated; a programme which is adjusted to our available repertoire of behavioural responses.”²⁴⁷

Beyond the fact that the view expressed above is contrary to Hume, who saw the self as stream of our experiences or bundle of impressions, it is also pertinent to remark that the integrative unity of the self or consciousness which rest on biological functions sees the self as consciousness, as an individual organism— an animal. Indeed some scholars have remarked that personal identity must be located and traceable only to the human animal. One of the most active proponents of this view is Eric Olson. The fact that consciousness has biological origin, further substantiates one of the positions held by this thesis that an eclectic approach to the problem of personal identity is not only ideal but also may constitute the only apt alternative to ending the sundry controversies plaguing or relating to personal identity debate.

Popper, while alluding to Penfield’s experiment demonstrated that the claim and view that there is no self beyond the stream of our experiences and the claim that the self is only a bundle of impressions is not only refutable but also unfounded. He expressed the argument thus:

Penfield stimulated what he called the “interpretative cortex” of the exposed brain in his patients and thereby managed to make them re-experience most vividly some of their past experiences. Nevertheless, the patients fully retained their awareness that they were lying on the operating table in Montreal. Their consciousness of self was not affected by their perceptual experiences, but was based on their knowledge of the localization of their bodies.

The importance of this localization (of the question “where am I?” on recovering from a fit) is that we cannot act coherently without it. It is part of our self-identity that we try to know where we are, in space and time: that we relate ourselves to our past and the immediate future, with its aims and purposes; and that we try to orientate ourselves in space.²⁴⁸

The consideration of the self as nothing but a bundle of experiences is difficult to defend in the face and understanding of the self as a unity. For example, if I feel pain on my right leg; the way the word “my” is couched to express what I feel is such that lays credence to the unity of consciousness or the self. I will not say “my leg is feeling pains” but that “I am feeling pains”. The same happens when I kick an object; say a stone or a ball. I will not say my leg is kicking the ball but rather that I am kicking or playing football. There is always this reference we make to the “self” intuitively without making reference to one or parts of our body. Our use of language is a pointer to the fact that there is always where we are located, a kind or a sort of a unity that explains our integrative self. It is this self that explains all our experiences and provides a basis for the knowledge and existence of the integrative self and self-identity.

In Popper’s consideration, the knowledge and the unity or the uniqueness of the self and our personal identity is less mysterious when compared to consciousness, life and individualized organisms, but however, he quickly added that the fact that consciousness and intelligence and unity are linked to the biological individual organism is of no surprise at all. He rendered the argument thus:

I do not think that what I have said here or in the preceding sections clears up any mystery; but I do think that we need not regard as mysterious either the individuality, or the unity, or the uniqueness of the self, or our personal identity; at any rate not as more mysterious than the existence of consciousness, and ultimately that of life, and of individualized organisms. The emergence of full consciousness, capable of self-reflection, which seems to be linked to the human brain and to the descriptive function of language, is indeed one of the greatest of miracles. But if we look at the

long evolution of individuation and of individuality, at the evolution of a central nervous system, and at the uniqueness of individuals (due partly to genetic uniqueness and partly to the uniqueness of their experience), then the fact that consciousness (rather than, say, to the germ plasm) does not seem so surprising. For it is in the individual organism that the germ plasm—the genome, the programme for life—has to stand up to tests.²⁴⁹

3.6. Consciousness, Self and Person in Locke and the Determination of Personal Identity.

There is no gainsaying that the self changes. We start as children, we grow up, and we grow old. Yet the continuity of the self ensures that the self remains identical in a sense. And it remains more truly identical than its changing body—these are drawn from Kurt Lewin's 1922 "genidentity". The self changes slowly due to aging, and due to forgetting; and much faster due to learning from experience.²⁵⁰ What is implied here is that there is a self and there is a body. These two entities are different in terms of their functionality. But they however, make up one person or human being. Though the self experiences changes as also the body, it however persists—it is this continuity that ensures that it remains the same.

Factors that normally bring about changes in the self can be highlighted thus; ageing, forgetting and learning from experience. All human beings must age. These changes from birth to death affect the self. Forgetting is usually common to the human person. The brain or memory sometimes is not able to recall or bring to remembrance the events or experiences the self has gone through in the past. This is worse in the case of mental disorder. Sleep, which momentarily interrupts the content or continuity of the self or consciousness, is responsible for forgetfulness in human beings. Learning from experience brings about adjustment in the individual. This adjustment brings about changes in the self. Organisms learn to adapt in order to continually stay alive in their environment. This process of learning to remain alive necessarily affects the human organism and thus causes some changes both in the self and body. These are actually some of the

ways changes are brought about in a human person. How then does Locke's consciousness criterion explain these changes?

David P. Behan interpreted Locke's use of consciousness from two perspectives. He asserted that "when Locke used the word "consciousness" in *Physike*, he meant by it reflexive perception of thinking. When, however, he spoke of consciousness in *Praktike*— i.e., in connection with moral man— concern was added to consciousness."²⁵¹ With respect to the idea of person, Behan noted that "Locke used "person" in two ways within *Praktike*. First, he used "person" to refer to moral man, the individual. Second, he used "person" to refer to what is owned by that individual— his moral property, which I shall call the forensic personality of moral man."²⁵²

Accentuating further Behan noted that:

These two concepts are reflected in Locke's two uses of the word "person". Used substantively, "person" refers to a moral man, i.e., an "independent and fundamentally unchangeable individuality." In its second use, however, "person" refers to the forensic personality of moral man established through "social relationship and voluntary activity". "Persona", related to "prosopon", carries with it the implication of a role one plays as agent within community. The person as agent stands in relation both to other members of the community and to the laws of the community. In another sense, "person" refers to the individual accountability— the forensic personality— of the two person as agent.²⁵³

How 'consciousness', 'person' and 'self' determine personal identity may be inferred from Behan's assertion that "the problem of personal identity for Locke is the first person problem of how a moral man becomes accountable to himself for his substances, thoughts, and actions. In Locke's words, it is the problem of how the substances, thoughts, and actions of natural man come to be owned (morally) by moral man— how what is his becomes and over time continues to be *his* to him. And the problem is solved by Locke by appealing to concerned

consciousness.”²⁵⁴ In which case, “... concerned consciousness provides the basis for moral ownership, and moral ownership is for Locke, a necessary and sufficient condition for accountability.”²⁵⁵

Sequel to the above, Locke made a distinction between a man drunk and a man sober as different persons. Locke demonstrated further the short-comings inherent in human laws where a person (understood as consciousness) who knew nothing about what its current body did previously with the old self (consciousness), is made to answer for them. As a result, Locke indicted any human justice system that will be unable to suitably make a distinction or apportion reward or punishment done precisely by a person other than make another suffer for what he knows nothing about. He vilified any act that will punish and take a man drunk and a man sober as the same person and a man awake and a man asleep as the same person. He argues that what sleeping Socrates did for example, Socrates awake should not be answerable for, vice versa. He renders the argument thus:

But is not a man drunk and sober the same person? Why else is he punished for the fact he commits when drunk, though he be never afterwards conscious of it? Just as much the same person as a man that walks, and does other things in his sleep, is the same person, and is answerable for any mischief he shall do in it. Human laws punish both, with a justice suitable to their way of knowledge;— because, in these cases, they cannot distinguish certainly what is real, what counterfeit: and so the ignorance in drunkenness or sleep is not admitted as a plea. But in the Great day, wherein the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, it may be reasonable to think, no one shall be made to answer for what he knows nothing of; but shall receive his doom, conscience accusing or excusing him.²⁵⁶

The ensuing paradox, arising from Locke's assertion above is: if indeed the sober man and the drunk man are different persons, on the day of judgment, who gets to keep the body—the drunk man or the sober man?

In conclusion, it is clearly the case that John Locke's idea of a person and his theory of personal identity which was developed to justify the continuity of the self face significant problem(s) and as pointed out; many of these issues have been disputed by the *physicalist* and the somatic criterion of personal identity. Though they equally have their own problems, in that they try to reduce consciousness and mental phenomenon to physical acts, this has been argued to be intuitively implausible. Besides, some of the theories provided a rather subjective approach to the understanding of personal identity debate, especially the ones offered by M. Schechman, K. Korsgaard, and C. Rovane, instead of the standard objective theories.

The idea of "person" therefore ought not to be conceived subjectively because we are not strictly what we experience or think. A human person or being is more than what he or she thinks— in a factual sense; following the doctrine of intentionality — which states that every mental act possesses content; consequently, a person is not only mental act but also content of mental act. Hence, a person is both consciousness and content of consciousness. If this view is sustained, then it is admissible to perceive a person's identity both mentally and physically. The justification is that there exists theories buttressing the physical nature of man and there exists also theories buttressing the mental nature of man. These theories neither sufficiently or wholly affirm nor also sufficiently or wholly deny the physical and mental nature of man. The point being made here is that the idea of person and his/her identity should be objectified.

In what follows, it seems no theories have been successfully developed to explain in one fell-swoop or full glance the nature of man and by extension it will be impossible to ascertain clearly which theory of personal identity—*physicalism*, psychological theory, soul theory etc is capable of re-identification of the self. The thesis submission is that problems of personal identity may best be approached on one's contextual systematic and coherent belief or philosophy. A philosopher's background is imperative and necessary in the understanding of the personal identity view that he or she holds or upholds. The point being made here is that there is no single approach to resolving the issue of personal identity. It all depends on the philosopher's philosophical and conceptual orientation. This is akin to Paul Feyerabend's view of science and the post-modernist thought— that there is no objective truth in science; that all we have are truths that are relative. Thus, truth in science is relative, there is no objectivity in science and there is no absolute truth. So also, there is no absolute approach to the view of personal identity, there is no objective approach or claim; all the various approaches are germane in their own rights—they methodologically and conceptually provide plausible explanations to the view of personal identity. Each of the views is fundamental and germane. Thus, an eclectic view or conception of the self may be the ideal approach. This is not to ignore the short-comings other theories have provided but they do not sufficiently dispense with the merits of the psychological criterion of personal identity.

In all, we see that the idea of the self, person and consciousness examined above differs from one conceptual and cultural context to another. It cannot be straightforwardly ascertained that Locke's idea of the self, person and consciousness reflect the above meanings and conceptions. Thus, this raises a paradox. It is unclear what exactly Locke meant by consciousness, self and person. It is even more problematic because the idea of person and self held by the African

world-view is somewhat a contradiction to Locke's conception. For instance, the Africans conceive a person to be a combination of matter and spirit; that is, body and soul or spirit, whereas, for Locke the idea of person arises from his idea of consciousness. Another point of divergence is Locke's distinction between the idea of man and person. For the Africans there is really no clear distinction from the idea of person and the idea of man. More so, while the Africans, especially the Akan people of Ghana maintained a distinction between the idea of person from human being, Locke was not quite assertive of this.

However, there appears to be some similarities between Locke's and African conception of person. Both accept that a person is a moral being, one who is capable of taking decision and distinguishing what is right from what is wrong and taking responsibility for his actions. Both believe that a person cannot evade his/her moral consequences. Thus, the moral consideration of the idea of person is maintained by both. What also somehow appears common to both is the idea of the self or person as metaphysical entity. Though, this is somewhat implicit in Locke's theory, some scholars have tried to remove any metaphysical consideration from Locke's conception of the self or person.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL IDENTITY: THEORIES AND COUNTER THEORIES

In the last chapter, the research has sufficiently examined John Locke's theory of personal identity and the notion of a person, self and consciousness. The aim in this chapter is to focus on the essential meaning of personal identity and the examination of the most basic and most recent theories and counter theories of personal identity. This is germane for two reasons— first, the discussion of what we really are (either as a metaphysical being or a material being) is still an on-going and more recent debates and arguments have emerged to explain the dynamic nature of the human person from where Locke left it. Secondly, the lack of apparent settlement/conclusion of the issue of whether the human nature is fixed or not. Without sufficiently delineating these two, it would be difficult to ascertain if Locke's idea of consciousness, self and person clearly constitute the identity of person.

For this reason, it has been argued that “if ... our nature is not fixed and we can create, at least in part, who we are, then personhood and personal identity should be approached more as open-ended project than as realities determined by factors independent of the choices we make.”²⁵⁷ Until we have successfully resolved whether the human nature is fixed or not, we may not successfully come to terms with what personality the human person is and why Locke thought it to be consciousness. However, this thesis is not aimed at resolving the precise nature of the human being; rather it is aimed at analyzing Locke's idea of consciousness, the person and the self, to determine the sustainability or not of his theory of personal identity.

We must bear in mind that in a way the problem of personal identity may be seen as the search for the criteria of identity of persons. In other words, what criteria best explain the identity

conditions of persons? What criteria best re-identifies a person? Under what condition(s) can a person be distinguished from non-person? Burn explains the crux of the matter and the quest of the philosophers in the field of personal identity thus: “it is the criterion of personal identity in the sense of the necessary and sufficient conditions of personal identity that philosophers are seeking.”²⁵⁸ Thus, in this chapter, an attempt will be made to succinctly conceptualize the sundry theories of personal identity. First, the research will begin by examining what personal identity is?

A concise look at the meaning of personal identity will in no small measure make us appreciate John Locke’s stand-point and importantly, the fact that other scholars have approached it from different perspectives. Ontologically, to assert that a person is composed of this idea or that idea requires a meticulous analysis. More so, the emerging debate on transgender and experiences of personal transformation calls for serious re-vision of our idea of who and what a person is, that is, both metaphysical and physical stand-points must be well considered if we are to make progress. It is for this reason we are going to argue in this thesis that mental configuration and consciousness approach alone in the determination of a person’s identity as Locke would make us accept does not guarantee and exhaust the problematic inherent in conceptualizing and explaining the change a person is capable of surviving.

More so, relying on the argument of the *physicalism* approach proponents of personal identity neither resolves the same problematic nor apparently explicates the changes humans are capable of surviving. Although the human’s five senses—touch, sight, taste, hearing and smelling are somewhat indications that he/she is a physical being yet the mental component of the human being quickly calls or draws our attention to the fact that a person is not completely material.

This is to an extent true “because to be a person is to at once and inextricably both a biological entity and an individual with a mental, moral, and social life, experiences of personal transformation often has concomitant effects on one’s nature as a physical being.”²⁵⁹

A philosopher’s conception of a person and by extension the persisting nature of a human person and more so of a non-human person are to a large extent depended on the school of thought and philosophical orientation or background of the philosopher. Little wonder why there are divergent theories of personal identity. These theories are of large-scale proportions, embedded here are also other micro-theories. Before the research takes a look at some of these theories, attempt will be made to provide a rational conceptualization of what personal identity is, by dissecting each word and analyzing them.

4.1. What is Personal Identity?

A conceptual clarification is necessary in order to illuminate or reinforce the meaning of the terms, “personal” and “identity”. The term ‘personal’ implies or connotes something subjective, (in contrast to inter-subjectivity) either of a person’s attributes or general characteristics. Similarly, the word ‘personal’ is sometimes taken to mean individual’s possessive qualities. These qualities define the humanity or *beingness* of a particular human being. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, the term “personal” means ‘belonging or relating to a particular person’, ‘made or designed to be used by one person’. It also means ‘of, relating to, or affecting a particular person’, ‘relating to the person or body’, ‘relating to an individual or an individual’s character, conduct, motives, or private affairs’. In the whole, it is what constitutes a person’s property; either private or personal.

The term, “identity” on the other hand, has French and Latin origins. In French, it is *identité* and in Latin, *identitas* and equivalent to the Latin *identidem* (“sameness”), which resulted from combining *idem* (“same”) with *-ti-* (?) – yielding *identi-* – and *-tas* (suffix equivalent to the English “-ty”), this term denotes the relation each thing bears just to itself.²⁶⁰ Both literally mean ‘same and same’, i.e., “is the relation each thing bears only to itself.”²⁶¹ Logically, going by this definition, *p* is *p*, *q* is *q*, *r* is *r*, no more, no less. That is, we cannot say *p* is *p* at one time and at another time *p* is not-*p* or that *p* is something else. Metaphysically, the term identity refers to the specific, unique or peculiar nature of a thing or its essence that distinguishes one thing from another, i.e., it refers to the idea of selfhood based on the uniqueness and individuality which makes a person distinct from others. It is the defining qualities of a thing. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, it means ‘sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing’ or ‘the distinguishing character or personality of an individual’ or ‘the condition of being the same with something described or asserted’.

In psychology, identity refers to the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expressions that make a person (self-identity) or group.²⁶² Following from this, Weinreich defines identity thus: “A person’s identity is defined as the totality of one’s self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future.”²⁶³ In similar vein, Leary & Tangney declares that: “identity refers to the capacity for self-reflection and the awareness of self.”²⁶⁴

John Locke, in his book *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in Four Books, Chapter XXVII, “Of Identity and Diversity”, explicates the meaning of identity thus:

Another occasion the mind often takes of comparing, is the very being of things, when, considering anything as existing at any determined time and place, we compare it with itself existing at another time, and thereon form the ideas of identity and diversity. When we see anything to be in any place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) that it is that very thing, and not another which at that same time exists in another place, how like and undistinguishable so ever it may be in all other respects: and in this consists IDENTITY, when the ideas it is attributed to vary not at all from what they were that moment wherein we consider their former existence, and to which we compare the present.²⁶⁵

Two things come out clearly from the above quotation. 1. Identity is formed by the mind comparing things at any determined time and place. 2. In all respects; the things being compared must be alike and undistinguishable from each other, i.e., in *stricto sensus*, identity is when a thing varies not or remains the same (in all respects) when we compare its former existence with the present. As a slight departure from the above definition, Slagel Jamie's definition is quite instructive: I take identity to refer to personal identity as opposed to the importance of identity of objects. Therefore, by "our identity", I am referring to our mental selves as opposed to our physical bodies or brains."²⁶⁶ He went on to clarify the sense with which he used the term asserting that: "identity is meant not in the sense of characteristics, but in the sense of the essential quality that makes me "me". When someone points to a school photo and says "that's me", what about the "photo me" has been maintained such that "current me" is the same as that past "me". The something which links a present object to a past or future object is identity."²⁶⁷

Though a conceptualization of the term identity has been provided above, there remains a fundamental problem. The notion of identity gives rise to many philosophical problems—identity of indiscernibles and personal identity. The identity of indiscernibles is an ontological principle that states that there cannot be separate objects or entities that have all their properties in common. That is, entities x and y are identical if every predicate possessed by x is also

possessed by y and vice versa; to suppose two things indiscernible is to suppose the same thing under two names.²⁶⁸ While personal identity relates to personal identity over time—what has to be the case for a person x at one time and a person y at a later time to be one and the same person?

It is instructive to point out that the philosophical concept of identity is distinct from the notion of the term as use in psychology and the social sciences. The philosophical concept concerns a relation, specifically, a relation that x and y stand in if, and only if they are one and the same thing, or identical to each other (i.e. if, and only if x is equal to y).²⁶⁹ On the other hand, sociological notion of identity has to do with a person's self-conception, social presentation, and more generally, the aspects of a person that make them unique, or qualitatively different from others (e.g. cultural identity, gender identity, national identity, online identity and processes of identity formation).²⁷⁰

The term identity has been largely discussed or approached in metaphysics, being one of the branches of philosophy, such that we talk of metaphysics of identity. It is in this regard that metaphysicians, and sometimes philosophers of language and mind often raise or ask the following questions—what does it mean for an object to be the same as itself? If x and y are identical (are they the same thing), must they always be identical? Are they necessarily identical? What does it mean for an object to be the same, if it changes over time? If an object's parts are entirely replaced over time, as in the Ship of Theseus example, in what way is it the same?²⁷¹ Let us use the last question to illustrate the relevance of the paradoxical nature of the metaphysics of identity. The ship of Theseus— or Theseus's paradox, in the metaphysics of identity is a thought

experiment that raises the question of whether a ship that has had all of its parts or components replaced remains fundamentally the same object. The thought experiment is presented thus:

First, suppose that the famous ship sailed by the hero Theseus in a great battle has been kept in a harbor as a museum piece. As the years go by some of the wooden parts begin to rot and are replaced by new ones. After a century or so, all of the parts have been replaced. Is the “restored” ship the same object as the original?

Second, suppose that each of the removed pieces were stored in a warehouse, and after the century, technology develops to cure their rotting and enable them to be put back together to make a ship. Is this “reconstructed” ship the original ship? And if so, is the restored ship in the harbor still the original ship too?²⁷²

To address the difficulty or paradox in the thought experiment presented above, the term identity has been explicated in sundry ways to mean different things. The first proposed solution is to deny the idea of identity over time, that is, to say that there is no identity over time. It states that: “two ships, while identical in all other ways, are not identical if they exist at two different times. Each ship-at-time is a unique “event”. So even without replacement of parts, the ships in the harbour are different at each time.”²⁷³

Heraclitus was the first Greek philosopher to introduce this solution when he propounded the doctrine that everything is in a state of flux and particularly the emphasis by his disciple, as described in Plato’s *Theaetetus*, ‘You cannot step twice into the same river, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.’²⁷⁴ Similarly, Arius Didymus quoted him as saying “upon those who step into the same rivers, different and again different waters flow.”²⁷⁵ Technically speaking, it means nothing can be the same over time, since everything changes ceaselessly. It was in this sense Heraclitus denies the idea of identity over time. However, Heraclitus’ claim about stepping twice into the same river has been disputed. Plutarch disputed it insisting that it cannot be done because “it scatters and again comes together, and approaches and recedes.”²⁷⁶

The second attempt to resolve the thought experiment is the view that continual identity over time is via final cause. Aristotle in his philosophical system furnished us with four ideas of causes. He wrote that “we do not have knowledge of a thing until we have grasped its why, that is to say, its cause.”²⁷⁷ He held that his four “causes” provided an analytical scheme of general applicability.²⁷⁸ The word “cause” is also regarded as *hyle*.²⁷⁹ These are formal cause, material cause, final cause and efficient cause. By analyzing these causes, we may arrive at solving the paradox. The formal cause or ‘form’ of a thing is the design of a thing. In other words, it is the shape or pattern of a thing. The material cause is the stuff which a thing is made, that is the raw material out of which an object is composed. The final cause is the end of or the intended purpose of a thing. It is also defined “as that for the sake of which a thing is done.”²⁸⁰ The ship of Theseus would have the same ends, those being, mystically, transporting Theseus, and politically, convincing the Athenians that Theseus was once a living person, though its material cause would change with time.²⁸¹ The efficient cause is how and by whom a thing is made. It is the designer or maker of a thing. Thus in the case of the ship of Theseus, the workers who built the ship in the first place could have used the same tools and techniques to replace the planks in the ship.²⁸²

Aristotle therefore uses the idea of formal cause—by which he means the “what-it-is” of a thing to resolve the paradox. He illustrated it thus: “so the ship of Theseus is the ‘same’ ship, because the formal cause, or design, does not change, even though the matter (material) used to construct it may vary with time. In the same manner, for Heraclitus’s paradox, a river has the same formal cause, although the material cause (the particular water in it) changes with time, and likewise for the person who steps in the river.”²⁸³ This Aristotle’s position has been attacked by indirect proof. Using arguments such as “suppose two ships are built using the same design and exist at the

same time until one sinks the other in battle. Clearly the two ships are not the same ship even before, let alone after, one sinks the other, and yet the two have the same formal cause; therefore, formal cause cannot by itself suffice to determine an object's identity" or "[...] therefore, two objects' or object-instances' having the same formal cause does not by itself suffice to make them the same object or prove that they are the same object."²⁸⁴

Another attempt at resolving the paradox is to see it as 'one ship in two locations'. The argument is rendered thus: "in this theory, both the reconstructed and restored ships claim identity with the original, as they can both trace their histories back to it. As such they are both identical with the original. As identity is a transitive relation, the two ships are therefore also identical with each other, and a single ship existing in two locations at the same time."²⁸⁵ This may however negate one of the laws of thought, particularly the law of contradiction or non-contradiction. A thing cannot exist at two different places at the same time. But the idea is that both ships though existing in two different locations at the same time, they are traceable to the original. This is the sense at which the solution may be allowed.

Furthermore, another attempt at solving the paradox is to perceive the 'two ships with non-transitive identity'. The argument is rendered thus: "in this theory, the reconstructed and restored ships are considered to be separate objects, both are identical to the original, but they are not identical to each other. This requires us to drop the transitivity of identity, i.e. deny that "A=B" and "A=C" entails "B=C."²⁸⁶ In a different vein, the law of identity which originated from classical antiquity, from the formulation of Gottfried Leibniz holds that x is the same as y if and only if every predicate true of x is true of y as well. Hence, what are those things or elements that

can make a thing to remain the same, steady and consistent throughout time in order for it to retain its identity that makes it that thing in relation to everything else?

In all, identity proper or strict identity is numerical identity, typically distinguished from exact similarity, which is qualitative identity, whereby two or more exactly similar objects are copies of each other, yet are more than one; hence, not identical. The notion or idea of numerical identity is also different from *haecceity*, from the Latin *haecceitas*, “thisness” or “Specificity,” which means either the fundamental actuality of an existent entity, or an individual essence, i.e. a feature an object has necessarily, or without which it would cease to exist.²⁸⁷ This leads us to consider two types of identity— qualitative identity and numerical identity.

4.1.1. Qualitative Identity

This is a type of identity that is different from numerical identity. Things with qualitative identity share properties, so things can be more or less qualitatively identical.²⁸⁸ This means two things that are exactly similar. Qualitatively, a thing or person may change over time. These changes may be seen in size, shape, appearance etc. Things that are qualitatively identical share their qualitative properties with each other, but they are separate objects nevertheless.²⁸⁹ It has been argued that “this way of looking at identity is not “guaranteed” in the same way that numerical identity is. Numerically you are always one regardless of what changes internally.”²⁹⁰

Going by this meaning, we can say that Boerbel and Rottweiler are qualitatively identical because they share the same property of being a dog. Two things are qualitatively identical when they are exactly similar. In this sense, identical twins may be qualitatively identical—there may be no telling them apart—but not numerically identical, as there are two of them: that’s what

makes them twins.²⁹¹ G. E. Flood defines qualitative identity as being of the same origin, for example, two identical copies of your original birth certificate, or two red crayons of the same origin.²⁹² Similarly, this refers to items that are identical in definite or certain descriptive aspects.

4.1.2. Numerical Identity

This identity requires absolute, or total, qualitative identity, and can only hold between a thing and itself.²⁹³ It is strictly being one and the same thing. Its name implies that it is the only identity relation in accordance with which we can properly count (or number) things: x and y are to be properly counted as one just in case they are numerically identical. It can be characterized as the relation everything has to itself and to nothing else. Usually it is defined as the equivalence relation (or: the reflexive relation) satisfying Leibniz's law, the principle of the indiscernibility of identical, that if x is identical with y then everything true of x is true of y .²⁹⁴ The explanation provided by Vishal V. Shekhar about the differences between qualitative identity and numerical identity is apt:

The question is about numerical identity. To say that this and that are numerically identical is to say that they are one and the same: one thing rather than two. This is different from qualitative identity. Things are qualitatively identical when they are exactly similar. Identical twins may be qualitatively identical—there may be no telling them apart—but not numerically identical, as there are two of them: that's what makes them twins. A past or future person need not be, at that past or future time, exactly like you are now in order to be you—that is, in order to be numerically identical with you. You don't remain qualitatively the same throughout your life. You change: you get bigger or smaller; you learn new things and forget others; and so on. So the question is not what it takes for a past or future being to be you, as opposed to someone or something other than you.²⁹⁵

Numerical identity means one thing rather than two, that is, one and the same. In this sense “a past/future person does not have to be exactly the same as you are now (in terms of action,

thought, opinion etc) to be numerically identical with you, however at the same time, someone who is exactly similar to you may not be numerically identical to you.”²⁹⁶ Thus, “as long as I continue to exist at all I necessarily remain numerically the same.” Based on this idea of numerical identity, nothing can become something different than what it already is. One thing cannot become two separate things it is just the “logic of identity.”²⁹⁷

It should be noted that the issue of personal identity is not about qualitative identity but numerical identity. In personal identity debate we are not asking questions about two similar things or entities and how they are alike, rather it is a question of how a thing at one time is the same thing at another time. To recast the point in another way, what does the person I am necessarily consist of from one day to the next? What would make me as a married man now the same as the bachelor who existed ten years ago? These questions concern numerical identity and not qualitative identity. Hence, personal identity is at the heart of numerical identity. It explicates the meaning of identity thus: “Necessarily, for any x , if x is a person at t and something y exists at t^* , $x=y$ if and only if x at t and y at t^* stand in relation R , where R is the relation preferred by the particular theory.”²⁹⁸

The point being made here is that this definition of personal identity provides a criterion of numerical identity of persons. It states under what condition(s) a person identified at one time is the same entity as a person identified at another time, as well as implies answers to the questions of when persons begin to exist, what changes they can persist, and when they cease to exist.²⁹⁹ It is important to clarify this. Having sufficiently explicated and conceptualized the meaning of the term identity, it is apt to ask what personal identity is?

Simply put, personal identity intuitively entails the absence of change or variation relating to a particular person, such that the person's character, traits, desires, feelings, thoughts or personality remains the same from time to time. This means a person at time t_1 remains and is the same person at time t_2 in as much as both possess same consciousness and one is annexed to the other. This is the psychological approach view. The *physicalism* view takes personal identity as our identity through time consisting in the identity of our bodies. By and large, the attempt to explicate or comprehend personal identity in relation to time is referred to as the persistence question—the relevant questions include: is it possible to remain always the same person? What changes? What does stay the same mean? In what way do you relate to yourself now that makes you, you?³⁰⁰

As an important aspect of the personal identity debate, the persistent question is roughly: what is necessary and sufficient for a past or future being to be someone existing now, and then describe someone or something existing at another time? Then we can ask whether we are referring twice to one thing, or once to each of two things.³⁰¹ This persistent question is critical for the following reasons:

What does it takes for a person to persist from one time to another—to continue existing rather than cease to exist? What sorts of adventures is it possible in the broadest sense of the word 'possible', for you to survive, and what sort of event would necessarily bring your existence to an end? What determines which past or future being is you? Suppose you point to a child in an old class photograph and say, "that's me." What makes you that one, rather than one of the others? What is it about the way she relates then to you as you are now that makes her you? For that matter, what makes it the case that anyone at all who existed back then is you? This is sometime called the question of personal identity over time. An answer to it is an account of our persistence conditions.³⁰²

Whether humans will persist or not depends on or arises out of the hope that we might continue to exist when we die. Many world religions, particularly Christianity and Islam as well as many theological-cum-philosophical theories share this sentiment. According to them, biological death is not the termination of life or human's existence. Life actually continues after death. Then it raises the question, suppose I survive death, how would the person in this world or the next (that survives death) really resemble me? How would both of us relate to me as me now in order to be me, rather than someone else?

Furthermore, it raises the question, what does it take for a past or future being to be me? Do people have the same persistence condition? Take, for example, if what it takes for us to persist might depend on whether we are biological organisms or thinking beings, this would be different if we are referring to immaterial people such as gods or angels, as what it takes for them to persist might be different from what it takes for a human person to persist. Suppose the person that will eventually survive death will be immaterial or incorporeal being (soul or spirit) how will it be me now in this world that is material or embodied being? This takes us to the persistence question

4.1.3. The Persistence Question in Personal Identity

The persistence question is often taken to ask what it takes for the same person to exist at two different times. The most common formulation is something like this: If a person x exists at one time and a person y exists at another time, under what possible circumstances is the case that x is y ?³⁰³ This practically concerns “identity over time” because to say that x is y is to say that x and y are one—that is, numerical identity. Another formulation is this: If a person x exists at one time and something y exists at another time, under what possible circumstances is it the case that x is

y? These two formulations may look the same but on a closer inspection we see that they refer to different accounts of personal identity theory. Eric T. Olson stated the argument thus:

Those who ask 1 (*the first formulation*) rather than 2 (*the second formulation*) usually do so because they assume that every person is a person **essentially**: nothing that is in fact a person could possibly exist without being a person. (By contrast, something that is in fact a student could exist without being a student: no student is essentially a student, and it would be a mistake to inquire about the conditions of student identity by asking what it takes for a student existing at one time to be identical to a student existing at another time.) This claim, “person essentialism”, implies that whatever is a person at one time must be a person at every time when she exists, making the two questions equivalent. Person essentialism is a controversial metaphysical claim, however. Combined with one of the usual accounts of personhood, it implies that you could not have been an embryo: at best you may have come into being when the embryo that gave rise to you developed certain mental capacities. Nor could you come to be a human vegetable. For that matter, it rules out our being biological organisms, since no organism is a person essentially: every human organism starts out as an embryo and may end up in a vegetative state. Whether we are organisms or were once embryos are substantive questions that an account of personal identity ought to answer, not matters to be settled in advance by the way we frame the debate. So it would be a mistake to assume person essentialism at the outset. Asking question 1 prejudices the issue by favouring some accounts of what we are, and what it takes for us to persist, over others. It rules out both animalism and the brute-physical view... It is like asking which man committed the crime before ruling out the possibility that it might have been a woman (*italics mine*).³⁰⁴

There are two versions or ways of looking at the persistence question—perdurantism and endurantism. Perdurantism or perdurance theory is a philosophical theory of persistence and identity.³⁰⁵ It is the view that an individual has distinct or separate temporal parts throughout its existence. It is usually presented as the antipode to endurantism, the view that an individual is wholly present at every moment of its existence.³⁰⁶

Endurantism or endurance theory on the other hand is a philosophical theory of persistence and identity. According to the endurantist view, material objects are persisting three-dimensional

individuals wholly present at every moment of their existence, which goes with an A-theory of time—the description of the temporal ordering relation among events which together with the B-theory of time was introduced by the Scottish idealist philosopher John McTaggart in 1908 as part of his argument for the unreality of time.³⁰⁷ This conception of an individual as always present is opposed to perdurantism or four dimensionalism, which maintains that an object is a series of temporal parts or stages, requiring a B-theory of time.³⁰⁸

The theories of endurantism and perdurantism— going by the use of the terms— “endure” and “perdure” to differentiate two ways in which an entity or an object can be considered or thought to persist is traceable to the work of American philosopher David Kellogg Lewis (1986). Accordingly, “[...] something *persists* iff, somehow or other, it exists at various times”.³⁰⁹ On the other hand, objects endure iff they exist at more than one time.³¹⁰

Given the undeniable reality of change that takes place from the day a person is born, until the time he or she dies, it would, the discussions of personal identity are exercises in futility. The implication of this is that, and what makes the discussion fashionable from the time or moment a person is born and to the time he or she dies, is that he or she is not the same person but many persons. The reason is that there are times we are unable to remember or annexe our actions to our past experiences. Then, if we accept we are different persons, this raises serious (moral and religious) problems and if we accept we are not then it raises the problem; how do we justify or explain the apparent change (bodily or psychologically) a person undergoes from time to time?

It is for this reason we are going to examine the claims and counter claims of the sundry theories of personal identity. Some of the theories naturally spring up from the study of the human nature and traits composition. Other theories certainly arose as an attempt to disprove or counter

existing theories of personal identity. What is important and instructive is that these theories in one way or the other provided a rational explication of the identity of the human person, either biologically, psychologically, physically or a combination of two of the aforementioned. This research shall therefore delve into the analysis of these theories, examining their merits and demerits.

4.2. Theories of Personal Identity

Chief among the theories of personal identity to consider here is the body or *physicalism* (physical connections) approach theory which sees the continuity of the body as the hallmark and defining essence of the human person or self. Next is the psychological approach, which takes consciousness or memory as the necessary and sufficient condition for the persistence of the self through time, the *animalism* theory or biological criterion/theory and the middle theory which states that the body and mind are necessary and sufficient conditions for determining the personal identity of a human person.

4.2.1. Physicalism Theory

This is the view that the functioning human body determines the identity of a person. This is purely a materialistic approach to the problem of personal identity. The theory emphasizes the biological or physical relations which is believed determines whether an individual persists over time. Gorkum's illustration is very apt. According to these theories:

What determine whether an individual persists over time are physical (usually biological) relations. A person A is identical to a person B because they are linked through a continuous chain of physical relations. For instance, according to one prominent theory, what determines whether one individual is the same individual as another is that they have the same body; according to another, what matters is that they are the same biological organism, the same human animal. What matters in these

theories, in short, are physical (biological) links, not psychological connections.³¹¹

From Gorkum's analysis above, it means there is more than one version of the physical theory. In fact, it is broadly divided into two parts—the body criterion and the somatic criterion. This research shall analyze each of these beginning with the body criterion.

4.2.1 (a). Bodily Criterion

The bodily criterion holds that the *spatio*-temporal continuity of a functioning human body constitutes personal identity.³¹² Advocates of this thought are Williams (1956-7; 1970) and Thomson (1997). For them the cardinal requirement for personal identity is the functioning human body. A person stage-A at t_1 is the same as a person stage-B at t_2 if both possess or have resemblance of the same body. Bleich while reflecting on Rashi's argument states that:

Personal identity is a product of a cause and effect relationship. Change certainly does occur in the course of human development and maturation but where there is no baby, there would be no adolescent, where there is no adolescent, there would be no adult. The baby, in a very significant sense, is the cause of the adolescent and the adolescent is the cause of the adult. That causal nexus gives rise both to personal identity and to identity as a member of a species because, despite any physical change that may occur, the cause is always present in its effect. Accordingly, the mother is present in her offspring and hence the offspring shares in the species of its progenitor.³¹³

Though the argument seems to fall into what Martin & Barresi (2003) called the simple view of personal identity relation, the cause and effect relationship introduced into the argument to defend the bodily criterion is superbly ingenious.

By and large, the hallmark and first view of our identity is our body. This is a sensory perception of the self. It goes with the empiricists' tradition that "nothing in the intellect or mind that was not first on the senses." This implies that we must first observe and experience the body before we can cognize or innately experience the self. The inner experience(s) of an individual or being is not what appears first to the senses. Virtually, every object or thing in the cosmic world are first and foremost perceived by the empirical senses. They are first known *a posteriori*. From these experiences of physical objects through contact of the object's corporeal configuration or body, the mind begins to form or have idea of the object's identity. Hence, the body as the basis of our identity is almost intuitively plausible because it is the commonest and easiest way to identify a human being and to distinguish him or her from others. That a person can persist over time without the body has been denied by this criterion. That there is an increase or a decrease in size of the body structure is not sufficient to deny that the body is something that can persist over time. Thus, to answer the question— what does being the person or being that you are from one day to the next necessarily consist of may be answered by referring to the body as means of the continuity of the self.

The next crucial question is: what change(s) can the body survive? Is there something about the body that remains or that is unaltered over time? Is it the case that when a person experiences increase or decrease in the size of his body structure, the person ceases or stops existing? However, these questions seem to have been dispensed with or to put it in another way has been sufficiently answered on the grounds that the *spatio*-temporal continuity of a functioning human body constitutes personal identity.³¹⁴ This view has been robustly canvassed by Williams (1956-7; 1970) and Thomson (1997). The cardinal point of their argument as we shall discuss later is

that the functioning human body is necessary and sufficient to constitute personal identity. It follows that we are nothing outside of our body.

In philosophy, some of the post Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenologists, especially Maurice Merleau-Ponty has described the body as an essential instrument for the cognition/perception and understanding of human experiences. In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty argues that our physical body is not experienced by us as an object among other objects in space, rather as humans we have been inserted into the world in a very special, organic way, determined by the nature of our sensory and motor capacities to perceive the world in a specific way.³¹⁵ He arrived at this by drawing on Husserl's distinction between the inanimate physical body and the living animate body. He argued further that there is no distinction between my subsistence—that is, the being that will live now and survive the next day and my embodiment. As Moran describes it:

Merleau-Ponty's notion of one's own or proper body (*le corps propre*) has some anticipations in Bergson's discussion of the body in the opening chapter of *Matter and Memory*, in Marcel's discussion in his *Metaphysical Journal* of the manner in which I am my body as opposed to having a body (PP 174n.; 203n.), and seems especially to be a critical meditation on Sartre's chapter on the body in *Being and Nothingness* (BN 303-359) where Sartre uses the verb 'to exist' in a transitive manner to form such novel expressions as "I exist my body" (BN 329; 378), "I live my body" (BN 325; 373), to show that there is no separation between my existence and my embodiment.³¹⁶

In a rather more plausible way, Gabriel Marcel's phenomenological description of the body as entity that makes me 'me' and not something I possess, a sort of 'ownership' or object, distinctly captures the imperativeness and role of the body in the determination of personal identity. Sweetman presented this argument thus:

Marcel argued that people's relationships to their own bodies is not one of typical "ownership", and so the fact of human embodiment presents a difficulty for any philosophy, such as Cartesianism, that wishes to place the fact of embodiment in doubt. It is thus incorrect to understand embodiment in terms of ownership, or to say that people "possess" their bodies as instruments; it is more accurate to say instead that "I am my body," by which Marcel meant that one cannot look upon one's body as an object or as a problem to be solved, because the logical detachment that is required to do so cannot be achieved. Indeed, as soon as I consider my body as an object, it ceases to be "my body", because the nature of conceptual thought requires detachment from the object under analysis. Nor, however, can I regard my bodily experiences as the sum total of my life.³¹⁷

This is in tandem with the theory of sexism, masculinity and feminism. A male or female individual is first given such identification through the physical inspection of the individual's body—male or female or biological reproductive organs. This is the basis of gender classification. The natural biological sex organ of an individual determines the person's identity as either male or female over time. One cannot for a while exist as a male and thereafter at another time exist as a female. Though recent arguments have emerged to counter this view, how successful and intuitively plausible are the arguments is a matter of much debate. In fact, the issue of transgender has become a subject of hot debate. Some persons have come to argue that their natural biological sex organ is neither sufficient nor intuitively plausible to determine their identities as male or female. It is argued that to determine a person's gender (as male or female) through the observation of the individual's natural sex organ is counter-intuitive. Focus is shifted from the physical or natural biological sex organ of an individual in the determination of one's gender to one's inner awareness or feelings.

The crux of the argument according to this theory is that it is only the individual that can determine his or her own identity as a male or female through his or her inner or introspective experiences or intuition. It is believed that one's inclination of the self must conform to one's

inner experiences and from these experiences one is at liberty to choose one's gender instead of the supposedly "nature imposed". The choice of one's gender is believed to correlate with the liberal principle and respect for individual cognitive ability and self-awareness or awareness of the self. It means that whatever one feels on the inside, contrary to one's natural biological configuration, is what matters in the determination of one's identity as a male or female. So, the physical body is neither necessary nor sufficient to determine how one persists over time.

4.2.1. (b). Somatic Criterion

The somatic criterion, on the other hand holds that the *spatio*-temporal continuity of the metabolic and other life-sustaining organs of a functioning human animal constitutes personal identity.³¹⁸ Proponents of this view are Mackie (1999); Olson (1997a, 1997b); Snowdon (1991, 1995 & 1996). Though the similarity of the bodily criterion and somatic criterion has been argued, everything depends on how the notions of "functioning human body" and "life-sustaining organs" are understood.³¹⁹

What are we? This is a question that cannot be straightforwardly answered. The issues and the contending issues are numerous—the various agreement and disagreement among defenders and contenders neither leave one with choice nor has it provided a clear and distinct solution to the ongoing debate of personal identity, re-identification of the self and the persistence question of human beings. The claims and counter claims that we are identical to animals is exemplified in this quote thus: "some say we are essentially animals, others say we are only contingently animals; some say we could survive disembodiment, others deny this; some say animalism is a species of materialism but others explicitly reject materialism and even say that we have souls;

some say that our persistence conditions are biological— tied to our animal nature— while others say it is the continuance of our psychology that is key to our survival.”³²⁰

Some of the elements of the animalist position (a version of the somatic criterion) may be found in Aristotle’s ontology and analysis of man but in terms of personal identity’s debate in recent time “the foundations were laid by David Wiggins (1967, 1980), who forcefully rejected John Locke’s (1975) distinction between persons and animals in support of a proto-animalist position he called the ‘animal attribute theory’. Subsequently, the animalist view has been developed by Michael Ayers, William Carter, David Mackie, Eric Olson, Paul Snowdon, Peter Van Inwagen, Wiggins, and Richard Wollheim among others.”³²¹

The claim of the animalist is that each of us is identical with a human animal. This follows that each of us is essentially and fundamentally an animal. “The claim that we are essentially animals implies that we could not exist except as animals, while the claim that we are most fundamentally animals suggests that the conditions of our persistence derive from our status as animals. Since these persistence conditions are often supposed to be biological in character, animalism is sometimes referred to as the ‘biological view’ or the ‘organism view’.”³²²

Andrew M. Bailey, one of the proponents of the animalism argument, argues that “animalism is at once a bold metaphysical theory and a pedestrian biological observation. For, according to animalists, human persons are organisms; we are members of a certain biological species.”³²³ In addition, Bailey sums up his argument concerning whether we are animals or not by introducing some heretofore unnoticed data concerning the interlocking interests of human persons and human organisms and then shows that the data support animalism, which result turns out to be a novel and powerful argument for animalism; that bold or pedestrian, animalism is true.”³²⁴

Amidst the sundry claims of animalism, Allison Thornton has come out to argue that “there are different varieties of animalism, differing with respect to which other theses are taken in conjunction with animalism in its basic form. The different varieties of animalism vary in credibility: some varieties are supported by arguments that are irrelevant to others, and some varieties are susceptible to objections that others can resist. Adequately distinguishing between varieties of animalism is thus an important preliminary to assisting them . . . he thus argued for a taxonomy of the most distinctive varieties.”³²⁵

That we are human animals have been heavily contested. Here this research shall briefly present some criticisms against animalism and also some defences of animalism and end up with practical applications of animalism, drawing from Matt Duncan’s analysis and review of the animalism debate in Stephan Blatti and Paul F. Snowdon’s edited essay.

4.2.2. Arguments in Support of Animalism

One of the well known arguments in favour of animalism is the ‘too-many-thinkers argument’ or the ‘too many minds argument’. The too-many-thinkers argument is presented thus: “there is a human animal currently located where you are, and it is thinking. But of course, you are thinking. So, unless you are identical to that animal, there is more than one thinker where you are, which is too many. Clearly, there is just one thinker there. So you are identical to the animal.”³²⁶ Blatti elucidated more on the argument thus:

If presented as a *reduction*, this argument aims to demonstrate how the absurdities derived from supposing animalism’s basic claim to be false thereby establish its truth. Thus, note that even one who denies that the animal presently sitting in your chair is you will grant that there is an animal presently sitting in your chair. Further note that it is increasingly implausible to deny that animals of many types think and perceive; and if

any do, surely the type of animal sitting in your chair does. Moreover, you are sitting in your chair, and clearly you are thinking and perceiving. Now, if you were not identical to this animal, then there would be two mental lives simultaneously running in parallel: the thoughts and perceptions had by you and the qualitatively identical thoughts and perceptions had by the animal. But this is absurd. Therefore, animalism's basic claim is true.³²⁷

This argument no doubt sounds plausible and convincing at the spur of the moment. Though every one of us thinks, we are not different from the human animal located where we are. This human animal is thinking and as such we are identical to the animal. Take for instance, a person who has relapsed into a vegetative state who is being rushed to the hospital after a fatal motor accident. Though the person may have stopped thinking; being unconscious, it does not reduce or make the person different from the body that is being rushed to the hospital. So, we persist and function as human animals.

Contrary to the view and claim above, Lynne Rudder Baker and Dennis Robinson according to Matt Duncan deny that you are the only thinking thing where you are. "They say there is also a thinking animal there that is not identical to you, but that rather constitutes you in the same way that a lump of a marble constitutes, but is non-identical to, a statue."³²⁸ Similarly, the view of Sydney Shoemaker is also expressed thus: Sydney Shoemaker prefers to deny that the animal where you are is thinking. He says animals are not the right kinds of things to which to attribute mental properties. So he concludes that there is just one thinker where you are right now, and it is not an animal— it is you, a person."³²⁹ Shoemaker clearly differentiated human animal from person on the grounds that it is only the latter to which we can attribute mental properties.

4.2.3. Arguments against Animalism

There are varieties of sources from which objections have been raised against animalism. Some of the arguments to consider here are the transplant argument, the remnant person argument, and the duplication argument.

The Transplant Argument: As Matt Duncan pointed out, the setup to the transplant argument is drawn from Bernard Williams (1973) and Derek Parfit (p. 34): thus: “My body is fatally diseased, as is your cerebrum. Since we have between us, only one good cerebrum and body, surgeons bring these together. My cerebrum is successfully transported into your cerebrum-less body.”³³⁰ For Matt, “a lot of people think that I survive in this case, but you don’t, since only my cerebrum, with my mental characteristics, survives. However, animalism appears to imply the opposite— that you survive, but I don’t, since, on animalism, we are animals, not cerebra. So it seems that animalism gets the case wrong, and thus, is false.”³³¹

This argument may have been drawn from Locke’s person-animal distinction, especially his discussion and example of ‘Prince and Cobbler’. The ‘body-transfer’ objection tasks us to “imagine how a person might be transferred from the animal body with which she happens to be associated and installed into an altogether different animal body. If possible (in some sense), then such scenarios would seem to suggest that we are not essentially animals and that our persistence conditions are not those of animals.”³³²

Furthermore, another related worry for animalism is that “if my cerebrum were transplanted into your skull, my practical concerns for my future self-concern over whether I will get sick, win the lottery, get tenure, etc. — would follow my cerebrum, not my animal body. Or so a lot of philosophers say. This spells trouble for animalism, which would seem to imply that my concern should be for my animal body, since that is what I am.”³³³

As a sort of a defence to the related worry for animalism expressed above, Jens Johansson's and David Shoemaker's remarks seem to exonerate the animalists' worry that what matters for our practical concerns for our future self concern is not identity but psychological continuity and also that there exist different self-related concerns that track various, conflicting things. The argument is aptly rendered thus:

Jens Johansson and David Shoemaker argue that any mismatch between animal identity and self-related concerns should not worry animalists, because identity is not what matters for these concerns. Johansson argues that psychological continuity, not identity, is what matters. Shoemaker argues that we have a wide array of self-related concerns that track various, conflicting things— some track psychological continuity, others track biological continuity— but in no case is identity what really matters. Thus, according to Johansson and Shoemaker, animalists are off the hook when it comes to practical concerns.³³⁴

The imperative question is what is the difference between matters of identity and matters of psychological continuity? It may well be that identity is the general characteristic and feature that makes a person the same person while psychological continuity is just an approach to explicating identity of persons. If the latter is what is used in explaining the former, then how is practical concerns not an essential issue in the discussion of identity? This research will not dig deep into this as it is not the goal of this thesis.

The Remnant Person Argument is put thus:

Suppose my cerebrum is removed from my skull, and yet is maintained so as to support consciousness. It seems undeniable that, whether or not that cerebrum is me, it is a person (in the Lockean sense). Most animalists would deny that the cerebrum is me. So it seems they must say that a new person comes into being when my cerebrum is removed. But, according to Mark Johnston, who first introduced this argument, that is implausible, since you cannot cause a new person to come into being just by removing tissue that in no way suppresses mental activities.³³⁵

As good as the remnant person argument against animalism may sound or seem, Eric T. Olson, Stephen Blatti and Rory Madden have come up with arguments in their essays to defend the claim of Johnston. For Olson, he lays out a range of potential animalist alternatives or options and through this, somewhat vilifies Johnston's argument, concluding that self-conscious human persons are one and the same as biological organisms of a certain kind. For Blatti, that there is a remnant person in Johnston's case is not true. For him, it is the whole human animal that thinks not cerebra. Hence, he objected and denied that the remnant cerebrum thinks and concluded that it is not a person. Rory Madden, "in contrast, embraces the claim that a new person is created in Johnston's case. He says there is nothing in itself mysterious about the possibility of having created an entity by "subtraction".³³⁶ In all, it should be noted that the ultimate goal of the remnant person argument is to keep track of a single person.

The Duplication Argument is in contrast to the remnant person argument in that it asks us to keep track of the single person. The argument seeks to demonstrate that animalists miscount the number of people in play. Duncan highlighted this point, reflecting on Campbell and McMahan's description/example of dicephalus, which "occurs when a human zygote divides incompletely, resulting in twins fused below the neck."³³⁷ According to Duncan, "they tinker with the case, and ask us to imagine twins who share all of their organs except for their cerebra. Campbell and McMahan say that, in such a case, there would be two people, not one. But presumably, on animalism, there is just one person, since there is just one organism. Thus, they say that animalism gets the case wrong, and so is false."³³⁸

Campbell and McMahan's argument clearly is a demonstration and pointer to the fact that humans or persons cannot be fully equated to human animals. They criticize animalism—the

view that each of us is identical to human organism as well as the assertion that there are two subjects of every conscious state one experiences: oneself and one's organism. However, be this as it may, Paul Snowdon, on the other hand, defended animalism against the above objection. "He considers split-brain cases, where, again, it seems like there are two people but one organism. Snowdon argues that, in fact, there is just one subject of experience in these cases, and so no problem for animalism arises."³³⁹

However, the animalism theory of personal identity is the version of the somatic criterion of personal identity most strikingly articulated by Olson in recent times. The animalism theory is the view expressed by Olson, the most prominent advocate of the animalistic view of personal identity. His view of persistence conditions of person is expressed thus: "what it takes for us to persist through time is what I have called biological continuity: one survives just in case one's purely animal functions— metabolism, the capacity to breathe and circulate one's blood and the like— continue. I would put biology in place of psychology, and one's biological life in place of one's mind, in determining what it takes for us to persist: a biological approach to personal identity."³⁴⁰

Explicating this argument further, Rory Madden expressed Olson's view thus: "Olson's view in effect subtracts sensorimotor and other psychological capacities from the list of capacities for activity characteristic of human organisms, and holds that the remaining capacities—or perhaps some sufficient subset of them— are necessary and sufficient for one to persist, a position structurally similar to Lockean view that instead selects just the psychological capacities as necessary and sufficient for one to persist."³⁴¹ This is somehow a categorical denial of the psychological view of personal identity as necessary and sufficient condition for the

reidentification of the self or person. Madden further remarks that Olson's wholly non-psychological theory of animal persistence conditions flows coherently from an influential vision of the fundamental metaphysical nature of an organism.³⁴² He supported this argument reflecting on Olson's submission thus:

Organisms differ from other material things by having lives. By a life I mean more or less what Locke meant (1975:330-331): a self-organizing biological event that maintains the organism's complex internal structure. The materials that organisms are made up of are intrinsically unstable and must therefore be consistently repaired and renewed, or else the organism dies and its remains decay. An organism must constantly take in new particles, reconfigure and assimilate them into its living fabric, and expel those that are no longer useful to it. An organism's life enables it to persist and retain its characteristic structure despite constant material turnover. . . . Organisms have parts: vast numbers of them. A thing is alive in the biological sense by virtue of a vastly complex array of bio-chemical processes, and the particles caught up in these processes are parts of the organism.³⁴³

From this description of organism's characteristics, we see that the fundamental constituent and persisting drive of the animal or organism is inherent or embedded in the organism's life. Though its parts may experience changes— decay and rebirth; this process does not completely eliminate the possibility of persistence in organisms. Furthermore, so long as these characteristics are certain of human animal then they are defining or explanatory terms for articulating persistence in human animals though they are not completely exhaustible. They are— breathing, sleeping, snoring, pointing, listening, walking, running, jumping, tool-using, gossiping, planning, remembering, fantasizing, excreting, eating, mating, drooling, seeking shelter, filling “humanoid” spatial receptacles, growing, ageing, fighting infection, ailing, dying, mourning, hunting, relaxing, visually attending, problem-solving, blocking light, resisting penetration, sweating, painting, singing, story-telling, fidgeting, digesting...³⁴⁴

In a way, it has been argued that animalism could collapse into Lockean psychological continuity theory, if we are to accept the argument of cerebrum or brain in a vat, assuming the human animal to be a brain— a psychological entity. As a matter of fact, Parfit has argued this in a recent discussion that a human organism could persist in a remnant cerebrum condition:

If Animalists made this claim, their view would cease to be an alternative to Lockean views. On the Lockean Brain-Based Psychological Criterion, some future person would be me if this person would be uniquely psychologically continuous with me, because he would have enough of my brain. This criterion implies that, in Surveying Cerebrum, the conscious being would be the same person as me. When animalists entered this debate, their main claim was that such psychological criteria of identity are seriously mistaken, because we are human animals, so that our criterion of identity must be biological. If these Animalists now claimed that, in Surveying Cerebrum, the conscious rational being would be an animal, who would be me, these people would be claiming that the true criterion of identity for developed human animals is of this Lockean psychological kind.³⁴⁵

As I have proposed to argue in this thesis, there are in fact, going by the claim of the animalists, certain aspects of their argument inevitably dovetail into psychological criterion's argument. A human animal, certainly, is in possession of a brain and the seat of consciousness, indeed is the brain. It is not intuitive for the animalists to argue for human persistence on the ground of biological processes alone, which are aspects and a microscopic consideration of the totality that make up the human person as a whole organism.

4.3. Psychological Theory

In the discussion of the psychological theory of personal identity, the argument shall revolve mainly around the use of the following psychological terms— consciousness, memory and mind. The theory argues that neither the body nor the soul can sufficiently and necessarily explicate or account for the persistence of person overtime. A person is capable of persisting continuously

without alteration or change, if and only if, he is psychologically continuous— that is, if the past and the present consciousness, memory and mind are intricately linked or identical. An examination of a person's past memory or consciousness with the present such that both are numerically the same is the subject matter of psychological theory of personal identity. Hence, the psychological continuity debate must be understood, as argued by its proponents as consisting of the persistence of the person with the consistency of the first-person perspective in retrospection- what accounts for someone's persistence overtime, is the continuity of his mind.³⁴⁶

According to the psychological theory(ies), “what determines whether an individual persists overtime are psychological relations. A person *A* is identical to a person *B* because he has inherited (or because *B* will inherit) his psychological states and dispositions, or is at least linked to *B* through a continuous chain of psychological connections of the sort.”³⁴⁷ What matters here is the fact that both *A* and *B* psychologies are linked together. However, Gorkum raises a concern when he asserted that “how exactly they are linked, and whether further requirements are needed in addition to psychological continuity (e.g. a requirement that the psychological relation in question applies to no more than one individual, or a requirement that the relation is underpinned by a continuous physical relation).”³⁴⁸ This concern is fundamental and attempt will be made to dissect it later in the work.

It should be understood that the psychological criterion or approach to personal identity deals basically with and places emphasis on the necessary and sufficient or both conditions for a person to persist overtime. For a person *A* at time t_1 to be psychologically identical to a person *B* at time t_2 both must share and have exactly the same psychological connectedness. In Gary Full example: “the person I was yesterday and the person I am today are psychologically connected...

I have retained most *or all* of the beliefs, memories and skills that I had yesterday (*italic mine*)”³⁴⁹. Therefore, whatever a person is at one time must be a person at every other time when he/she is psychologically continuous— when a person *A*’s beliefs, memories and experiences are psychologically connected to a high degree with a person *B*’s.

It is in this regard that proponents of this view especially John Locke speculated consciousness as the basis of the self’s identity and persistence. A person is able to remain the same from one day to the next, thanks to his consciousness. The totality of an individual’s beliefs, memories and experiences— characterized as consciousness defines a person’s identity. The psychological approach proponents dwell on the fact that the distinction between the body and mind is apparent; given that it is only the mind that is capable of persisting without alteration unless where there is loss of memory or due to influence of drink or sleep. This only happens, if a person drunk or awake is unable to connect with his memory or actions prior to the drunken or sleeping state.

It is pertinent to note that the body other than consciousness is not capable of thought and there exist no plausible indication that the body is able to survive change(es), without altering or affecting its self. The appropriate question is what kind of change can the body survive? There seems to be no apparent or straightforward answer. It is because of this that the psychological approach proponents have argued that the body lacks the necessary and sufficient conditions to count or define a person’s identity. The disputation between the bodily criterion and the psychological criterion is hinged on the understanding of the term ‘person’ as different from our idea of ‘man’ or ‘human being’. Effort will be made to analyze this in the next chapter. As it

were, here the research is concerned only with the meaning and arguments of the various theories of personal identity.

By and large, psychological continuity is concerned with the criteria of identity for conscious subjects, unlike the bodily criterion. It is important to point out that conscious subjects as mentioned above do not in any way— in principle not restricted to human beings, needless to mention any kind or sort of animal beings. There are emerging researches which seem to demonstrate that Aliens, angels, androids, computers are conscious subjects— as well as many immaterial substances. Thus, the term “conscious subjects” has a broad connotative meaning. It cannot only be applied in the description of human beings who are conscious. In the actual sense, psychological subjects are rational, thinking and independently minded beings that can take decisions and explain their actions without alluding or appealing to any form extra-terrestrial cause.

For the psychological criterion proponents; the body or brain is immaterial, because it is possible for the person to survive bodily death or loss of brain and continue to exist when another substance or vehicle could be found to sustain it. Burns rendered the argument thus: “the person you are (meaning the conscious subject you are) may as a matter of present fact depend for its persistence on your actual living body and in particular your brain. This, however, does not mean that it could not survive the death of that body or the loss of that brain if another vehicle could be found to sustain it. Perhaps a replacement brain (or whole body), in this life or the next, could perform the task of sustaining the person you are.”³⁵⁰

According to the psychological proponents, particularly Locke, the persisting person is not any sort of substance— either material or immaterial; rather it is a conscious self. For Locke, as far

as you can cast back or extend the net of conscious memory and self-awareness to past experiences and events— so far stretches the person you are.³⁵¹ It follows that “keeping the same living body is neither sufficient nor necessary for personal identity. What matters is keeping the same consciousness. What is both necessary and sufficient for staying you is that you continue to be able to be aware of the events and feelings of your past with that same self-consciousness that you had when they occurred.”³⁵²

The beauty of the psychological criterion’s argument of personal identity comes with great benefits and accommodates many presuppositions or assumptions that may have been impossible to justify and logically acceptable. Burn puts it thus: “with such a criterion of personal identity a thinker can accommodate such notions as that of reincarnation, swapping bodies with another person, survival of death, resurrection and possession of one person’s body by another. The name living body could host successive persons. It could house one person by day and a different one by night. If the same human body is neither necessary nor sufficient for being the same person it becomes irrelevant to personal identity.”³⁵³

From the foregoing, we see that what matters for a person to stay the same is psychological continuity. However, the person ceases to exist or is broken if the right consciousness and memory are lost or that continuity is otherwise critically interrupted either by amnesia, drunkenness, sleep or forgetfulness. When this is the case, he or she is a new person or different person. The continuous interruption of consciousness in a man or human being implies the multiplication of the self or person in the same man or human being. More so, consciousness can be transferred from one substance to another. Locke illustrated this possibility in his example of

Cobbler and Prince switching souls. It is in this regard that it is plausible to retain the idea of reincarnation in the psychological continuity argument.

Before now, though arguable, the idea of reincarnation seems absurd and logically invalid. A close analysis of the psychological criterion of personal identity clearly or plausibly makes this case possible. If the idea and persistence of a person over time is hinged on consciousness as Locke has argued, then it is logically reasonable and valid to accept the possibility of reincarnation, not only reincarnation but also Christian belief of resurrection and the possession of one's person's body by another. These concepts shall be discussed in detail later.

4.3.1. Psychological Continuity and the Idea of Reincarnation

Psychological continuity of the self/person and the idea of reincarnation are somewhat compatible in some ways. It means that a person can be psychological continuous in another person's body. Reincarnation which is sometimes explained as rebirth or transmigration; implying migration from one life (body) to another,³⁵⁴ attributed to Pythagoras, is seen as the philosophical or religious concept that the non-physical essence of a living being starts a new life in a different physical form or body after biological death.³⁵⁵ The word "reincarnation" derives from Latin, literally meaning, "entering the flesh again". The Greek equivalent *metempsychosis* derives from *meta* (change) and *empsychoun* (to put a soul into).³⁵⁶ Furthermore, reincarnation "refers to the belief that an aspect of every human being (or all living beings in some cultures) continues to exist after death, this aspect may be the soul or mind or consciousness or something transcendent which is reborn in an interconnected cycle of existence; the transmigration belief varies by culture, and is envisioned to be in the form of a newly born human being, or animal, or plant, or spirit, or as a being in some other non-human realm of existence."³⁵⁷

From the meaning of the term reincarnation, we see that the human person (consciousness) can be continuous in another body after death. But, however, empirically it will be difficult to identify or establish the identity of that person. Locke, in his example of the exchange of the soul of a Prince who enters the body of a Cobbler and that of the Cobbler in the body of the Prince, seeks to demonstrate the problematic of relying on the soul's and body's theory of personal identity. For Locke the Prince carries with it the consciousness of the Cobbler and the Cobbler the consciousness of the Prince. However, the Prince is psychologically continuous in the body of the Cobbler and the Cobbler in the body of the Prince, though in different substances.

The goal of Locke here is to show that a person can be psychologically continuous in the body of another person. This is to demonstrate that the sameness of substances in personal identity is inconsequential. What matters is, is the person existing now (after death), psychologically continuous and the same person who existed before the death? Once it is the same consciousness— that is transferred from the person who died and the person who reincarnated, for Locke, personal identity is established. Therefore, in traditional African belief and in other beliefs— namely Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Spiritism, Theosophy, Eckankar etc., where reincarnation is accepted, body marks (birth marks) and other physical signs are not indication and sufficient empirical evidence to prove that the person who died and the person who reincarnated are the same. Rather sameness of psychological behaviour— namely feelings, desires, emotions, thoughts etc., are adequate to establish identity.

4.3.2. Psychological Theory and Appropriation of Mental States and Unity of One's Own Thinking

The psychological theory or criterion of personal identity has also been understood not only as memory or appropriation of mental states but as the distinct internal experience of the unity of

one's own thinking. Margaret Atherton is one of the proponents of this view. According to her, "persons are individuated by their consciousness and that there can be a "unity of consciousness" that is different from the "integrative unity" of thinking. That is, we experience a "distinct internality" to thinking (internally distinct and idiosyncratic qualitative features) that is not identical to those mechanisms causally responsible for having thinking at all."³⁵⁸ In what follows, the awareness of mental states such as the seeing of red, as the tasting of wine, as the feeling cold, as the smelling of rotten or decaying substance, as the hearing of cry from an empty building, as mine are the unity of consciousness.

Furthermore, Atherton provided two reasons for arguing that the "integrative unity" of thinking is not the same as the "unity of consciousness". First, that we can imagine some "underlying cause" of the unity of our thought and ideas that allowed for two distinct consciousnesses, and second, that given his arguments against Descartes, Locke would not want to say that we know that what provides an essential integrative unity to our "thoughts, desires, and powers to move" is conscious thought.³⁵⁹

The existentialists' argument that we recreate who we are (ourselves) through our actions seems to suggest that there is no static perception or conception of person. Consciousness for Locke, as also adduced by Descartes seems to be the only thing that is static or that we are certain of. The idea that we cannot anchor personal persistence on the body has been further demonstrated by the depersonalized schizophrenic patients who feel fragmented in time in spite of having enough memories of themselves in the past, still feel this way: "I feel as parts of a whole person, but never at the same time. It is difficult to explain (. . .) I constantly have to ask myself 'who am I really?' (. . .) Most of the time, I have this very strange thing: I watch closely, like, how am I

doing now and where are the ‘parts’ (. . .) I think about that so much that I get to nothing else. It is not easy when you change from day to day. As if you were a totally different person all of a sudden.”³⁶⁰

Trying to recollect or reconstruct what one has done in the past sometimes end in uncertainty. Does this buttress or render the argument of the psychological proponents true about who we are? The highlight of the problem by Fuchs is apt: “every morning the latter patient attempted to reconstruct exactly what he had done the day before to be sure that he was still the same person. Yet he could never attain complete certainty, in the end musing about whether at some time he had not previously been replaced by a different person.”³⁶¹

4.4. Memory Criterion/Theory of Personal Identity

Memory is central to the discussion of personal identity. The memory-based account of personal identity stems from Locke’s use of the term in describing the idea of consciousness as the necessary desideratum in the determination of personal identity. Though Locke did not really call his theory memory criterion, many thinkers have come to attribute memory criterion to Locke’s account of personal identity because of his use of the term “remembrance” and “memory”. Locke had argued in his essay, Book II, chapter 27, “of Identity and Diversity” that same person as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person, it is the same self now it was then.

Locke used of the term memory appeared when he attempted a distinction or to differentiate between the idea of man and the idea of person affirming that absolute oblivion separates what is thus forgotten from the person, but not from the man: “suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be

conscious of them again; yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thoughts that I once was conscious of, though I have now forgotten them?”³⁶²

The emphasis is on sameness of consciousness if the person who existed yesterday is to be regarded as the same person who continues to exist today. The point is that a person who existed yesterday, let call it x and a person existing today, call it y are the same person if and only if they share the same consciousness. The condition for a person at yesterday (x) and a person today (y) to share the same consciousness is highlighted by Locke in the following claim: “for as far as any intelligent being can repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far it is the same personal self.”³⁶³ Thus, for a person at yesterday and a person today to be the same self or person, not different persons, both shared the same consciousness or possess the same memory. Hence, this explains why Locke’s theory is sometimes called ‘memory’ theory of personal identity. For x and y to be the same person is for them to share the same consciousness; and for them to share the same consciousness is for y to be able to remember (or ‘repeat the idea of’) elements of the consciousness of x .³⁶⁴

It is as a result of the use of the term ‘memory’ that some thinkers have come to interpret Locke’s theory of personal identity as memory criterion or psychological criterion. It is argued that memory has been viewed by many philosophers since John Locke as key to explaining personal identity through time and that Locke (1731) viewed memory as constitutive of personal identity; Thomas Reid (1785) and Joseph Butler (1736) took memory to be evidence of it and David Hume (1739/2000), whilst denying that persons persist, acknowledged that memory provides a powerful illusion of such persistence.³⁶⁵ However, while the following scholars—

Flew (1951), Mackie (1976), Parfit (1984) and Noonan (1989) think that Locke is famously viewed identity to consist solely in memory, Gustafsson (2010) have argued that Locke never explicitly endorsed this view but argued that he held a weaker view. Albeit, memory-based accounts of personal identity remain relevant and popular hitherto as it embodies what is perhaps the dominant contemporary view— Shoemaker (1970), Shoemaker & Swinburne (1984); Perry (1975a); Lewis (1976); Parfit (1984); Noonan (1989).

Accordingly, a person P at time t is identical to a person P^1 at a later time t^1 if P at t^1 remembers P 's experiences at t^2 . Since identity is transitive, it can also arise from overlapping strands of such memory links: if P^2 at t^2 does not remember P 's experiences at t , P^2 at t^2 and P at t are nevertheless identical if P^2 at t^2 remembers P^1 's experiences at t^1 , and if P^1 at t^1 remembers P 's experiences at t^3 .³⁶⁶

Given the circularity criticism posed by Thomas Reid, and since we remember only our own experiences, memory-based accounts is often replaced with the notion of memory with that of quasi-memory in order to avoid or escape the charge of circularity. Roache renders the argument thus: “defenders of memory-based accounts escape the charge of circularity by arguing that, when they say that identity consists in memory, what they mean is that it consists in quasi-memory subject to certain constraints. These constraints are specified without presupposing personal identity between quasi-rememberer and subject of quasi-remembered experiences.”³⁶⁷

What then is quasi-memory? The view offered by Derek Parfit, while elaborating on Sydney Shoemaker's (1970) idea is apt when he defined quasi-memory thus: “I have a quasi-memory of an experience if I seem to remember having the experience, *someone* had the experience.”³⁶⁸ It is germane to point out that “those who appeal to the notion of quasi-memory in accounting for

identity claim that ordinary memory is a sub-category of quasi-memory. From my quasi-memory of doing *X*, I cannot infer that *I* did *X*, but I can infer that somebody did *X*. whether I am identical with the doer of *X* depends on what personal identity consists in.”³⁶⁹

Though the memory-based account of personal identity has been viewed to consist of a well-known problem—the view that persons cease to exist during moments not later remembered, i.e., you will recall that a person *P* at time *t* is identical to a person *P*¹ at a later time *t*¹ if *P* at *t*¹ remembers *P*’s experiences at *t*², where *P* at *t*¹ fails to remember *P*’s experiences then a person *P* ceases to be identical to *P* at *t*¹. Contemporary memory-based theorists have provided argument to escape this problem. For example, Slors (2001) argued that memory should be viewed as evidence of identity and not constitutive of it; i.e., memory does not constitute identity; it is rather an evidence of identity.³⁷⁰

Similarly, but contrary to Slors’ argument, thinkers such as Shoemaker (1970), Perry (1975a), Lewis (1976), Parfit (1984) and Noonan (1989) take identity to be constituted by memory alongside other forms of psychological continuity, such as the persistence of personality traits, beliefs, values, and so on.³⁷¹ Expanding the view of memory further as constitutive of identity, Shoemaker argued that memory is important in accounting for identity because it is evidence of the sort of causal dependence of later psychological states on earlier ones that on his views, is required for personal persistence; yet provided that other forms of psychological continuity can be taken to involve similar relations of causal dependence, continuity of non-memory psychological states “has as good a claim to be constitutive of a fact of personal identity” as does continuity of memory.”³⁷² Shoemaker further claims that “[r]emembering is best seen as just a special, albeit very important, case of the retention of acquired mental states.”³⁷³

More re-assuring of the role and place of memory to the personal identity debate is the view expressed by Marc Slors thus:

To be sure, memory is not thought to exhaust psychological continuity, but neither is it considered to be an optional ingredient. In fact, contemporary conceptions of psychological continuity evolved by adding various kinds of psychological connections between person-stages—connections such as those established by perpetuated beliefs, values, and character traits or by relations between intentions and actions—to John Locke’s memory criterion of identity; this criterion is held to be too tight, but correct in spirit.³⁷⁴

Though Locke’s memory account of personal identity has been somewhat lauded for perhaps accurately and plausibly accounting for the possibility of Christian’s resurrection of the dead on the last day and most importantly drawing explicitly the distinction between the idea of man, its identity and the idea of person, its identity, Klein and Nichols have demonstrated through a research that though memory is central to the discussion of personal identity, it does not convey the idea of “mineness” that usually accompanies our memories. The argument of Klein and Nichols is that the idea of memories lacks the sense of “mineness” usually conveyed by memory. They take R. B.’s case to show that the sense of mineness is merely a contingent feature of memory, which they see as raising two problems for memory-based accounts of personal identity. First, they see it as potentially undermining the appeal of memory-based accounts. Second, they take it to show that the conception of quasi-memory that underpins many memory-based accounts is inadequate.³⁷⁵ This argument of Klein and Nichols as well as the intended implications is stated thus:

Stanley Klein and Shaun Nichols introduced patient R.B., whose memories, after he was hit by a car, were left devoid of the sense of “mineness” that usually accompanies our memories. Klein and Nichols take R.B.’s case to demonstrate that this sense of mineness is “a contingent feature of memory”. . . They see this as having two important

implications for the relationship between memory and the metaphysics of personal identity. First, they see it as potentially undermining memory-based accounts of personal identity by undermining the appeal of such accounts. Second, they draw on it to raise a problem for Parfit's canonical characterization of quasi-memory. Since the plausibility of memory-based accounts of personal identity depends upon the coherence of the concept of quasi-memory, this constitutes a further blow for such accounts.³⁷⁶

Klein and Nichols arrived at this conclusion above by analyzing long-term memory as comprising two memory-systems —procedural and declarative. The latter for them correspond to Gilbert Ryle's "knowing how" and the former "knowing that". They analyzed declarative memory further into two sub-divisions —semantic and episodic memories. According to them, semantic memory "contains relatively generic, context-free information about the world such as Grapes are edibles, $2+2=4$ and Sacramento is the capital of California."³⁷⁷ Recalling semantic memories involves recalling or bringing to mind information without necessarily recalling or recollecting the experience of acquiring it. Episodic memory, on the other hand, involves "re-experiencing one's past."³⁷⁸

For them, episodic memory "represents the "what, where, when" of an event. As such, it is experienced as a memory that makes explicit reference to the time and place of its acquisition. Examples of episodic memory are I remember eating chicken for supper yesterday evening, I recall my meeting with Judith last Monday."³⁷⁹ Furthermore, for Klein and Nichols, philosophical discussions of the role and place of memory in personal identity by and large, focuses on episodic memory and that semantic memory involves in some aspects of self-knowledge, that it is only episodic memory that can convey a sense of the self-persisting.³⁸⁰

It is from this understanding and background presented by Roache that Klein and Nichols introduce the case of R. B. after, being hit by a car, forty-three-year-old R. B. suffered physical

injuries along with cognitive and memory impairments: “R. B. was able to remember particular incidents from his life accompanied by temporal, spatial, and self-referential knowledge, but he did not feel the memories he experienced belonged to him. In his words, they lacked “ownership”. This particular form of memory impairment —episodic recollection absents- a sense of personal ownership, is a form of memory dissociation that, to our knowledge, has not previously been documented in the neurological literature.”³⁸¹

The argument of Klein and Nichols for short is that it is possible to have a memory of a past event without being mine— the implication of this is an attempt to dislodge the psychological account of personal identity— that once I can extend my memory to the past, I am the same person as that past person who had the experiences. Whereas, on the contrary, Klein and Nichols say that having an experience of a past event does not make it mine.

However, Rebecca Roache in her work “Memory and Mineness in Personal identity,” plausibly provides argument in defense of memory-based account of personal identity that Klein and Nichols’ characterization of R. B.’s experience is implausible and as a result, the problems that they describe for memory-based accounts of personal identity do not arise. Roache argued further that Klein and Nichols’ conception of R. B.’s case is untenable on the following grounds: (i) that Klein and Nichols view themselves as taking R. B.’s talk of ownership at face value: “R. B. himself initiated use of the language of ‘ownership’ we simply adopt his expression”³⁸² and that they offered no analysis of this “language of ‘ownership’”.

(ii) That they write as if, aside from lacking mineness, R. B.’s memories were intact; i.e. as if the lack of mineness was the only way in which R. B.’s memories were unusual. As Roache buttressed “they do not state this explicitly, but they make many remarks that collectively are

strongly indicative of this integration. For example, they tell us that R. B.'s memory, "though fitting the standard criteria for episodic recollection, was not accompanied by a sense of personal ownership."³⁸³

(iii) That they also write of episodic memories being composed of two separate components, content and mineness and so on. (iv) That they move very quickly— in their concluding paragraph— from the claim that mineness is a contingent by-product of memory to the claim that it may not reflect "the reality of identity" whereas they do not explain how their conception of R. B.'s unusual experiences raises problems for memory-based accounts. A more robust defense *inter-alia* is this point presented by Roache thus:

Episodic memory is not merely a capacity to represent one's past experienced; it is a faculty for non-inferential knowledge about one's past. In normal circumstances, remembering X is sufficient for (fallible) knowing that X occurred. These normal circumstances involve, *inter alia*, recognizing our memories as such: to derive knowledge that X occurred from one's memory of X, one must be able to distinguish remembering X from other attitudes toward X, including imagining. Were our memories routinely to lack a feeling of memory, we would be unable to make such distinctions without drawing inferences from external information, such as the reports of others. In this case, episodic memory would not be a faculty for non-inferential knowledge about the past. Consequently the feeling of memory is not a contingent feature of episodic memory; neither, therefore, is mineness.³⁸⁴

The clear message of Roache is that it is impossible for memory to routinely lack a feeling of memory and concluded that "since what is conceptually impossible cannot be nomologically possible, my conclusion undermines Klein and Nichols' claim that it is nomologically possible for memory routinely to lack mineness."³⁸⁵

In conclusion, the theories of personal identity easily do not help in the resolution of the problem and the question—who are we or what am I? Considered, either as an epistemological or metaphysical issue; still does not clear the air on the determination of our identity as humans.

Rather, the many theories further complicated the debate. It is for this reason; this research investigated the idea of person/self and consciousness— to find out if in actual fact reflects Locke's argument and submission on the separation of the idea of person from the idea of man/soul. It is imperative, if philosophizing about the nature of man and society and the understanding of our self must be completely deciphered. It is not only to say that there will be resurrection of the self/soul on the last day but with what form and identity will the individual resurrected is another question. It is quite disturbing not to be certain about man's place and purpose in the universe without adequately answering questions that border on his/her existence and persistence hereafter. It is in view of this, the next chapter shall focus on the analysis of the merits and demerits of Locke's consciousness criterion of personal identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATION OF LOCKE’S THEORY OF PERSONAL IDENTITY AND THE OPTION OF REVERSE CONSTRUCTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS THEORY

This chapter begins by critically x-raying the merits and the demerits of Locke’s theory of personal identity. This is germane in order to ascertain the veracity and the relevance of the theory to contemporary debate. The arguments that spring up in opposition to Locke’s theory are indications that rethinking Locke’s theory is inevitable. This does not in any way reduce or render Locke’s theory inconsequential. In fact, ever since Locke ventured into solving the problem of personal identity, no discussion or debate that does not begin and end with it. As we shall see, the exposition of the concept of the self/person in relation to the personal identity debate led to the discovery of a new theory— “the reverse transitivity consciousness theory” or “constructive consciousness theory” as well as some crucial findings. These findings are germane and help to fill the gap as far as the debate in contemporary time is concerned.

5.1. Evaluation

5.1.1. Some of the Merits of Locke’s Psychological Theory of Personal Identity

To begin with, though Locke’s view on personal identity was heavily repudiated, there are however some undeniable merits. The first, which appears not but on a second thought clearly is the fact that Locke was the first to pose the problem of personal identity though his specific solution was profoundly criticized.³⁸⁶ The significant contribution of John Locke to the subject is evidenced in David Hume’s remarks, less than fifty years later, that personal identity “has become so great a question in philosophy, especially of late years in England”³⁸⁷ The direction and impact of Locke’s thought to modern and contemporary philosophy are inestimable and worthwhile. As John Barresi puts it: “Locke’s discussion of personal identity, along with the

rest of his *Essay*, had an enormous impact on the eighteenth century. It is primarily through Locke's use of the term consciousness in the context that the term came under general use both in England and the continent."³⁸⁸ Locke's contribution has in no small measure provoked thought, not only in philosophy but also in psychology, medicine, theology and education. Though his solution was rejected, it has somehow provided what may be termed adequate explanation for and to the possibility of resurrection of the self on the last day.

Another impressive contribution of Locke is the distinct identification of the self to moral responsibility and justice, and not the soul. Prior to now, with Plato, it is believed that man possesses a material body and immaterial soul. Plato elevated the soul over and above the body, because he believes the soul is capable of surviving the body at death. More so, that the soul is the seat of man's intellect, that is, the rational part of man, is adequate to consider it as superior. Plato's doctrine of the transmigration of the soul further elucidated the profound difference between the soul and the body. In a nutshell, in Plato's philosophy, the soul is seen as the moral person and by extension, the basis of man's identity.

On the contrary, Locke's analysis of man is simply that the "idea of man entails certain determinate size and shape. Man cannot be adequately defined either in terms of his immortal soul or of his rationality."³⁸⁹ To define man in terms of his immortal soul and rationality as Allison³⁹⁰ noted, while reflecting on Locke's theory of personal identity, leads to two alternatives:

The first alternative, the location of the essence of man in his soul, renders conceivable the absurd consequence (Locke is here no doubt thinking of the doctrine of transmigration of the souls, which was much discussed by the Cambridge Platonists) that "men, living in distant ages, and of different tempers, may have been the same man". The second alternative

is disposed of with the fantastic account of an allegedly rational parrot. Despite its intelligence, Locke argues, such a creature could never be considered a man, because it is lacking the requisite physical appearance.³⁹¹

By differentiating man (corporeal substance) from person (conscious thinking thing called self), Locke made a profound contribution and solves what seems hitherto obscure; the resurrection of the dead, in which focus is on the soul instead of “person” which in Locke’s submission may connote an abstract entity. The consequence here is that the idea of man for Locke is concrete substance and the idea of person is abstract. In all, “the problem of personal identity is at the centre of discussions about life after death and immortality. In order to exist after death, there has to be a person after death who is the same person as the person who died.”³⁹²

The second merit of John Locke’s theory is the articulation of personal identity as the ultimate source of all rights and justice of reward and punishment. Like every other moralist or ethical theorist, Locke attributed the objects of reward and punishment to persons and not substances. Persons, Locke implies “self or consciousness” and by substance, he meant either the physical or material body or soul. It is both the former and the latter that constitute the idea of man. Thus, what Locke means by the assertion that persons, not substances are the objects of reward and punishment is that persons are morally responsible for one’s action and not the body or substance that consciousness or self is joined to or affected with.

To be sure, Locke is arguing that if for example a body takes up consciousness and both is regarded as person A, let say James, such that this person A (James) committed a crime and was charged for murder and if assuming later, the consciousness of person A deserted its body and this same body took up another consciousness which knew nothing about the crime committed

by the previous consciousness, Locke would argue that though the body remains the same, it cannot be charged for the crime committed by the former consciousness, rather the first consciousness which deserted the body, known or referred to as James should be answerable to or responsible for the crime committed. Thus, according to Locke, the crime committed should not be imputed to the new consciousness though it is joined to the same body or substance which the first or former consciousness deserted. The point to draw from here is that, reward and punishment can only be attributed to persons— whereby Locke means consciousness or self not body or substance.

Similarly, one man who is drunk and sober at another time are two different persons. The wrong done by the one asleep should not be imputed to the one awake. But in Locke's view, the human law inconsiderately punishes both, only divine law of God will be able to rectify the injustice on the last day. He puts it thus:

But is not a man drunk and sober the same person? Why else is he punished for the fact he commits when drunk, though he be never afterwards conscious of it? Just as much the same person as a man that walks, and does other things in his sleep, is the same person, and is answerable for any mischief he shall do in it. Human laws punish both, with a justice suitable to their way of knowledge;—because, in these cases, they cannot distinguish certainly what is real, what counterfeit: and so the ignorance in drunkenness or sleep is not admitted as a plea. But in the Great Day, wherein the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, it may be reasonable to think, no one shall be made to answer for what he knows nothing of; but shall receive his doom, his conscience accusing or excusing him.³⁹³

5.1.2. Some of the Demerits of Locke's Psychological Theory of Personal Identity

David Hume contested Locke's theory of personal identity purely from empirical grounds and with his criticism of causality. Hume says that we should ask from which perception, the idea of

the self emanates? The answer is that all perceptions are gotten from sense impressions. The idea of the self is nothing but bundles of impressions. That is, there is no single idea called self but collections of sense impressions. As Allison puts it, Hume rejects the doctrine of an abiding substantial self in the light of his fundamental tenet that for every idea there must be a corresponding impression. Reflection upon one's mental life discloses only a succession of fleeting and distinct perceptions. There is no single impression from which the idea of self could be derived, hence there is no such idea.³⁹⁴

It can be said that Hume gave an account of personal identity that accepts both reductionist and skeptical interpretations. He denies any direct awareness of a persisting subject of experience. He put it thus, "if any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same ... But there is no impression constant and invariable. Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other, and never all exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is derived; and consequently there is no such idea."³⁹⁵

That is to say, we cannot have a single impression of the self, other than collections of sense data such as heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. In fact, Hume continues, "for my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception."³⁹⁶ This argument of Hume struck at the very heart of Locke's idea of the self and consequently the basis of his theory of personal identity.

The second attack came from Joseph Butler and Thomas Reid. Butler was the first to point out the circularity and illogicality in Locke's argument. He called Locke's idea of personal identity a "wonderful mistake" as Locke fails to recognize that the relation of consciousness presupposes identity, and thus cannot constitute it.³⁹⁷ Nimbalkar Namita writing of Butler's objection of Locke buttressed Butler's criticism thus, "I can remember only my own experiences, but it is not my memory of an experience that makes it mine; rather, I remember it only because it is already mine. So while memory can reveal my identity with some past experiencer, it does not make that experiencer me. What I am remembering, then, insists Butler, are the experiences of a substance, namely the same substance that constitutes me now."³⁹⁸

Similarly, Thomas Reid called Locke's memory theory absurd. Among the many reasons for criticizing Locke include: that personal identity cannot be determined by operations but by something indivisible, that Locke's main problem stems from confusing the evidence of something with the thing itself³⁹⁹ and finally the officer paradox introduced by Reid to demonstrate how Locke's memory theory can be reduced to absurdity:

Suppose that as he was stealing the enemy's standard ("standard" is the food store or food provisions), a 40-year-old brave officer remembered stealing apples from a neighbour's orchard when he was 10 years old; and then suppose further that when he was 80 years old, a retired general, he remembered stealing the enemy's standard as a brave officer but no longer remembered stealing the neighbour's apples. On Locke's account, the general would have to be both identical to the apple-stealer (because of the transitivity of the identity relation: he was identical to the brave officer, who himself was identical to the apple-stealer) and not identical to the apple-stealer (given that he had no direct memory of the boy's experiences).⁴⁰⁰

Reid also pointed out that the link between identity and ethics in Locke's memory theory are logically irreconcilable. Since a person would never remain the same from one moment to the

next and since “the right and justice of reward and punishment are founded on personal identity, no man could be responsible for his actions,”⁴⁰¹ because identity which implies sameness cannot be based on consciousness that varies from moment to moment. It is instructive that both Butler and Reid rejected Locke’s relational view in favour of a substance based view of identity.⁴⁰² Nevertheless, though Butler and Reid were critical of Locke’s view, especially what identity consisted of, they however agreed with Locke that “identity... is the foundation of all rights and obligations, and of accountableness, and the notion of it is fixed and precise.”⁴⁰³

As recounted in chapter three, there are two main arguments, the somatic criterion (physiological approach), raised against the psychological approach, which is equally a criticism of Locke’s theory. They are as follows:

(i) Human Vegetable

X has at t_1 a motor bicycle accident.

The being Y that is transported to the hospital is at t_2 a persistent vegetative state.

Our alleged intuition: X at t_1 is identical with Y at t_2 .

Alleged conclusion: all views which postulate psychological continuity as a necessary condition are false.

(ii) Foetus

Since a foetus does not possess the cognitive capacities necessary to satisfy the demands of the psychological criterion, if the latter is true, no person can be identical with a past foetus.

Our alleged intuition: Each of us is identical with a past foetus.

Alleged conclusion: All views which postulate psychological continuity as a necessary condition are false.⁴⁰⁴

The arguments above are weighty and may not be easily defended. This is because Locke’s psychological approach does not accommodate the idea that persons are human vegetable as well as foetus. Whereas, it is obvious we are. This is similar to the problem raised by Ayers (1990), Snowdon (1990) and Olson (1997a-2002a) that we are human animals, in contrary to Locke’s view which implies supposedly that we are not human animals. “The underlying problem, however, is that it seems undeniable that there is a human animal located where each of us is. If

this human animal has persistence conditions different from those that determine our persistence, then there must be two things wherever each of us is located. This conclusion raises important questions and problems Locke must address.”⁴⁰⁵

The main problem of Locke is not that he rejected bodily criterion of identity but that he conceives consciousness (viz: memory) as the only basis and determinant of personal identity and his analysis in the final end is incoherent and vague. The problem is further compounded by his view that personal identity is a matter of psychological continuity. He does not accept a momentary pause or suspension of continuity of consciousness, where such is to happen, he believes the person before the pause and the person after the pause are no longer the same person, except if the person after the pause is able to extend his thoughts and memory to his past actions. Here, the research slightly disagrees with Locke to propose rather the idea of personal identity based on “constructive consciousness” or “reverse transitivity consciousness” which is here refers to as the “other”.

To start with, it is mistaken to x-ray or take the issue of identity and relate it with sequence of events present and past, without cognizant that present and past are two different times. The error of past scholars including John Locke is to consider consciousness as the basis of our identity and with remembrance of past events as though present and past events were the same thing. The basis of the research’s argument is hinged on the fact that we cannot tell precisely when we/or humans started having or possessing consciousness. No doubt that humans or persons possess consciousness, the fact that we think is a demonstration that we possess consciousness but when precisely did we receive or begin to be conscious? What stage in our life did we start having cognitive faculty? Is it at embryo, foetus, infant or adult? Is consciousness inherent in a person?

Locke would in fact take it as the stamp or determinant of personhood. Descartes' submission and thesis of the *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) is a clear indication that consciousness or thought may be seen as the essence and affirmation of human existence. Aristotle's assertion that man is a rational animal is also indication that humans possess independent thought. The fundamental question is if consciousness is the same as thought or thinking then at what time precisely did humans or persons start having or possessing consciousness? Though Anand and Hickey try to suggest when consciousness first occurs, yet it is still unclear:

Many empirical studies indicate that sentience is not possible before 20 weeks gestation, and may not emerge until much later. Prior to 20 weeks, although billions of neurons have already migrated to the cerebral cortex, there are almost no synaptic connections between them or with the thalamus, which mediates sensory perception. Partly because of the ambiguity of foetal EEG patterns, it's difficult to say precisely when consciousness first occurs. But somewhere between 20 and 32 weeks gestation, the cortical neurons become capable of firing in ways that make consciousness possible. The brainstem and nervous system may function before that time and there may be reflex reactions to stimuli, but there is no one "there" yet to experience sensory inputs— the lights are on, but nobody's home.⁴⁰⁶

The disagreement among scholars on the clear-cut nature of consciousness is not in any way helpful either. While some think that consciousness is inherent and infused at the point of conception (this is commonly reported among medieval scholars), others believed it is received the moment a child is given birth to. It may come to be present in every normal human being, in some form, in children.⁴⁰⁷ Those who exclude children as rational agents may think that consciousness is received the moment the mind or intellect is filled with experience. More so, the disparity between the rationalists and empiricists on the matter assuming consciousness is taken as mind, is even more problematic. What worries more is the definition offered by the twentieth-century British psychologist Stuart Sutherland that: consciousness is a fascinating but elusive

phenomenon: it is impossible to specify what it is, what it does, or why it evolved. Nothing worth reading has been written about it.⁴⁰⁸ The fact that most people associated consciousness with brains shows that it is not innate.

It is clear from the foregoing that it is impossible to fix or assign specific time to when persons or humans start to be conscious. To use Locke's definition of consciousness, at what point does a child begin to be sensible or conscious of pleasure and pain, happiness or misery? Intuitively, the time a person begins to be conscious is indeterminate. Somehow, during the episode of our life in this existential world, from infant to adult, we just became aware of ourselves, others, environment and things in general. It is not clear when this awareness started. It could not be ascertained or determined when, assuming is the infant stage we start to receive consciousness. This indeterminacy shows that though it is apt for Locke to ground personal identity on consciousness, it is arbitrary and misleading to determine the continuity or persistence of one 'person' stage to another only by extending or annexing thought or consciousness to previous actions, in order to retain same identity with the present and past person. What this thesis is arguing here is that human beings or persons are conscious contingently in relation to time.

Furthermore, I quite agree with Locke that personal identity is sustained when a person extends his thoughts to his previous actions but the present time and the past time are two different events. Consciousness of events as it relates to the idea of the self or person cannot be recorded in linear, unbreakable sequence but contingently. The idea of reading past or current events to consciousness makes us to think that when we are unable to remember past events then we are different persons. Existentially, we are not what we are at the time of our birth and we are not also what we are now or would be in the future. We can only talk of personal identity with

accuracy when we cease to extend consciousness to past events but relate it to events as it unfolds. This is why some commentators speak of the indeterminacy of identity. So long as we do not at a glance see our whole past life; it is incorrect to reason that we are different from our past. As a child, I only know myself as it develops or unfolds, even as adult. Human life and mental cognition cannot be read with precision. There is no permanent stage. Everything passes ceaselessly, our life unfolds ceaselessly, but we are only conscious of the stage contingently.

The idea of person as a social being is a clear refutation of Locke's conception of person as psychological being. One serious implication of John Locke's conception of a person is that a person is a psychological being. The question then arises, if a person is a psychological being, with what and how does he relate or interact with other beings in his environment, given that he must exist and subsist in a concrete environment or world? Locke's idea of person is different from his idea of man. He considers a person as a rational, thinking intelligent being who is conscious of himself as his self. He added also that a person is a forensic being. By this, Locke means that a person is a moral agent—one who makes decision and takes responsibility for his actions. The implication is that a person is morally obliged to accept the responsibility of his or her actions whether good or bad.

Locke's intention is to see or demonstrate that every person ought not to escape the consequences of his/her action. His moral interpretation of the nature of man is to portray that the moral law is inevitably binding on person and not man. Though the human law may be regarded as being fallible, in that it sometimes punishes the wrong man for what another person committed, on the last day, according to Locke this ill will be corrected by the divine law, where our conscience will stand, either accusing or excusing us.

But this characteristic nature of person is somewhat confusing. Locke was not so clear what the idea of man is and what the idea of person is. Though he clearly spelt out the distinction between the identity of person and the identity of man, his idea of person as a forensic being, implicitly says less about the moral responsibility of man. Since Socrates' philosophy shifted focus from the cosmic universe to the nature of man and his environment, the latter (man) has dominated philosophical discussions in metaphysics, epistemology, values and ethics. Against this backdrop, Locke's fresh attempt to shift moral focus from man to person is therefore perplexing, as man hitherto, remains the center in ethical or moral discussions.

Howbeit, granted that a person is a forensic being from Locke's stand point, how do we reconcile this idea with the presupposed idea that every individual person is a social being? This question is pertinent on the ground that the idea of morality makes sense in a social sphere, where man is portrayed using Heideggerean interpretation, as "being-with-others", which among other things connotes a being that socially interacts with other beings in the world. If one should follow Locke's definition and idea of a person, then with what does he (person) relate or interact with others in the existential world? This is a serious flaw on the part of Locke's conception of personhood. As a psychological being, it will be impossible to relate with others without the body. Therefore, the idea of a person cannot fully be cognized without reference to the body. A person is an embodied being. As Ponty noted, the body is vital in the understanding of the nature of reality and the self. It is through the body that, a person is known to the world. It is for this reason a person is referred to as a *spatio-temporal* being.

As a final point, before we articulate the new approach to Locke's theory of personal identity, it could be said that the psychological approach theorists miss the point by thinking that for the self

to be abiding; it must remember all his past events. The conclusion of Locke as well as many other psychological theorists is that if a person cannot link his present events with his past events or extends his present thoughts with the past, he is no longer the same person. That is, for a person to persist from one day to the next, his present thoughts or experiences must be the same with his past. The thesis therefore argues that this view may be completely false.

The thesis's argument is based on the fact that, a person cannot be fully aware of the whole events from birth to death of his life time. Rather, the awareness or consciousness takes two levels or forms— the direct awareness/consciousness and the indirect awareness/consciousness. The research shall discuss these two briefly to buttress the above argument. As adults, if we are to write our autobiography, we will rely on information, narrative and sometimes testimonies from others. We do not fully remember our childhood events; the memory or knowledge we had of our birth is not more than what we were told. This experience is what has been classified as episodic memory. The challenge with this kind of memory is exemplified by this statement: “I can remember that I was born in University of Benin Teaching Hospital, Benin City, but I cannot remember being born in a hospital.” The reason is that, I did not personally witness my birth. It could not have been possible. The remembrance and memory I have about my birth place is what I was told.

Therefore, we cannot completely remember our childhood experiences other than what we are told and from what we are told we learn about ourselves. This is also true when we assume the role of a narrator. For example, we study our children's habit and later in life they are told. When we notice any strange behaviour, we tell them they were not behaving like that when they were little and we learn that the change in habit or behaviour may be due to environmental or

circumstantial factors (environmental adaptation). We too, through this process of narration learn about ourselves and come to the understanding of the self. Our remembrance of ourselves is always aided either by information stored, written about us or what we are told verbally. There is this intuitive or inherent harmony or agreement between what we are told about ourselves and about what we know about ourselves. It is this two that help us to know about ourselves. This process of learning about the self inevitably sustains or explains personal identity.

Hence, direct awareness/consciousness is the knowledge of the self learnt by us without external aid. It is the knowledge of the self by the self. It is self experiences of its activities. It is the consciousness that I am able to repeat and perform knowledge stored in the brain or mental faculty such as driving, mastery of language, skills, sleeping and waking, my body, my environment etc. which constitute my habits. These constitute knowledge of the self. That I am able to perform the mastery of my body and repeat same continuously from one day to the next is a vivid indication of the role and significance of direct awareness or consciousness. For example, a patient who suffered severe brain damage upon recovery, though he may have lost some of his past memories, cannot be re-educated about the knowledge of his body. Similarly, a mentally disoriented person, say a lunatic has a firm grasp of his body. Direct awareness or consciousness is when experience continuously writes on the mind and we are conscious of these activities from one day to the next.

The second which is indirect awareness/consciousness come to bear to fill the gap or vacuum the self was not fully aware of itself as self. For example, it is impossible for new born babies or children to fully cognize their self as self. This is because experience is yet to completely impress on the mind or it just beginning at that level. The same applies to persons in coma or

persons that are drunk or drunkards. This does not mean that they are not conscious but that they are not conscious of their self as self. At this stage, persistence of the self and personal identity is preserved by the process of reverse transitivity consciousness, i.e., the presence of the *other*. Even when a person is not conscious of himself as himself, it does not preclude or distort his personal identity. His self-identity and personal identity is established and continuous in the *other*— which could be other persons, environment and stored information. The supposed “void” (i.e., unconscious actions), will be filled in their mind later when they are told or reminded of their actions and this later constitute or form the knowledge of the self. Thus, everything I come to know about myself, my environment, my world is by experience. I have knowledge of my personal identity by experience— concrete and mental.

Consequently, I am the only person that possesses the knowledge that I persist from one day to the next, though we know about others by drawing from our own self experiences. This knowledge is almost intrinsic and definite in all human beings. It is for this reason no individual or human can dispute about his persistence or not, whether he is the same person today as the person yesterday. Consciousness is vital to the knowledge of the self, so also the body. Any theory that advocates consciousness such as the psychological theory as the sole approach to personal identity is only advocating an aspect. Similarly, the theory that advocates the human body, such as *physicalism* theory or somatic theory as the sole approach to personal identity is only advocating an aspect. It is on this note that this thesis suggests heterogeneous or eclectic approach, which would be explicated later in this chapter.

From what has been said earlier, Locke’s theory failed to buttress or justifies how consciousness alone can be considered the basis of personal identity without considering that even if a person

cannot connect with his or her past events, on the ground of forgetfulness, it does not make the person stop existing. Rather, it is possible as often seen for a person to lose his/her memory and yet remain the same person. This is possible, because it is not consciousness alone that ought to constitute the basis of our persistence from one day to the next, instead the possibility that someone can be aided to recall his previous (forgotten) memory by either objects and things or other persons in his/her environment constitute the basis of the next argument— called “constructive consciousness theory.”

5.2. Constructive Consciousness Theory

The thesis of the “constructive consciousness theory” or “reverse transitive constructive consciousness theory” is designed not only to strengthen Locke’s argument of consciousness and memory criterion of personal identity but also to discredit Locke’s opponents and basically to add that though memory may be fallible in some circumstances and given also that it is possible that a human being cannot remember vividly everything that he/she has gone through in life, years back; from childhood to adulthood, that does not imply that the person from childhood to adulthood has lost his/her identity. The theory is a recreation or reconstruction of a person’s consciousness who has experienced loss of consciousness either due to sleep, forgetfulness or coma/amnesia. As we have seen Locke’s doctrine of “continuous consciousness” leads to absurdity or futility. It is essential to assert that any worthwhile philosophical thesis or doctrine must avoid leading to ends which are absurd or futile. For instance, if I have a physical exercise doctrine that states that a man will attain maximum good health if he can leap over the moon, such doctrine will lead to a futile end in so far as it will never be possible for a man whose two feet are placed on mother earth to leap over the moon which is thousands of miles away.

In the same vein, if I hypothesized that someone who engaged in sending text messages continuously for two weeks from his mobile phone will get all requests made by him positively answered, my hypothesis will border on the absurd if by continuous I mean that the person in question would not pause to eat, sleep, brush his teeth, go to toilet, take his bath etc.

- (a) So, Locke's doctrine will relish in absurdity if the doctrine anticipates that any person could engage continuously, without break, in immersion in the consciousness of his past life as a way of sustaining his 'personhood'. Would the person not once in a while address his consciousness to the work in hand, whether it is his official day-to-day duty, whether it is driving to work and back, whether it is shopping at a mall or whatever?
- (b) Next, consciousness as we have seen in chapter four like every other faculty dims and wanes and so cannot at all time have total access to all details of past events and accordingly cannot be totally reflexive. Puts schematically as (x)Rxx. To demand total and unmitigated reflexivity from continuous consciousness seems to me to be a futile exercise.
- (c) Note that in (a) and (b) above, I am talking about continuous consciousness in ACTUALITY
- (d) But in order to avoid the absurdity and futility detected in (a) and (b) above, I have had to replace "continuous consciousness" in ACTION by CONSTRUCTIVE continuous consciousness. (Recall that the "verification" and the "falsification" theories in science are constructive theories wherein we ask: what and what could be done to verify a given law or prove it to be true)

- (e) To the above constructive doctrine, I add what I call “reverse transitivity”, by which I mean in this case (recall that transitivity can be symbolized thus $(x)(y)(z) [(Rxy \bullet Ryz) \supset Rxz]$ my consciousness today Tuesday (x) presupposes my consciousness on some past (may not be yesterday Monday, when I was in coma or sometime when I was sleeping), say, last Sunday (y), just as my consciousness last Sunday (y) presupposes my consciousness last Thursday (z). It is instructive to note that the consciousness of today cannot guarantee the consciousness of tomorrow, but it can presuppose that of yesterday.
- (f) Furthermore, I devise the notion of “communal/community consciousness” as “spare part” to be used to fill all such gaps in individual consciousness as coma, sleep, other activities etc.
- (g) When I put all these (d) – (f) together I arrive at what I call constructive reverse transitive consciousness with communal consciousness component or simply put constructive consciousness.

The thesis argument is that, in a single individual/human being’s life span, from childhood to adulthood; you cannot have many persons but a single person. Though it only on metaphysical theory grounds that it may have been possible, existentially, this is impossible. The reason is that there exists no vacuum in the social and existential relation of man to others. Others here could be environment, persons and things. No man is capable of living a solitary life or in isolation. At least, Aristotle’s theory proved this. Since man must necessarily exist with others, then there cannot be a vacuum as far as his continuous persistence is concerned. The crux of the thesis is that the existence and presence of others constitute testimonies to the continuous persistence of the self and sustenance of personal identity. Leibniz’s argument supported this claim thus:

Neither would I say that personal identity and even the self do not dwell in us and that I am not this ego which has been in the cradle, under pretext that I no more remember anything of all that I then did. It is sufficient in order to find moral identity by itself that there be a middle bond of consciousness between a state bordering upon or even a little removed from another, although a leap or forgotten interval might be mingled therein. Thus if a disease had caused an interruption of the continuity of the bond of consciousness so that I did not know how I came into the present state, although I remember things more remote, **the testimony of others** could fill the void in my memory. I could even be punished upon this testimony, if I had just done something bad of deliberate purpose in an interval that I had forgotten a little after on account of this disease. And if I had just forgotten all past things and would be obliged to let myself be taught anew even to my name and even to reading and writing, I could always learn from others my past life in my previous state, as I have kept my rights without its being necessary for me to share them with two persons, and to make me the heir of myself.⁴⁰⁹

In Leibniz's submission, as highlighted above, there are lots of important points to note. The following are essential— that personal identity and the self reside in us, that amnesia or memory loss could be possible, that there exist some sorts of bond of consciousness between one state of a person's life and another, that the testimonies of others could fill the void in memory, that the testimonies of others is so important that one can be punished even when the person did not remember committing the bad act, and ultimately, I can be taught afresh my pervious past or state I could not remember anymore and finally that I cannot be two or more than one person, which is heir to myself.

The fact that individuals are punished on account of others' testimonies is a clear demonstration that the role and place of the "other" cannot be over-emphasized. According to Leibniz, as buttressed by Allison, "'a middle bond of consciousness'" (*une moyenne liaison de consciosite*) between two distinct states is enough to establish identity, and hence, the accountability of the

person. Even if an individual suffers a temporary loss of memory, so that he cannot recall the immediate past, the testimony of others is sufficient to establish the necessary unifying bond, and the individual should not only regard himself as the author of the deeds attributed to him, but be willing to accept their consequences.”⁴¹⁰ The constructive consciousness theory is supported by the theories that attempt to push and argue that both psychological theory and bodily theory are fundamental requirements for personal identity.

When a person is in a state of coma or unconscious, there is completely no time the person ceases to persist. The self or person is continuous either due to environmental presence or the presence of the “other”. Given this whole scenario or arrangement, it is no longer sufficient to remark that a person *A* and a person *B* are psychologically continuous if a person *A*’s memory and experiences are the same with a person *B*. This assertion or schema fits well into Locke’s belief that another person emerges when a person *B* is no longer psychologically continuous as *A*. Where a person *B* at time t_2 experiences, desires, emotions, feelings and actions are not psychologically the same with person *A*’s at time t_1 , then a new person has emerged. By implication a person *A* has stopped or ceased to exist and he is now replaced and continuous as person *B*.

This assumption fits into Locke’s thinking that consciousness may be interrupted either by sleep or forgetfulness. Locke here fails to take into cognizance that though consciousness may be interrupted yet it is continuous with the presence of the other or due to environmental presence. Here, the schema may be slightly modified to read as follow: *a person A and B are psychologically continuous at time t_1 if and only if person A’s and B’s experiences, emotions,*

desires, feelings, memories, environmental presence and the presence of the other are the same at time t_2 .

For example, if a person in a state of coma in an hospital bed wakes up let say after two years in a completely strange environment— strange persons, place, things such that everything around him is totally strange to him and vice versa, and he has also failed to recall his previous memories and the environment's and other's presences are completely lacking to either narrate, reconstruct or aid his memory recovery then one can say or conclude that he is completely a different person.

Sequel to the above, personal identity is a sum total of a person's consciousness, the presence of the other (communal consciousness) and the environment in general. Once the other and environment is doubted or strange to the individual or person vice versa then the individual or person is no longer the same. The environment is here depicted by persons, things in general that may aid one's memory recovery or continuity. There are instances where a person who completely losses his memory and self was aided or reconstructed by things like— pictures, places, things and special moments replayed. A typical example is my personal experience which I am quite sure many others may have had too. In December 24th, 2012 at 6:54am, I posted this message on my face book wall thus: *“This season marks the reawakening, reaffirming and reigniting of our salvation which was freely given to us two hundred and twelve years ago. “For unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given...” Let celebrate it in the spirit of that unspeakable feeling we first got when we gave our life to God. In this season, let us be more spiritually sensitive and more scripturally minded. Do everything in LOVE, PEACE and JOY. For this is what differentiates us as Christians from them (Christian-imitators). Let nothing spoil*

your mood, not your financial want, relationship, family, friends, job, contract, ill-health, disappointment, foes and the likes. Have knowledge of this, that JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON. Be happy! Merry Xmas.” On December 24th, 2018 Face Book brought to my remembrance the post I shared six years ago in the caption “6 Years Ago see your Memories.”

In what follows, first, I had completely forgotten that I wrote or shared a post like that six years ago. Secondly, even if it were possible for me to remember that I shared a post like that on Face Book, it could not have been possible to remember vividly the content and wordings. Going by the Lockean position, suppose Face Book did not bring this to my knowledge and I am asked if I shared a post on December 24th, 2012 at 6:54am, my answer perhaps will be ‘I didn’t remember’ as this was actually my state of mind. By Locke’s argument and the psychological approach proponents, I am no longer the same person who shared the post six years ago, on December 24th, 2012 at 6:54am with the person existing now December 24th 2018. But the moment Face Book brought it to my knowledge I remembered I shared a post like that six years ago. By this, I may have forgotten I wrote or shared a post like that but my-self identity and memory as the same person who shared the post six years ago and the person existing now have been preserved by Face Book. So, there may be somewhat or an implicit “vacuum” or “interruption” between my-self 2012 and 2018, my-self continuity has been ensured or preserved by Face Book presence. This is similar to the pictures I shared, the important events I wrote down in my diary and note-pads.

The point is that when I am no longer conscious of myself existing or continuous, the *other* is still conscious of me as me. The other may have or possess implicit consciousness or awareness of my feelings, desires, experiences and actions but it does not preclude the *other* from carrying

on my consciousness from one day to the next. The *other* may not be some set of persons, places, things, environment but everything I have come in contact with— places, things, environment, persons, from birth to death constitute the “other”. Since the *other* affirmation of the self ends at death then Locke construes consciousness as capable of surviving death, and constituting person that will receive judgment— good or bad and upon whom reward or punishment will be imputed on the last day by God according to what he or she has done to his/her body or self.

This raises a serious paradox. Let us examine the example of a person who dies after ten years of being in coma. Going by my thesis, the conjecture would be that the person’s self continuity would have been preserved with the presence of the other and the environment since from ten years of coma to death, the other and the environment guarantee the person’s persistence but strangely the other did not die with him. The question would be that how would God judge, i.e. award blame or praise to the ten years period the individual was in coma? The probable answer would be that for a person to possess consciousness, mind or intellect implies there is a greater consciousness or intellect or mind from which lesser consciousness participates. This was the view of one of the greatest medieval Christian philosophers, St Augustine. Also, in the view of Hegel, Engels and Karl Marx, God is seen as the highest form of consciousness from which all individuals or persons derive their consciousness. So, it is intuitive to assert that when a person is in coma, not only the other and the environment that continue to perceive or conscious of the person, the “Greater Other” or God also does. Thus, it is not out of place to say that a person’s persistence and personal identity is continuously preserved by the presence of the other, the environment and God, which is the “Greater Other.”

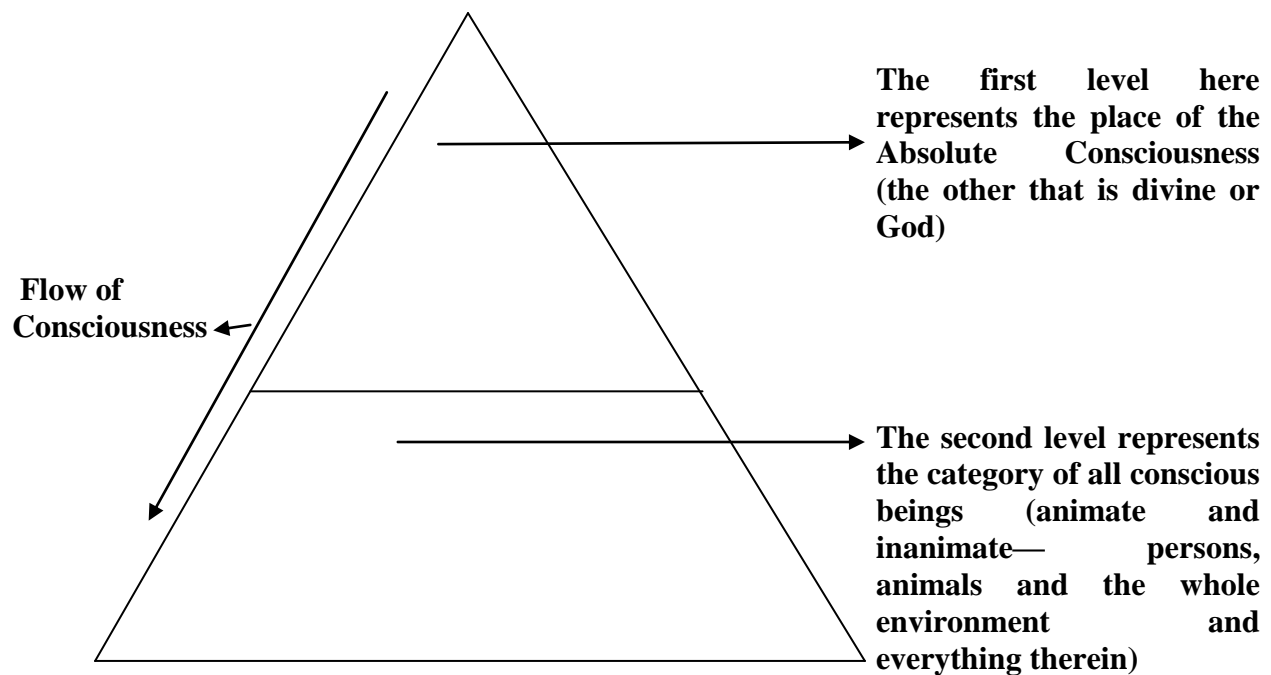
One may want to add that how convincing is the above point for the atheist? It is even less difficult to defend if we are to assume there is no God. If we are to assume that it is only matter that exists, no soul, no mind, no spirit, no possibility of an afterlife. Even if we are to belief in reincarnation where one's consequence of action determines one's number of times to be reborn or reincarnated and the form to be reincarnated, everything will end with the assumption that a person's persistence and personal identity is hinged on consciousness and the vegetative state (of a person). Since a person in coma performs no action, his moral credibility will be considered on the grounds of his/her vegetative state. In all, someone in coma is believed to be amoral agent. However, his personal identity is preserved, uninterrupted and continuous by the presence of the *other* and the environment. The individual's consciousness or identity over time is maintained through the recreation and refurbishing of his consciousness by the "other".

5.2.1. Types or Categorization of the "Other"

From the analysis above, the *other* may be classified into two types or categories— the *other* that is divine and the *other* that is existential. The research shall analyze these two summarily. The *other* that is divine is logically and transcendently prior to the other that is existential. The other that is divine represents God or *Nous* as typified or denoted by Heraclitus and many medieval Christian scholars. It can be considered here as the Absolute Mind or Universal Consciousness from which all other concrete or existential minds or consciousnesses share, participate or derive their origin and existence. Every being in the universe participates in the universal consciousness. None can be said to be self subsistent. Animate beings or inanimate beings— they all draw from and take part in the other that is divine.

In African ontology, especially as portrayed or illustrated by Placid Tempest, the other that is divine may be analogically interpreted as one who occupies the top most or upper echelon in the

hierarchy of beings. It may be compared to the vital force from which all other lower beings in the hierarchy derive their life force. To be a conscious being, one must draw from the universal consciousness. Everything in the web is linked to the universal consciousness and sustains their support or continuous consciousness by remaining in the web or chain of life-force. All beings are regarded as conscious beings—animate or inanimate, sentient or non-sentient. So long they can be acted on or possess the capacity to act on others, they remain conscious beings. This may be diagrammatically¹ illustrated thus:



The second category or level represents the other that is existential. This level is depicted by persons, animals, plants, trees, stones, mountains, rivers, computer and the environment as a whole. It should be noted that the inclusion of inanimate beings or objects in this second level do not in any way suggest that these objects possess consciousness as humans or persons do. There

¹. Osemwegie, T. W. (2019). The diagram illustrates the level and flow of consciousness and depicts the relationship between transcendental and existential beings.

are gradations or levels of consciousness. They belong to this second category by virtue of being able to act or acted upon. In other words, all objects and things that are capable of thoughts or can influence our thoughts have been classified here as conscious. Either they are capable of thought or consciousness as humans or persons, or they are capable of influencing our thoughts. This is analogous to Newton's law of motion, the view that every object is capable of being acted upon. Stones, though they do not possess legs as humans, yet are capable of motions.

Strictly speaking, the other that is existential, refers to other persons, objects and things in general, including the environment that is capable of filling the void when a person relapses into an "unconscious state" or "vegetative state". Reiterating the point made earlier, when a person falls into coma, the continuity or the persistence of the self (due to the presence of constructive consciousness) may not be interrupted. Though the person at this moment does not remember or is unaware of his environment, this does not preclude him from being the same person prior to experiencing or falling into the unconscious state. When the person is able to come out of coma, the others reconstruct or fill his void memory through a process of narrative. By this, self is reconstituted— that is, the self prior to coma and the self after coma are re-linked or reconnected. The narrative experience becomes part of the person's memory now and in the future. In this way, the person is still one and the same person, not another different person as Locke would have us believe.

It is therefore critical to affirm that it is erroneous to think that persons cease to exist when they are unable to reconnect with their past or previous memory or experience. It seems non-existence can only be applied to persons who are completely devoid or who suffer from dearth of consciousness. This is possible only through death. The fact that all beings are linked to the

universal consciousness and so long death which is the only phenomenon that is capable of permanently breaking or disconnecting one from the web or chain of life-force has not come into place, then even in an unconscious state a person is still conscious through others come to fill his/her memory subsequently when he has come out of coma or retain consciousness.

There is no gainsaying that this view will be seriously objected to by the atheistic philosophers and scholars who hold the belief that God does not exist and has no bearing and control directly or indirectly of things in the universe. To this group of thinkers, it may be arbitrary to associate or describe God as universal consciousness and more so to reason that He (God) is the Absolute Consciousness from which all other things in the universe share or participate and derive their consciousness. Though where the origin or source of life emanated from has been a serious debate among theistic and non-theistic scholars, more findings and arguments have naturally pointed to God as the origin and source of life. More so, in spite of scientific explanation and interpretation of virtually everything in the universe, it would be arbitrary to conclude that God is none existent.

The research's views and finding about the 'other that is divine' draw inspiration from the religious interpretation of the universe and largely from the medieval Christian and Muslim thinkers. Philosophy, from ancient to contemporary time cannot be completely devoid of religious hermeneutic approach in the explanation of reality. Granted that the emergence of science has continued to pose serious challenge to the plausibility and the genuineness of transcendental and metaphysical interpretations of reality, it is apt to point out that its domain of "operations" (science) is restricted only to the world of sensible objects or things. It is germane to note that reality is divided into two worlds— the sensible and the non-sensible. It is therefore

arbitrary, illogical and one-sided to superintend or super-impose only the method of science on both the world of sensible objects and the world of supra-sensible objects. It is even more mind-boggling and irrational to conclude that, since science is unable to investigate the transcendental realm, it is therefore non-existence.

Importantly, the point being made here is that consciousness is crucial to defining self's identity and by extension the re-identification (rediscovery) of persons. This (consciousness) must be maintained if the self's persistence or numerical identity, from one day to the next, is to be achieved. Persons as conscious beings are not self-subsisting beings, so also is their consciousnesses. It is for this reason this thesis has categorized persons other than oneself as well as the environment as constituting "other that is existential" and the self-subsisting consciousness as "other that is divine".

In all, the research is of the view that the fact that a person can be analyzed or categorized as a unity of mind and body, especially from the analyses and views expressed in chapter four about persons, self and consciousness, in Western and African thoughts or world views, inevitably forms the basis of an eclectic approach as solution to the problem of personal identity. The next subchapter shall be focusing on the rational ground for proposing an eclectic approach or view to the problem of personal identity, instead of the either psychological or *physicalism* approach.

5.2.2. The Moral and Environmental Relevance of the "Other"/Constructive Consciousness theory

The role and place of the "other" in the determination or rediscovery/actualization of the self and personal identity remain significant. If the rediscovery or re-identification of the self is not dependent on the self only as pointed out in this thesis but also on the other (i.e., existence of

other human beings), it therefore behooves all humans to respect the dignity and existence of the other. One of the essential ways to ensure this is by valuing the life of the other. This means that actions that will inflict pain and suffering on the other should be avoided. On the contrary, actions that will promote happiness and pleasure of the other should be pursued. To this end, it therefore means that human actions such as terrorism, kidnapping, arm robbery, stealing, murder, assassination, human trafficking to mention a few that debase or undermine human dignity should be morally condemned. Without the presence of the other, self rediscovery or actualization may be existentially impossible.

Furthermore, the environment plays a significant role in the reconstruction of a person's identity due to declining/loss of memory or forgetfulness. To deliberately obliterate or destroy the environment is to implicitly harm that which could aid self re-identification/discovery. The argument is that the ecological environment is instrumental in the determination of the self's persistence over time. To hurt the environment is indirectly to harm that which aids the persistence of the self/person over time. The environment provides the ambience where a person's persistence and identity can be discussed. The content of consciousness sometimes constitutes phenomena/things in the empirical environment (recall Husserlian doctrine of secondary intentionality).

The importance of the environment to aiding personal identity or self rediscovery may be illustrated using the rule of hypothetical syllogism thus; if personal identity implies sameness of consciousness, sameness of consciousness implies human experiences, human experiences implies things/phenomena in our environment, therefore personal identity implies things/phenomena in our environment. To preserve the environment is by extension preserving personal identity. The hypothetical deduction/argument can be rendered schematically thus:

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \text{If} & & I \supset C \\
 & & C \supset H \\
 & & \underline{H \supset E} \\
 \text{Therefore,} & & I \supset E
 \end{array}$$

(Key: I = personal identity, C = sameness of consciousness, H = human experiences, E = things/phenomena in our environment)

5.3. Person, Self and Consciousness as Unity of Mind and Body: Basis for Eclectic Approach.

To demonstrate that a person or self is a unity of body and mind, however not in the sense of Descartes' conceptualization, has considerable meaningful insight when asked the question, is a new born a self? A close analysis of Popper's answer to the question is quite stimulating— "is a new born a self? Yes and no? It feels: it is capable of feeling pain and pleasure. But it is not yet a person in the sense of Kant's two statements: "A person is a subject that is responsible for his actions", and "A person is something that is conscious, at different times, of numerical identity of its self." Thus a baby is a body- a developing human body- before it becomes a person, a unity of body and mind."⁴¹¹

Clearly, this suggests that a person is neither in every aspect mind or consciousness nor in every aspect a body. The best approximation and assumption will be that he is both. In other words, it is both mind and body that informs a person's identity. No scholar may effectively theorize on the accurate identity of a person and by extension personal identity without alluding to either the body or mind (consciousness). Theories that say a person's identity is body are only affirming a partial identity of the actual or real identity of the human person. Same goes with the theories that say a person's identity is consciousness. The appropriate theory or theories must strike a balance— like the Aristotelian ethical theory of virtue lies in the middle. In this regard, a person is an integration or amalgamation of mind and body. P. F. Strawson seems to make the same

point when he hinted that “it is a mistake to assume a distinction between body and mind to start with; we should start, rather, from the integrated person. We can then distinguish various aspects or kinds of properties: those which are clearly physical, and those which are partly or wholly personal or mental.”⁴¹²

In what follows, it is fairly clear that the identity and integrity of the self have a physical basis. This seems to be centered in the brain. Yet, we can lose considerable portions of our brain without interference with our personality. On the other hand, damage to our mental integrity seems to be always due to brain damage or some other physical disorder of the brain.⁴¹³ It is also fitting to explore the assertion of J. H. Woodger about the nature of person thus: “persons, it is rightly said, can be *identified* in the same way in which we identified physical bodies. And this, it is said, solves the problem of the identity of selves. I think it is a very attractive suggestion that we take the person as primary, and its analysis into body and mind as a secondary abstraction.”⁴¹⁴ It seems this suggestion is question begging—the very thing that may help or aid our understanding of person is its analysis. A person cannot be defined as a person wholly; rather a sort of *mereological* decomposition of the person’s parts must be carried out. It is from these parts; body and mind we may reach a convincing or agreeable status about the nature of a person or the exact conceptualization of the term ‘person’.

5.3.1. ‘Body as identity’ and ‘Consciousness as identity’ in the conceptualization of personal identity: Basis for Eclectic Approach

To answer the question outlined in Robert C. Coburn’s work “Personal Identity Revisited”: “what is it for a person who exists now to be the very same person as some person who existed at some past time (or who will exist at some future time)? Or, what does a person’s retaining

his/her identity through time consist in? Or ‘what is it for a person a , who existed at t_j , to be a later stage in the history of a person a , who existed at t_i where t_i is earlier than t_j ?’⁴¹⁵ This requires either appeal to the Lockean psychological criterion or the bodily criterion of personal identity. From our analysis of these criteria, it seems essential to agree with Borowski that there is no hope that we can ever find a single adequate criterion of personal identity:

First let us note that there is no hope that we can ever find a single adequate criterion of personal identity. There are strong arguments that ‘a necessary condition of making supposed identifications on non-bodily grounds is that at some stage identification be made on bodily grounds’, and, conversely, that no physical identity can amount to a criterion of personal identity— since, even if the suggestion is weakened to apply only to identity of brain— ‘if the outcome of the brain transfer were different... surely no would say that this man, who looks, act, and talks just like Robinson... must really be Brown... because he has Brown’s brain. This exemplifies the way in which any proposed criterion can be discredited by describing a situation in which all the other possible factors are ranked against it; and there is no reason to suppose that there should be any limit to our ability to invent such new puzzle cases. Whence it follows that puzzle cases have a purely negative role, and that the search for a single criterion can never succeed.’⁴¹⁶

More so, Borowski buttressed further the inadequacy of a single criterion on his reflection on Penelhum’s remarks in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* that:

‘it is salutary to remind ourselves that our actual concept of a person is of a psychological being. Hence talk of the criteria of identity for purely psychical beings is not talk of the concept of a person that we actually have’, for this reason, ‘the criteria problem admits of no... clear-cut solution, since it is clear on examination that both the bodily criterion and the memory criterion are ineluctable components of our concept of a person. The bodily criterion is more fundamental, but the memory criterion is, in its own way, indispensable, because of the basic epistemological status of memory itself. This is one of the many facets of the irreducibly psychophysical nature of persons.’⁴¹⁷

One of the reasons why some scholars think that an eclectic approach to the problem of personal identity is apt, perhaps could be due to Plato’s assertion in the *Symposium* that:

A man is said to be the same person from childhood until he is advanced in years: yet though he is called the same he does not at any time possess the same properties; he is continually becoming a new person, and there are things also which he loses, as appears by his hair, his flesh, his bones, and his blood and body altogether. And observe that not only in his body but in his soul besides we find none of his manners or habits, his opinions, desires, pleasures, pains or fears, ever abiding the same in his particular self; some things grow in him, while others perish,... and a like fate attends every sort of knowledge.⁴¹⁸

The argument here is that personal identity over time consists in physical and psychological continuity. It appears or seems to me that there is the identity of the body and there is also the identity of the mind or consciousness. Both identities together constitute personal identity. A person is not hundred per cent body neither hundred per cent consciousness. To stick to one is rather implausible intuitively as far as the discussion of one's personal identity is concerned. There is the more likelihood that people are swayed easily or gravitate toward the belief that the body is all there is, i.e. as the necessary and sufficient conditions for approaching the subject of personal identity. More so, this seems to be the case for the reason that a lot of people and theorists have come to identify the brain with body, since it is held to be the seat of the mind. This belief has stiffened other access, thus rendering the body criterion as intuitively plausible for personal identity. However, Popper has warned against accepting the identity of the body as an ultimate criterion thus:

In ordinary circumstances we can regard the identity of the body as a criterion of the identity of person, and of the self. But our thought experiment, the transplantation... shows that the identity of the body is a criterion only as long as it entails the identity of the brain; and the brain plays this role in its turn only because we conjecture its liaison with the mind, because we conjecture that due to this liaison the brain is the carrier of the self-identity of the person. This also explains why, in a case of pathological loss of memory, we should regard the identity of the body as sufficient for identifying the person. But this does not imply that we accept the identity of the body as an ultimate criterion.⁴¹⁹

Popper's remark about the loss of memory and, the body standing in its stead in the identification of the person is apt. It is quite plausible to accept this view. It is similar to the case of a person in a vegetative state that is being rushed to the hospital; the physical body may be used to identify the person. Here the point must be made that personal identity must be seen or viewed from two perspectives— the person affirming his identity (during conscious state) and the “other” affirmation of the self. Let us annotate these two points further, starting with the first.

Though bodily identity has no place in Locke's memory theory, yet it cannot be over-looked if we are to accept consciousness as the criterion of personal identity. Before one can talk about consciousness as the determinant of personal identity, there has to be a person who has a body and he/she is conscious. How do we arrive at consciousness as the only thing that is permanent or that persists through time amidst change without first intuitively noticing change physically? Consciousness does not exist in a vacuum as Locke himself affirmed; it either exists in substance or body. But how do we come about the discussion of consciousness as basis of personal identity, if we have not seen or perceived changes as it relates to the body? Suppose a blind person from birth, without having both physical and mental pictures of his/her self, would the discussion of personal identity makes sense to him? Suppose also that, I have no idea of myself, how I look, what I have grown up to become, no image or photo, no mirror, when I look into the river or water, all I see is shadow of myself, I have no idea of others, how they look, in fact, I exist in isolation. Then from these suppositions, we see that nobody could raise discussions about identity, let alone personal identity based on consciousness alone.

It is for this reason Hegel argues that the presence of the other is vital to coming to self-consciousness. He also noted that “developed self-consciousness can arise only when the self

recognizes selfhood in others and itself (hence, truly social or we-consciousness- of identity-in-difference).⁴²⁰ What is said here is that, the self necessarily depends on the other— a kind of social relation, for it to attain self-consciousness. The social relation of the self and the other is further articulated thus:

The existence of another self is a condition of self-consciousness- yet the first spontaneous reaction when we are confronted by another is to assert our own existence in the face of the other. The self desires to annihilate the other (just as it does objects) as a means to triumphing of the self over the other (the self uses the other to satisfy itself). If such a move would be the literal destruction of the other, it would also defeat the self's own purposes. For self-consciousness requires the recognition of the selfhood of the other (the other must recognize me if I am to be self-conscious), and thus there occurs what Hegel calls a Master-Slave Dialectic at this level of coming to self-consciousness.⁴²¹

Similarly, George Herbert Mead in his two most profound areas of writing; “Pragmatism and Symbolic Interaction”, argued that “the individual mind can exist only in relation to other minds with shared meanings.”⁴²² He thinks that there is no distinction between consciousness and action and interaction as well. Rather, consciousness is an integral part of action and interaction.

His most prominent idea is the emergence of the mind and self from the communication process between organisms. “This concept of how the mind and self emerge from the social process of communication by signs founded the symbolic interactionist school of sociology. Rooted intellectually in Hegelian dialectics and process philosophy, Mead, like Dewey, developed a more materialist process philosophy that was based upon human action and specifically communicative action.”⁴²³ The emergence of mind or self in Mead's opinion is dependent on the interface between the human organism and its social environment. The argument is rendered thus:

The emergence of the mind is contingent upon interaction between the human organism and its social environment; it is through participation in the social act of communication that individuals realize their potential for significantly symbolic behaviour, that is, thought. Mind, in Mead's terms, is the individualized focus of the communication process. It is linguistic behaviour on the part of the individual. There is, then, no "mind or thought without language;" and language (the content of mind) "is only a development and product of social interaction"(...). Thus, mind is not reducible to the neurophysiology of the organic individual, but is emergent in "the dynamic, ongoing social process" that constitutes human experience.⁴²⁴

Furthermore, it is the case that mind, in Mead's view arises out of a social process, that is, through the social act of communication. This is an important aspect that is instrumental to his theory of mind and his social philosophy. It is argued that "his theory of mind, self, and society" is, in effect, a philosophy of the act from the standpoint of a social process involving the interaction of many individuals, just as his theory of knowledge and value is a philosophy of the act from the standpoint of the experiencing individual in interaction with an environment."⁴²⁵

Mead further opines that the individual is a product of an on-going, pre-existing society, or more specifically, social interaction that is a consequence of a *sui generis* society. In the same way, he argued that the self arises when the individual becomes an object to themselves.⁴²⁶ He averred further that we are objects first to other people, and secondarily we become objects to ourselves by talking the perspective of other people. It is by the means of language that enables us talk about ourselves in the same way as we talk about other people, and thus through language we become other to ourselves.⁴²⁷

It therefore implies that language is important in the discussion and the argument of personal identity. How language is used to construe personal identity's debate, to a certain extent determines its veracity. When Locke says, for example, that a person is a thinking intelligent

being who is conscious of himself as himself, this depends almost totally on the use of language. Similarly, the argument that we are human organisms and that organism's vegetative state explains or consists of a person's identity over time necessarily depends on the use and meaning we ascribe to language.

In all, Mead sees the mind as the individual importation of the social process.⁴²⁸ The self, according to Mead is a social process. This implies that there are series of actions that go on in the mind to help formulate one's complete self. He noted that as gestures are taken in by the individual organism, the individual organism also takes in the collective attitudes of others, in the form of gestures, and reacts accordingly with other organized attitudes.⁴²⁹ Mead explains the process as the "I" and the "Me". According to him, the "Me" is the social self and the "I" is the response of an individual to the attitudes of others, while the "Me" is the organized set of attitudes of others which an individual assumes.⁴³⁰

The point the thesis is making here is that discussion of personal identity makes sense because it involves everything in my environment. Since I do not exist in isolation, I exist with others, I have intuitive idea of myself, I have cognitive awareness of my environment and things that go on around me, then it is not only consciousness that should matter in the determination of my identity but also everything around me. This is to say, "the person though a separate substance, must nevertheless relate to other person-substances"⁴³¹ around him. Locke would argue that when a person is unable to extend or annex his memory or thought to past actions is a different person, such that, if Socrates waking and Socrates sleeping lack continuous psychological existence, he is no longer the same person but different persons. To this, the research argues that, since it is seldom common to see a person whose memory or consciousness has not been

interrupted either by sleep or forgetfulness but feel intuitively the same person, it is as a result of the phenomenon of the “other” (everything; including other persons and the environment) which help to fill the gap during the temporary discontinuity of memory or consciousness. Even in the case of total forgetfulness or unconsciousness, the person can get back his memory or consciousness with the aid or help of the “other”. Though “...is the individual who remembers, the activity of remembering is extended, being distributed between that individual and things in her environment.”⁴³² To this end, the fact that “...individuals engage in some forms of cognition only insofar as they constitute part of a social group”⁴³³ is enough to explicate the tenability of the “other” in the determination of personal identity.

There is no denying “the sense of having a continued psychological existence over time, such that one can remember oneself having done certain things in the past, matters to us and is what allows us to guide our current actions and plan our futures in light of who we are.”⁴³⁴ In the light of this, the essential role of the other can help to reinforce and reinvigorate the status of the psychological criterion. If we take the infant, for example, granted that he has not attained full consciousness, the fact that the infant can be aided by the narrative of the “other”, is a clear indication that what matters in personal identity is not only consciousness but the presence of the “other”.

5.4.1. Person: as Self Affirmation of His identity (Direct Self Affirmation)

It is necessary to explicate the notion of person as self affirmation of his identity. This arises when a person is conscious of his self as self. By this, he is the only person that can stamp, affirm or assert his identity. The *other* does not play any role. The environment too has nothing to contribute. The persistence of the self is established by the person’s continuous conscious state

from one day to the next. The person's experiences, desires, feelings, in all sum actions are only explained by the person. He is the same self because he continuously carries the same experiences, the same feelings, the same desires.

It is in this regard that it is affirmed that it is only the person that can sufficiently and satisfactorily answer the question about identity of his self. When I perceived objects and things around me, I do not perceive their experiences, feelings, desires inwardly. I am not able to penetrate into the conscious state of the other person's mind. I only perceive the person's outward appearances or the physical body. For example, I have no way of knowing that the other person is no longer the same self or person assuming the person has forgotten his or her experiences of yesterday when he wakes up today's morning. Similarly, when a person is unconscious either due to accident or illness, for the animalist theorists, the person is said to be in a vegetative state, but others seeing or perceiving the person cannot explain the inner or inward experiences of the person other than the person's physical state. This physical state may not satisfactorily explain the person's inward experiences except the person himself. There are instances in real life where a person who has been unconscious for say three days is able to explain or narrate his inner experiences or feelings upon regaining consciousness.

So, it is not always the case that when a person is unconscious, he is no longer the same person. The unconscious state is only a physical state perceived by the other persons. The mere perception of this state is not sufficient to rule out that the self persistence is continuous. Inner experiences are exclusive only to the person experiencing it. It can only be the person that will be able to narrate his or her experiences not the other person. A momentary pause of consciousness under this auspices or regard does not terminate the continuous existence of the same self and by

extension personal identity. It is only on the ground that if the person who has been unconscious is unable to connect with his past self, i.e. if the person fails to bring to bear his past experiences and connects it with the present.

The self is fallible. The fallibility is due to the self sometimes not able to remember previous or past experiences. This is usually due to the decline of the brain's power. This phenomenon is common with older people. As humans grow old, they tender to forget things. This shows that the power of the brain is gradually declining. When this happens, it is not the case that the individual's continuity has been stopped. Through a gradually and guided means sometimes people are helped to regain their self or consciousness. This is the place of the other which we shall explicate next.

5.4.2 The “Other” Affirmation of the Self (Indirect Self Affirmation)

The second perspective to personal identity is the other affirmation of the self. As explained above, the self is capable of forgetting/forgetfulness. The self in its natural design cannot continue and remain conscious *ad infinitum*. At birth, i.e. as new born baby, the self-affirmation and awareness is absent. This may be tantamount to Locke's description of the mind at birth as “tabula rasa”, meaning a “blank” or “clean slate.” As the child continues to gather experiences; his/her self-affirmation is gradually activated— this coincide or happens alongside the development of the brain which is the seat of consciousness. The brain as hinted earlier in preceding chapter is only a seat of consciousness; it is not the owner of consciousness, being so, the child learns about (him)self and (his)identity by experience and the other's presence.

The natural design of the brain makes it possible to sometimes experience memory loss. A careful study of the human brain reveals that as time passes by a person may start experiencing

brain retardation or decline. Medically, this has been proven to be so. This may be due to sickness, accident or disease which has affected the brain. This loss of memory impedes on or interrupts the maintenance of constant or abiding consciousness and by extension of the self. When this happens, the “other” becomes the affirmation of the self. In other words, the “other” replaces the function or role of the self-affirmation. There is usually no vacuum, when self-affirmation fails either due to memory loss or interruption of consciousness, the “other” continues the preservation of the self-identity, until the person regains self-consciousness.

When this happens, there is no loss of personal identity *per se*; it is only loss of self-affirmation. Personal identity is preserved and uninterrupted. The only phenomenon that can permanently bring an end to the continuity of the self or person and by extension personal identity or self-identity is death. It can be said here that the dissolution of the self and by extension of personal identity in human persons is caused by death. Death as it were is the final and total termination of life and the continuity of the self, person and consciousness. As far as self-identity and personal identity of the human person is concerned, there is no vacuum. From the day a person is born to the time he/she dies, personal identity is preserved by self-affirmation or awareness of itself and also by the existence or presence of the other.

The point is that the self owns the brain and not the brain that owns the self. The self is conscious of its self— it is aware of its activities and it capable of storing these activities. The self continues to act and re-act. These actions, reactions and inactions are stored and constitute memories of the self. The ability of the self to constantly reflect, ruminant and ponder on, no matter how long the action, reaction or inaction may have been, defines or explains the process of personal identity. Amidst these actions, reactions and inactions, the self continues to see itself

as itself. These actions, reactions and inactions are not external to the self neither do they arise from nothing/nowhere. It is difficult to separate the self from its activities. Once the self is no longer aware of its activities then it ceases to be the same self. The self must necessarily be cognizant of its activities to remain the same self. It is this awareness of the self as itself via its activities, that the research has christened or called direct self affirmation.

The second is the indirect self affirmation. This happens once the self is unable to reflect accurately on its activities. This is usually due to sleep, forgetfulness and sickness. I may never be aware of my activities during sleep. There are instances where a person asleep makes verbal utterances subconsciously. The person is not aware of these utterances but the other people around are. They will be the ones to communicate the person's activities to him/her. Strangely, the person at first may deny that he is the one that made the utterances. As time goes on, owing to further similar experiences, the person comes to the knowledge of his/her self or understanding of his/her self as the one who usually makes utterances while asleep. This epistemic understanding of the self, which was brought about by the aid or presence of the other, constitutes what this research has called indirect self affirmation.

The earlier understanding, especially from the proponents of the psychological continuity theorists is that the self may be interrupted by sleep and forgetfulness. Once the self is unable to extend his immediate experiences with the past experiences, he is no longer the same self. Going by this view, it is the similarity of the experiences or acts— past and present that makes the same self/person. Once a vacuum is created or there exist a dis-connect between the acts or experiences of the present and the acts or experiences of the past in the consciousness of the individual, then he/she is no longer the same person or self. Is it not possible for me to be the

same self even if my past and present thoughts are not similar? The view of the psychological theorists seems that for the self to be the same it must be aware of its present experiences and past experiences at the same time.

It may sound right to assert that the psychological continuity theorists only accept the similarity of the present thoughts and the past thoughts of an individual to define or explicate the person's personal identity without a meticulous consideration of the nature of the self. To use one's experiences to define one's persistence and identity seem grossly implausible. It is like placing a cart before the horse. The only ground that one may accept the argument of the psychological theorists is, if the self and its experiences from birth to death are the same thing. In other words, are my thoughts, behaviour, feelings, desires and experiences etc. the same thing as myself?

To answer the question above may not be very easy, as a straightforward answer may be impossible. It is imperative to affirm that the self, though a reality, its nature may be easily discernible. A metaphysical approach is more apt than a scientific approach. The self is more of an immaterial substance than material. It is not the case that the self is purely a spiritual substance like the Hegelian self or absolute spirit. Conversely, the self is not also purely matter. It may be described in the Aristotelian sense as a substance which matter inheres. The self manifests as partly matter (body) and partly mind (form). It is neither absolutely matter nor form. From these descriptions and analyses of the self, we can therefore say the self is not thoughts, behaviour, feeling, desire and experience, though, we are aware of the self's existence through our thoughts, feelings, desires, emotions and experiences.

We grasp the knowledge and awareness of the self when we communicate our feelings, thoughts, emotions and experiences to others. The self does not exist in isolation, nor is something solitary.

It is something sociable. It is something that relates; interfaces and penetrates. It cannot be conscripted to be represented solely by the brain. To do so, is to reduce the self to matter. It is not reducible to brain; rather the self owns the brain. It is erroneous to assume the brain to be self. The brain is only the seat of consciousness, where all our emotions, thoughts, feelings and experiences are generated. The self is in charge of the brain and by extension in charge of our thoughts, feelings and experiences.

To reiterate the foregoing discussion, it is seen that the self is conscious of its self in two ways—as itself on one hand and due to the presence of the other. This seems to be supported by Hegel assertion that “I am a being for itself which is for itself only through another. Therefore, the other penetrates me to the heart. I cannot doubt him without doubting myself, since self-consciousness is real only in so far as it recognizes its echo in another.”⁴³⁵ Furthermore, Frances Berenson’s analysis of Hegel on others and the self is apt. He opined that each of us is a self in that we exist for ourselves as well as for others—we are both objects and subjects, part of one reality, and we come to know selves through our interaction with others in a common form of life.⁴³⁶

The inference to draw from all of this as far as the problem and approach to personal identity is concerned is that the Lockean approach which is also the psychological approach is only a half approach. Also, the bodily approach which is also the *physicalist* or somatic approach is only a half approach. Both approaches need to be blended to achieve and perhaps bring to an end the seemingly “unending” problematic about who we are and what are we, more so, about our personhood and personal identity.

Thus far, this thesis has provided full-scale conception of the self, consciousness and more importantly, of personal identity. It has debunked the view which the Lockean approach represents— the possibility of having “many persons” exist in a single entity (body/man). The thesis has demonstrated that the view of Locke and by and large the view of the psychological approach is not only unfounded but also implausible. The reason is that if person *A* for example experiences loss of consciousness or he is not able to connect his present thoughts with the past, for Locke, person *A* has ceased to exist as a person. The implication of this is the existence of another self or person *B* in person *A*’s body. This means that each time a person is not able to extend his memory or consciousness with the past, a new person exists or takes over its place. This inevitably leads to strange consequences.

Accordingly, some of the paradoxes or questions that may emanate from the scenario above are— how comes “person *B*” is not aware or conscious that he has acquired a “new body”? Secondly, where was person *B* prior to acquiring the “new body”? Since by implication *B* has acquired *A*’s body, then *A* which ceases to exist will acquire what body? Assuming there is no body to be acquired, *A* will remain where? The nexus between *body* and *mind*, *matter* and *form*, essentially presupposes that every *mind* has a unique *body* and every *form* has a unique *matter*. It is only at death *form* or *mind* can be separated from *body* or *matter* respectively. A person cannot stop existing by mere inability to extend his thoughts to the past. If this was the case, every single existential being or individual would intuitively possess this knowledge.

These paradoxes or questions are essential if Locke’s approach or theory of personal identity is to be fully meaningful and true to life. The point raised above has seriously undermined Locke’s body swap paradigm going by his example of the Prince and the cobbler. This fission case or

body swap at best exists in the figment or imagination of Locke without clear scientific proof. Though there are possibilities of brain transplant, especially those carried out to correct or solve the problem of brain dysfunction in epileptic patients; such do not exactly portray the Lockean Prince and the Cobbler example. It is not out of place to say that Locke went too far in trying to justify the psychological approach to the problem of personal identity. His fission or brain transplant example can only be described as hypothetical.

Furthermore, the body swap example has been refuted by the argument that it is outright injustice for an “innocent body” to suffer the wrong or punishment attributed or imputed or committed by another self or person while in the body prior to the swap. Suppose a person A has memory m_1 and body b_1 . He was convicted of stealing and was to receive one hundred strokes of cane. Suppose before receiving the hundred strokes of cane, he swapped his memory with another body b_2 . Thus, leaving only body b_1 to face the punishment committed by memory m_1 in a new body b_2 . The pertinent question is, is it fair or justifiable to punish only body b_1 for what m_1 and b_1 committed? More so, the situation where two or two hundred, several persons come to exist in one body is not only raising perplexing questions to the view of personal identity hinged on consciousness but also renders Locke’s reality of resurrection, attribution of just reward and punishment to persons inconceivable and impossible. This point is further expressed succinctly thus:

If the same persons, after annihilation, could, by restoring of the same consciousness, be created again; he might as possibly be created again, by addition of the same consciousness to new matter, even before annihilation of the first: from whence it would follow, that two, or two hundred, several persons, might all, by a superaddition of the like consciousness, be one and the same individual person, at the same time that they remain several and distinct persons: it being as easy for God to add my consciousness to the new formed matter of one or of one hundred

bodies at this present time, as the dust of my present body at the time of the resurrection. And no reason can be given, why it would not be as just at any time, to punish for my faults a new created man, to whom my consciousness is by the power of God superadded: [...] This inexplicable confusion, wherewith your doctrine perplexes the notion of personal identity, upon which identity the justice of all reward and punishment manifestly depends; makes the resurrection, in your way of arguing, to be inconceivable and impossible.⁴³⁷

The point might be made that the body is inconsequential or irrelevant in the case described above; that what matter is that person A cannot escape final or divine judgment, as noted by Locke. It should be emphasized that the first point of identification of a person is his body. This is very important across all cultures— African, Western, Asian, etc. when a person's body is completely shattered and mixed-up with other bodies during an accident, efforts are intensified to clearly identify which body belongs to which person. This is usually done through DNA test or forensic test. The essence is to make sure the wrong body is not buried with the wrong person. This view is taken seriously in cultures where a person is believed to be reincarnated. In other words, those who belief in reincarnation would ensure that the right body parts are buried with the right person.

Hence, no matter how the issue of personal identity is treated, the body remains an essential component. So also is consciousness or memory. Both make up a person. A person's identity is incomplete with his body, so also his mind or consciousness. It is pertinent to point out that by consciousness or mind; we are not referring to the soul. Locke has meticulously dispensed with the doctrine of the soul as inconsequential. He described it as not something necessary for personal identity. He also dispensed with the theory of the soul on the account of Plato's doctrine of transmigration of the soul and referred to the soul as a substance which is capable of receiving consciousness. Hence, Locke declined to equate the idea of person with the idea of a soul. Thus,

with reference to the concept of personal identity, reference is made to the idea of a person and not to the soul.

5.5. Eclectic/Heterogeneous Option to Personal Identity Debate

According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*— eclectic means *selecting what appears to be the best in various doctrines, methods, or styles*. Here, this research shall be concerned with a form of a heterogeneous approach to the resolution of the personal identity dichotomy. It is a method or approach this thesis has adopted to explicate and argue that the paradoxes inherent in the personal identity's debate may be laid to rest if the best aspects of the bodily approach's and psychological approach's arguments are combined or harnessed. Going by the various views and perspectives of the idea of person, self, body and consciousness (spirit/mind) expressed by the many social cultural world-views of the people across different strata— African, Western and Asian, it is apt to rethink the methods of personal identity in favour of a more holistic and heterogeneous approach.

Consequently, this thesis argued that the advocates of personal identity as consciousness or memory miss the point half-way, in the same vein; the advocates of personal identity as body miss the point half-way. The proper approach is an eclectic approach— an approach that harnesses or combines the elements of psychological approach and the bodily approach to personal identity. This new horizon argues that personal identity must be approached and understood from these two perspectives. This new position proposed here agrees with those who advocated both theories as proper approaches to personal identity but only depart from the later to argue that personal identity is continuous and uninterrupted. The heterogeneous approach is

informed by the fact that the self or person is psycho-physical in nature. This point is corroborated by Popper's remark thus:

The brain is owned by the self, rather than the other way round. The self is almost always active. The activity of selves is, I suggest, the only genuine activity we know. The active, psycho-physical self is the active programmer to the brain,... The mind is, as Plato said, the pilot. It is not, as David Hume and William James suggested, the sum total, or the bundle, or the stream of its experiences: this suggests passivity. It is, I suppose, a view that results from passively trying to observe oneself, instead of thinking back and reviewing one's past actions.

I suggest that these considerations show that the self is not a "pure ego" that is, a mere subject. Rather, it is acting and suffering, recalling the past and planning and programming the future; expecting and disposing. It contains, in quick succession, or all at once, wishes, plans, hopes, decisions to act, and a vivid consciousness of being an acting self, a centre of action. And it owes this selfhood largely to interaction with other persons, other selves, and with world 3. And all this closely interacts with the tremendous "activity" going on in its brain.⁴³⁸

5.6. The knowledge of Self/Person (Personal Identity) as Innate

The awareness that a person has as the same self or person from one day to the next, is innate. Like *apriori* knowledge, the knowledge that I have of myself as the same person yesterday and the same person now and the same person in the future is innate. One cannot dispute or doubt this knowledge without falling into contradiction. No one is inclined to think that he/she is not the same person as the person of yesterday and in the future, whether or not he/she extends his memory to the past. The same applies to the body. A person, for example, after losing an arm or a leg— any other body part does not need to cross-check his previous body (prior to the loss of the arm/leg etc.) with the current body (after the loss of the arm/leg etc.) to know that he/she is the same self/person or not. This presupposes that the knowledge of self-identity or personal identity is logically prior to the psychological or bodily theory of personal identity.

Consequently, the theory of personal identity must be re-formulated to follow this line of thought. Like I argued previously in this work, it is absurd for a person to wake up one morning and to think that he/she is no longer the same person yesterday or to ask the question about his/her identity and persistence. Personal identity theory, according to Locke may have been constructed to fit into Locke's explanation of the paradox of resurrection on the last day. In essence, no body questions or raises doubt about his/her self identity or personal identity. Even, in the event where a person wakes up from coma or suffers severe mental disorientation or is unable to connect his past and present memory, he/she does not intuitively feel different.

The pertinent question therefore is what is the importance or relevance of personal identity debate? Why raise questions concerning what we are? Who we are? Does anything really matter about self or personal identity? These questions seem unimportant but on a closer inspection, they are germane if we are to settle the issue of what our real identity is, the proper award of praise or blame morally either to man or person, the nature that will eventually survive death and the resurrection of the dead on the last day. Locke's analysis of person as forensic agent is a clear indication that a person is morally responsible for his/her actions. The appropriate consequences— blame or praise should be ascribed to the right person is the reason to distinguish the identity of person from the identity of man.

5.7. Findings

From the analysis of Locke's theory of personal identity, other theories and counter theories of personal identity, analyses of the idea of the self, person and consciousness; the following were arrived at;

- i. that Locke's exposition of the theory of personal identity has stimulated modern and contemporary thinkers to articulate and provide a conceptual framework for the examination and studying of the self identity and personhood;
- ii. that though Locke's psychological approach has been severely criticized, it remains a fundamental theory for explicating the identity of the self in time and space and of personal identity from one day to the next;
- iii. that though the idea of self/person and consciousness have different meanings when examined vis-à-vis Locke's theory, these concepts must however be exposed contextually. If not examined under this background, then the concepts become seemingly misleading and unsatisfactory;
- iv. that what matters in personal identity is not only consciousness, but also constructive consciousness which is seen through the activities of the *other* and the environment by and large;
- v. that the various theories of personal identity— *psychological* theory and *physicalism* or bodily theory provide aspects and half ways of explaining and resolving the personal identity debate;
- vi. that these sundry theories are inadequate as they do not provide necessary and sufficient grounds for the re-identification of person;
- vii. that a person is a rational, moral and social being;

- viii. that an enduring theory must combine or harness psychology, *physicalism* and socialization in the determination of personal identity;
- ix. that Locke's theory and approach is the most germane/relevant to explaining the continuous/persistence identity of the person corporeal and incorporeal/after life;
- x. that there is a distinction between the idea of person, man and the human being;
- xi. that an eclectic approach is the most apt and intuitive in the debate of personal identity;
- xii. that the continuity and persistence of the self from one day to the next is self-validating and innate, and

that the idea of personal identity is purely relative—it is only the individual that can affirm his or her persistence and continuity over time and from one day to the next.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6. 1. Summary

This research took a critical evaluation of the idea of person, self and consciousness in John Locke's theory of personal identity. To achieve its objective, the research was divided into six chapters. Chapter one which is general introduction of the dissertation covers the background of study, the statement of problem, the objective of the research, purpose of the research, significance, methodology and scope. The last part of chapter one provides a conceptual analysis and definition of terms that are relevant to the work. The background of the research provides a historical framework for what is to be seen in Locke's philosophy and particularly his theory of personal identity hinged on consciousness. The core of the problem was how to account for the identity of person over time amidst change. Under what condition can it be said that a person *A* who exists in the past at time T_1 and a person *A* existing now at time T_2 are logically the same?

Using the method of analysis, the research approached the above problem by analyzing the subject matter, chapter by chapter. In chapter two, a thematic review of relevant literature on the subject of personal identity was undertaken. It comprises four sections. The first section focused on affirmations of Locke's doctrine. The second was the consideration of Locke's thesis as mistaken, confusing and failed. The third was the replacement for Locke's thesis of consciousness and the fourth was the gap identified and the proposed solution. The outcome is that there is current effort by some scholars to shift from Locke's psychological view of the self to an extended self. It is on this basis that the research proposes to rethink and re-modify Locke's

approach from an intrinsic to an extrinsic perspective. Thus, proposing the doctrine of constructive consciousness.

Chapter three focuses on John Locke and his theory of personal identity. The chapter offers an in-depth analysis of Locke's point of departure and conclusion that it is only sameness of consciousness and not sameness of substance (body or soul) that can guarantee a person's identity and personal identity over time. It is for this reason that his approach was christened psychological. The chapter also spelt out Locke's distinction between the identity of man and the identity of person. In sum, Locke did not only consider a person as a rational, thinking intelligent being, but also as a forensic agent or being to whom punishment/blame and reward/praise may be imputed.

More so, the chapter critically analyzed the meaning of the following concepts— self, person and consciousness. The lesson drawn from here was that the term self/person and consciousness though in Locke's psychological approach constitute fundamental or essential component in the personal identity debate, however, their meanings and uses varied from one social cultural context to another. The two main contexts examined were African and Western. Nevertheless, there were bases of similarity and differences. Most importantly, it is instructive to assert that some of the interpretations and meanings offered by the African and Western views of the self, person and consciousness did not only give credence to but also provided a skeptical view of Locke's psychological theory of personal identity.

In chapter four, the work provided a conceptualization of the meaning and definition of personal identity and examined varied theories and counter theories of personal identity. The conclusion reached was that though Locke's psychological theory provided a typical and plausible

articulation of the identity of person/self based on consciousness, it is however replete or fraught with some difficulties.

Chapter five, which is the core of the dissertation provides critical evaluation of Locke's psychological theory of personal identity, by examining the merits and demerits of the theory. More so, attempt was made to resolve the statement of the problem articulated in the introductory chapter of the thesis. The crux of the argument was that given the analysis of the idea of person, self and consciousness, Locke's theory may no longer be sustainable. The chapter argues that a psychological theory of personal identity hinged on consciousness alone is inadequate, absurd, and futile. This is because apart from consciousness, the *other*, which is referred to as objects, things, other persons and the environment can also aid our ability to remember or recall forgotten/past experiences or events thus preserving the persistence of the self/person over time. Thus, the theory of constructive consciousness was articulated as complementing Locke's psychological theory. The chapter ended with some germane findings and finally, chapter six contains the summary and conclusion of the dissertation. Here the importance of the dissertation was highlighted and an intrinsic-cum-extrinsic approach to the problem of personal identity was recommended.

6.2. Conclusion

In all, the research demonstrates or shows by way of conclusion that all human beings or individuals can be analyzed into two main components— man and person. These two comprise the identity of a human being. Each has its own identity, i.e. there is identity for the term 'man' and there is identity for the term 'person'. Thus, when 'personal identity' is mentioned, reference is made to the identity of person other than the identity of man. Both are to be approached

differently if we are to avoid the confusion made by most proponents of personal identity debates beginning with Locke and other contemporary scholars. The point is that to avoid the hitherto paradox inherent in personal identity debate, it is germane to distinguish and assert that the two dominant approaches to the personal identity underpin the debate in different viewpoints and constitute unique ways of seeing or approaching the problem.

Proponents of psychological approach are correct in their own way to reduce person to psychological object and define the identity of person on the ground of sameness of consciousness. In the same manner, the animalist/or *physicalist* theorists or proponents are also correct in their own way (but must understand that the term person and the term man are two different aspects of the same object) to reduce man to physical object and define the identity based on the continuity of the same body. This thesis has highlighted the misconceptions of the *physicalist* approach pointing out that to treat the idea of a person as physical object could be misleading or in fact erroneous. It demonstrated that like Descartes' dualism of mind and body, the person is the metaphysical or psychological component and the man is the physical component. To assume that both identities (i.e., the identity of person and the identity of man) can be approached the same way is to engage in futile philosophy.

The main goal of the research was the submission that it is not enough to accept consciousness as the underlying or defining basis of a person's identity over time. It must necessarily include the constructive consciousness or reverse transitive consciousness. This is seen or exemplified by the *other*—which are other persons (human beings), environment and objects or things in general. This therefore means that an intrinsic conception of personal identity must be forfeited for an intrinsic-cum-extrinsic conception. The concluding position of this research is that, a person's

identity cannot only be established judging from or going by the person's personal disposition and characteristic feature alone (consciousness), rather by both personal and extended features—consciousness and the presence of the *other*.

However, to what extent and with what successes can the constructive consciousness theory typified by the *other* serve as re-assurance of the self, consciousness, person and personal identity, since I am the only person in my thought? Is it possible for the *other* to share in my thoughts or another's thoughts? To what extent can the *other* help to reinforce and restore the identity of a person suffering from mental dementia and the likes? More so, given that consciousness is exclusively a person's independent experience or a person's private experience, is it possible for me to have epistemic grasp of another person's thinking, i.e., mental content? Can I be in the mind or thought of the other? These are paradoxes that may constitute fertile ground for further research.

6.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research as well as the eclectic or heterogeneous arguments articulated in the chapter five of this work, the research therefore provides the following recommendation(s) as approach to the problem of personal identity: the intrinsic-extrinsic approach. The justification is that the constructive consciousness or reverse transitive consciousness theory (typified by the *other*) articulated in this work springs from the hermeneutic interpretations and meanings of the following terms—consciousness, person and self analyzed in chapter three, from the African and Western perspectives. A person is not only a psychological being but also a social and an embodied being who must necessarily exist in a corporeal and social-cultural milieu.

The intrinsic-extrinsic approach proposed in this work may dispense with the problems confronting the personal identity debate. It is not only that it provided an explicit explanation to the psychological theory of personal identity by virtue of recognizing consciousness as necessary and sufficient conditions of personal identity, it also recognizes the physical component of the human person which is the core argument of the *physicalism* proponents. Therefore, an eclectic approach is recommended, that is, the theory that harnesses the merits of both the psychological argument and the physicalist's argument to the proble

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