THE FORMATION OF THE SELF AS MENTAL UNITY AND MORAL AGENCY IN HUME'S PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation proposes to analyze the stages in the formation of the idea of self in Hume's philosophy. According to Hume we have no a simple and individual impression that we can call the self − where the self is the totality of conscious life of a person. Nevertheless, we do have an idea of personal identity that must be accounted for. He begins his explanation of this idea by noting that our perceptions are fleeting, and he concludes from this that all we are is a bundle of different perceptions. But as a result of such a consideration Hume argues that he failed to find sufficient account for the relation between the idea of self involved in the indirect passions of pride and humility and the idea of self associated with its mental aspect. In this dissertation it is attempted to show that these two aspects of the self do not contradict, but rather they co-exist, and such a co-existence of the two aspects of the self should be recognised as an empirical fact. This means that the self is not a mere bundle of perceptions, but it is at least a very peculiar form of the relational unity of perceptions.

Key Words: David Hume, self, mind, identity, perception

ÖZ

HUME'UN FELSEFESİNDE ZİHİNSEL BİRLİK VE AHLAKSAL ARACI OLARAK BEN'İN OLUŞUMU

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Bu tez David Hume'un felsefesinde ben'in kuruluş süresince ortaya çıkan aşamaları incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Hume'a göre, ben − bir kişinin bilincinde olduğu yaşamının bütünü − olarak tanımlayabileceğimiz yalın ve tikel bir izlenime sahip değiliz. Buna rağmen, dikkate alınması gerekli kişisel bir özdeşlik idesine sahibiz. Hume bu ideyi algılarımızın geçiciliğine dikkat çekerek açıklamaya girişir ve bundan hepimizin birer farklı algılar demeti olduğumuz sonucunu çıkarır. Ancak, böyle bir düşünüşün sonucunda, gurur ve tevazu gibi dolayımlı tutkuların gerektirdiği 'ben idesi' ile zihinselliğin çağrıştırdığı 'ben idesi' arasındaki ilişkinin yeterli bir açıklamasını vermeyi başaramadığını ileri sürer. Bu tezde, 'ben'in sözkonusu iki yanının çelişmediği, ancak birlikte-varolduklarından sözetmenin daha doğru olduğu; 'ben'in sözkonusu iki yanının bu türden birlikte-varoluşunun, görgül bir kanıt olarak kabul edilmesi gerektiği gösterilmeye çalışılmaktadır. Bu, ben'in sadece bir algılar demeti olmadığı, ancak en azından algıların ilişkisel bütünlüğünün çok özel bir biçimi olduğu anlamına gelmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: David Hume, ben, zihin, özdeşlik, algı

For my mother and for my son

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DNR	*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*
EHU	*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
EPM	*An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*
E	*Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*
E DT	Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion
E Ep	The Epicurean
E ST	Of the Standard of Taste
E St	The Stoic
E PI	The Platonist
E Sc	The Sceptic
E SH	Of the Study of History
E NC	Of National Characters
E RP	Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences
E In	Of Interest
E Su	Of Suicide
E IS	Of the Immortality of the Soul
E DM	Of the Dignity or Meanness of Human Nature
ML	My Own Life
NL	*The New Letters of David Hume*
T	*A Treatise of Human Nature*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

David Hume (1711-1776) has long been recognized as one of the most profound, creative, and widely influential thinkers in the history of modern philosophy. His writings range from epistemology and metaphysics, through discussions of the principles of explanation in the human sciences, to moral theory, political theory, economics, aesthetics, and history. Over the next two centuries, his works has become a point of reference and a resource for such diverse developments as the idealist tradition in nineteenth century Germany and the empiricist tradition in nineteenth century Britain, and both the phenomenological and analytic movements in twentieth century philosophy. Indeed, Hume has been perpetually rediscovered, either as a source of unappreciated insights or as a target of criticism, by almost every subsequent movement in the Western philosophical tradition. But many interpreters still disagree about the nature of Hume's basic philosophical system and principles. It is agreed that he is a sceptic who argues throughout his writings that our basic connections with the natural and social worlds is not founded on reason, but on the non-rational processes of the imagination and passions. What is in dispute is the nature of his scepticism, and the degree to which he sought to radically change the conceptions of the natural and social worlds as conceived by his contemporaries.[1] The other crucial point is concerning early twentieth century philosophers' view on Hume as an early precursor of positivism. This sort of interpretation has been challenged by recent scholars, for example by Wright.[2]

[1] Rupert Read and Kenneth A. Richman, (eds.) *The New Hume Debate*

[2] J. P. Wright, *The Sceptical Realism of David Hume*

The present work is based on this new interpretation of Hume's philosophical system.

The history of the interpretations of Hume is an important part of the history of modern philosophy, many subsequent philosophers have used his writings. The scholarly interpretation of Hume has developed in a series of overlapping stages in which he has been regarded variously as a sceptic, as a positivist or a narrow empiricist, and as a more broadly constructive philosopher.[3] In this study it is followed the way of interpretation including a renewed consideration of the unity and constructive character of Hume's project, and of the history of its interpretation.

In 'Introduction' to *Treatise* Hume outlines his project amounting to found a "science of human nature" which will provide a foundation for all the other sciences [T: 6], and emphasizes that this science itself must be based on experiment and observation. Hume's foundational science of human nature is a science of the human mind. The basic principle that he seeks to establish in *Treatise* was that of the association of ideas and impressions through resemblance, contiguity in space and time, and causality. He follows Locke in rejecting innatism and holding that our ideas must be based on the impressions of external and internal experience; however, he argues against Locke that these sources cannot supply us with our common sense or scientific conceptions of reality. Hume claims that the scientific conceptions of reality arise through irrational processes of the imagination and habits, which are based on the principles of association. In fact when he presents an account of the elements and principles of human cognition, he intends not only to explain but also to justify and improve our reasoning in both the natural and human sciences. On the other hand, he attempts to establish the limits of human reason and the

[3] James Fieser compiled eighteenth and nineteenth century reactions to Hume in his *Early Responses to Hume*. The criticisms of Hume's British contemporaries and his responses to them are found in James Somerville's *Enigmatic Parting Shot.* For the influence of Hume's works in German philosophy Manfred Kuehn's *Scottish Common Sense in Germany* is important source.

principles governing its connection to the passions in the human actions. In other words, he searches the features of human what we today call the social and historical dimensions of human consciousness. This seems in his consideration of how our concepts, beliefs, passions, and even standards of judgment in different areas of enquiry are formed by our experience, both in our personal histories and through our participation in a community life.[4] In short, Hume's philosophy aims to understand human nature itself, by identifying the basic principles that regulate human thought, feeling and action. So it is not satisfied with determining what is good and what is not, but seeks to explain the source of these distinctions: *why* we draw the distinctions we do between good and evil, beauty and ugliness, and so on.

Hume begins to improve his project of the science of human nature or mind with his criticism of what he calls the "antient" system of philosophy or the theory of substance and accident in the Aristotelian and Scholastic tradition. This continues consistently with his attack on Scholastic philosophy by the Cartesian and Lockean traditions in modern philosophy. In Hume's criticism and developing his project, it seems that he was impressed by four things: the discordant and unreasonable conclusions of the dogmatic metaphysicians and theologians, the logical strength of the arguments of the Sceptics, the successes of Newtonian science, and the importance of finding a satisfactory theory of morals. Hume in accordance with these impressions rejects realism concerning personal identity in the form of a substantial self, because it is not only untenable but superfluous. He rejects the dogmatist's arguments to know a substantial soul, but also rejects Locke's claim that the idea of the self can be derived from experience. Locke argues that, although whatever substance the

[4] In approaching this project of Hume, Norman Kemp Smith suggests a new way [Kemp Smith, *Philosophy of David Hume,* pp. vii-viii] and this way is reaffirmed by Mossner [*Life of David Hume,* p. vii] and Baier [*Progress of Sentiments,* pp. viii-ix]. Kemp Smith's suggestion requires a study of Hume "in all his manifold activities: as philosopher, as political theorist, as economist, as historian, and as man of letters," with the hope that "Hume's philosophy, as the attitude of mind which found for itself these various forms of expression, will then have been presented, adequately and in due perspective, for the first time."

person may inhere in is unknown and unknowable, the idea of personal identity is grounded in unity of consciousness via memory or psychological continuity. Hume discusses this, since he can trace the idea of a self to no impression or group of impressions [T: 251-253]. He concludes that the identity which thought leads us to attribute to the self results from the imagination's confounding a related succession of impressions with the view of a single unchanging object, the self.

The present study shall take Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*[5] as the primary source among his all writings. *Treatise* consists of three books. The first of these deals with the origin of ideas and with the character and limits of human intellectual powers; the second book deals with the passional side of human nature; and the third book attempts to show how human sentiment, rather than reason, explains the phenomenon we know as morality. In accordance with these divisions, in Book I of *Treatise* Hume distinguishes the idea of the self or personal identity "as it regards our thought or imagination" and the idea of our identity "as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves" [T: 253; 261, 469]. In Book II he examines the second aspect of personal identity, by exploring the role of the passions, sympathy, and the will in our formulation of the particular ideas we have of ourselves as empirical subjects. For this reason in this study there is considered Hume's account of the self as an object of our thought and imagination, and his account of the self as the subject of passion and volition. In the remainder of the thesis, these two aspects are labelled as "the mental aspect of the self" and "the agency aspect of the self" respectively.

In Chapter 2 of the thesis, an analysis of Hume's treatment of the mental aspect of the self is presented. In accordance with this label of the self, the nature of the mind and the principal ingredients of Hume's account of the mind − which forms part of his overall project as defined in 'Introduction' to *Treatise* − are examined. What emerges from the sections of this chapter is a view of mental

[5] Hereafter it is used as *Treatise*.

activity as consisting in the occurrence of different sorts of perception related to each other partly by resemblance and partly by causation. This reflects the system account of the mind which Hume provides in opposition to the substance theory which he rejects. There is also concerned with the distinctive features of Hume's account of the idea of identity, and its application to the case of the self. After that the philosophical implications of Hume's system or bundle theory of the self is sought. With two of these implications are especially dealt: one of these is concerning the *simplicity* of the self and the other is its *identity*. In the former case Hume is concerned with the synchronic unity or identity of the self or mind (i.e. the supposition that certain momentary experiences or mental states may be so related that they belong to one and the same mind or self) and in the latter case he is concerned with the diachronic identity of the self (i.e. the supposition that certain experiences or mental states occurring over time may be so related that they belong to the same continuing mind or self). Hume's account of the self is able to provide solutions to the problem of diachronic identity, at least when it is supplemented by his position on the agency aspect of the self. In this chapter some of the principal objections which have been raised to Hume's bundle or system theory of mind are mentioned: in particular, those which concern the relation between the self and its perceptions.

In Chapter 3 of the thesis, Hume's treatment of the agency aspect of the self is analysed. First of all his treatment of *character* is discussed as a central feature of his account of the self as an agent or public self. It is considered how traits of character are to be categorised in terms of the various perceptions which form the self in accordance with the bundle or system theory of Book I, and also how these traits contribute to a person's sense of her/his own identity. After that Hume's account of the relation between human and animal nature is analysed. Many interpreters of Hume evaluate his account, which includes claim about the fundamental continuities between humans and animals, as a philosophical revolution. Hume's view of morality is analysed on the basis of Hume's claim about the absence of a moral sense in non-human animals, as well as the

relationship between human and animal nature. In subsequent sections, the issue of the nature of agency is discussed. From this point of view, the crucial role of Hume's view of the passions and the question of his position on the existence of other minds are considered. In accordance with his views on the passions, I will argue that although the self (as it is involved in the indirect passions of pride and humility) is different from that associated with the mental aspect of the self, these two aspects of the self do not contradict. I will suggest that co-existence or co-presence of the perceptions should be recognised as an empirical evidence for the existence of the self and the relational unity of perceptions. The relations required to unite them are not only similarity, causation and spatial and temporal conjunction, but also *co-existence* and *co-presentation*. In the dissertation I argue that Hume failed to recognise the existence of this relation as an empirical fact, and therefore found himself in the difficulty described in 'Appendix' to *Treatise*. All these mean that the self is not a mere bundle of perceptions; it is at least a very peculiar form of relational unity of perceptions. Additionally I suggest that the co-existence of perceptions may be better explained by Hume's notion of sympathy which provides the basis for a naturalistic explanation of the belief, and thereby the existence of the self.

CHAPTER 2

THE MENTAL ASPECT OF THE SELF

David Hume, in *A Treatise of Human Nature* set out to found all the other sciences on the science of human nature, and stressed that this science itself must be based on experiment and observation. He introduces the basic vocabulary and principles which he will be appealing to throughout *Treatise*. His exposition is brief and includes a terminological innovation. He introduces the term "perception" to denote the basic elements of his system, the items which are before the mind whenever any mental activity is going on. He divides perceptions into *impressions* (corresponding to feeling or experience) and *ideas* (corresponding to thinking). He also distinguishes between *simple* and *complex perceptions*. With this terminological apparatus in hand, Hume formulates the most fundamental principle of his system and his project as "science of human nature".

Hume intends to develop a science of human nature which will provide a foundation for all other sciences. The self provides the focus for the project which Hume undertakes in *Treatise*. In order to understand Hume's conception of the self, our first task should be to investigate his aims, his terminological apparatus and his method.

2.1. The method and aims in *Treatise*

In 1739 Hume prefaced the first two volumes of his *Treatise* with an Advertisement of works on Morals, Politics and Criticism to follow. He announces that "My design" "is sufficiently explain'd in the introduction".

Hume in that 'Introduction' to *Treatise* declares his intention of establishing an *empirical* science of man[6]. He argues that the development of such a science based on "the experimental method of reasoning" must precede all other inquiry, since only it can serve as a foundation of the rest of our knowledge:

> There is no question of importance, whose decision is not compriz'd in the science of man; and there is none, which can be decided with any certainty, before we become acquainted with that science. In pretending therefore to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a compleat system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security. [T: Introduction, xvi]

Hume argues that such a foundation which is "the only solid foundation" [T: Introduction, xx] of both the practical sciences − Logic, Morals, Criticism, and Politics− and of the theoretical sciences "which are the objects of pure curiosity" [*ibid*.] − Mathematics, Natural Philosophy and Natural Religion. He believed that this foundation can be established only by investigating the nature of philosophy and exploring the disorders in it. For this reason he deals with the nature of philosophy, its disorders and also their cure. He believes that these disorders are to be cured by developing a science of human nature which will provide a foundation for the other sciences.

In the 'Introduction', Hume begins by saying that philosophy or metaphysics is an unsatisfactory state; "There is nothing which is not the subject of debate, and in which men of learning are not of contrary opinions." [T: Introduction, xviii]. In brief, on any ultimate question, every philosopher has an opinion but it differs from that of almost every other philosopher. In order to overcome this state of affairs, according to Hume, we should turn away from ambiguous problems and consider what we can best understand, namely our own nature. He thinks that before we begin to study other sciences, the human nature as a basis for knowledge must be explored, because it influences all the sciences severely.

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[6] Hume uses "the empirical science of man" and "the science of human nature" synonymously.

> Even *Mathematics*, *Natural Philosophy* and *Natural Religion*, are in some measure dependent on the science of MAN; since they lie under the cognizance of men, and are judged of by their powers and faculties. 'Tis impossible to tell what changes and improvements we might make in these sciences were we thoroughly acquainted with the extent and force of human understanding, and cou'd explain the nature of the ideas we employ, and of the operations we perform in our reasonings. [T: Introduction, xv]

In Hume's day an entire generation of natural philosophers were inspired by Newton to apply the empirical method to the whole range of scientific problems. It is not surprising, therefore, that Hume's first work is represented on the title page as "Being An Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects". Newton's scientific work was widely recognized as a formative influence upon the development of Hume's philosophy, especially upon that of his method. But we should underline that Newton and Hume are quite compatible in respect to method, but not in respect to the purpose of system. Newton is concerned with the physical universe, with the world experienced by men who observe the heavens from the planet, Earth. The purpose of his system is to establish the principles by which celestial bodies move in harmony. Hume is not concerned with the world that is experienced, but with the experience of the world and with philosophical systems devised to explain that experiences. The purpose of his system is to show that the natural principles of the understanding are independent of the rational principles that would fortify them, and resistant to the sceptical principles that would destroy them. Newton's purpose is to construct a conceptual model of the physical universe; Hume's purpose is to undermine philosophical conceptions of the physical world. Thus, it must be realized that neither "science" nor "philosophy" meant for Hume what they mean for us or for a Newtonian understanding. "Science" means for us as the members of the modern world an activity which employs the categories and follows the procedures of the physical sciences. For Hume, "science" and "philosophy" are roughly interchangeable and mean any general form of study or learning. For this reason when Hume talks about a science of human nature or science of man in 'Introduction' of *Treatise*, he does

not imply that this study will be committed to the categories or procedures of physical sciences.

The other remarkable subject is that Newton makes distinction between matter in its ultimate nature and matter as it appears to us, and argues that science must confine itself to the phenomenal. But Hume tries to apply the same principle to his project of the science of man. We, for Hume, must abandon the search for ultimate causes and confine ourselves to what can be discovered in phenomena through experience and observation.

> For to me it seems evident, that the essence of the mind being equally unknown to us with that of external bodies, it must be equally impossible to form any notion of its powers and qualities otherwise than from careful and exact experiments, and the observation of those particular effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations. And tho' we must endeavour to render all our principles as universal as possible, tracing up our experiments to the utmost, and explaining all effects from the simplest and fewest causes, 'tis still certain we cannot go beyond experience; and any hypothesis, that pretends to discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature, ought at first to be rejected as presumption and chimerical.
> [T: Introduction, xvii]

At this point, Hume's remark "tis still certain we cannot beyond experience" must be taken into consideration severely. For Hume, this shows an inevitable limit. Human experience is limited inevitably because in its fundamental nature the world transcends it. We must distinguish a sphere in which the world appears to human experience and one in which it transcends that experience. For this reason, the essence of mind, like that of matter, is unknown. Hume rejects an understanding of the human mind, of its nature and cognitive powers requiring us to look in the direction of the divine mind. For example, in the case of Malebranche, his famous slogan of seeing all things in God is certainly unacceptable for Hume. Hume thinks that we need to look in a completely different direction, namely the natural world as it is revealed to us by (in his terms) "natural philosophy". In effect men are being approached as natural objects rather than as objects which bear the imprint of the divine mind.

Therefore, according to Hume, we must reject at first as presumption and illusory any attempt to determine ultimate principles for the mind. Rather we must proceed from mental phenomena as they appear in ordinary circumstances, attempting so far as possible to arrive at general conclusions but not supposing that we are in possession of a complete system.

Nicholas Capaldi argues that the Newtonian influence on Hume's system can be appreciated only when viewed against the foundation of the Aristotelian tradition, which the mechanistic world view replaced during the scientific revolution. Capaldi gives a short explanation of this influence in the following passage:

> It is generally accepted that Hume's philosophical program was greatly influenced by Newton... Nevertheless, what has never been made clear is the exact manner in which that influence is translated into Hume's specific philosophical statements. An understanding of the exact nature of Newton's influence on Hume can serve as the key to understanding Hume's philosophy as a whole, and it can explain why Hume structures the *Treatise* as he does. Finally, it can serve as the basis for correcting a number of misconceptions about Hume's philosophy.[7]

According to Capaldi, Hume was the first philosopher to fully understand the empiricist implications of Newtonian physics. He underlines that "Historically the importance of Hume's analysis is that he carefully articulates what happens when we substitute Newtonian physics for Aristotelian physics".[8] Terence Penelhum takes precisely the opposite view. Hume's "main enterprise", he declares, "is primarily, and unconfusedly psychological"[9]. What Hume got from Newtonian science was not the ontology with implications for epistemology, but the method which led to his Science of Human Nature. Within this science, which proceeds "from a cautious observation of human life" [T: Introduction, xxiii], the conditions and limits of factual knowledge and moral judgement are

[7] Nicholas Capaldi, *David Hume: The Newtonian Philosopher*, p. 49

[8] *Ibid*., p. 50

[9] Penelhum, *Hume*, p. 18

fixed. When the facts of mental and social life have been reduced to principle, the "general philosophical vision" [10] which emerges is at once sceptical and naturalistic.

2.2. The self and human nature

Hume's theory of the self in the context of *Treatise* as a whole provides the focus for the project which he works to develop in *Treatise*. This project, which he outlines in the 'Introduction' to his *Treatise*, amounts to establishing a "science of man" which will provide a foundation for the other sciences [T: Introduction, xvi]. Particularly, the science of man as a subject-matter of moral[11] (as opposed to natural) philosophy is concerned with the ultimate principles of the mind. It is more appropriately described as a "science of mind": a "science" to be conducted in accordance with the experimental method.

Hume believes in the existence of a self. As he writes in *Treatise*, 'Of the Passions', the self is "that individual person, of whose actions and sentiments each of us is ultimately conscious" [T: 286], and he further describes the self by reference to "the qualities of our mind and body" [T: 303]. If there is, therefore, a self in his system of philosophy, then of what does it consist? As the previous quotations indicate, the self consists of a mind and a body. If the self consists of a mind and a body, we must at some point raise the question of the relationship between the two. But now I shall emphasize that there are two parts to the self, a mind and a body, and we cannot assume to the other part or to the whole which they compose. So important is this point that Hume cautions his readers in *Treatise* that there are going to be two different discussions of the self.

[10] *Ibid*., p. 7

[11] Here "moral" is used in its wide eighteenth century sense of "pertaining to what is specifically human".

> . . . we must distinguish betwixt personal identity, as it regards our thought or imagination, and as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves. The first is our present subject... [T: 253]

He also cautions us that what he says in *Treatise* applies only to the first part of the self, namely the mind. Hume describes the mind (or the self) as:

I. "a bundle or collection of different perceptions" [T: 252];
II. "a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance" [T: 253]; and
III. "a system of different perceptions or different existences, which are link'd together by the relation of cause and effect..." [T: 261].

Finally, for Hume the science of man will be a Newtonian discipline: it will be observational in character; it will deal with the ultimate corpuscular units that we find when we search into the world of mental phenomena; and it will locate a principle that accounts for the constant changes that occur in the mental realm, as Newton's principle of gravitation accounts for those in the physical realm. Hume calls the units of mental life perceptions, and he distinguishes, among them, impressions from ideas. The principle governing their change, the mental analogue of gravitation, is *association*.

2.2.1. The perceptions of the mind

Hume's theory of the self and its terms can be understood only if the distinction with which he begins *Treatise* is comprehended in detail. He suggests in his book that "the perceptions of the human mind" − or the units of mental life perceptions are two distinct kinds: *impressions* and *ideas*. Many of his most important arguments make vital use of this distinction.

Hume uses the term "perception" in *Treatise* to designate the contents or constituent elements of our thought or our consciousness. He firstly argues that

"nothing is ever really present with the mind but its perceptions," [T: 67] and later adds that "the only existences, of which we are certain, are perceptions, which being immediately present to us by consciousness." [T: 212]. He defines perception in 'Abstract' as "whatever can be present to the mind, whether we employ our senses, or are actuated with passion, or exercise our thought and reflection" [T: 647]. Along these lines, impressions of reflection (like impressions of sensations) are to be considered perceptions from the very start. Hume also defines perception as "object of our thought," [T: 66] or an "object" in the primary sense of the term. He makes a distinction between an object in this sense as the content of any conscious state and external objects which appears to have a continued existence distinct from the mind, but are known to us only "by those perceptions they occasion" [T: 67]. According to Hume, our perceptions contain all of the sensory, affective, and cognitive modifications of the human mind, for example the actions of seeing, hearing, judging, loving, hating, and thinking. As a result of this approach, he thinks that our individual perceptions may be viewed as substances, at least according to the definition of a substance as whatever may be "consider'd as separately existent, and may exist separately," and has "no need of any thing else" to support its existence [T: 233]. Finally Hume tries to show that our ideas of external objects and of the self are produced by the mind through its various activities in connecting our perceptions. Moreover, he attempts to vindicate that we have no basis or way of justification for these ideas other than the constructive activity of the imagination.

Hume's division of perceptions into impressions and ideas amounts, as he says, to "the difference betwixt feeling and thinking." [T: 2]. This difference is more explicitly indicated in the 'Abstract', where he states that "when we feel a passion or emotion," or the influence of external objects on our senses, our perception is called an "impression," while "when we reflect on a passion or an object which is not present, this perception is an *idea*". Here he suggests that we can recognize a difference in the subjective quality of our conscious states

between our immediate apprehension of a sensation or emotion and our reflective apprehension of the same sensation or emotion when it is represented by an idea. This reference to the two types of intentional states involved in our apprehending of perceptions, either as impressions or as ideas. Hume concerns, in fact, the question of the origin of our ideas. His basic argument is that our ideas all originate ultimately from impressions, because they are all copies of impressions or are entirely composed of parts of impressions.[12]

At this point we may attain two basic results for Hume's philosophical system. Firstly, as a result of his investigation of the origins of ideas, he presents the first principle in his science of human nature − that ideas are copies of impressions. This principle is called as *the copy principle*. As James Noxon points out, Hume introduces the copy principle as an empirical proposition.[13] Moreover, he distinguishes also impressions into two categories: *impressions of sensation* and *impressions of reflection*. The impressions of sensation include the experiences associated with perceptions, as well as bodily feelings of pleasure and pain. On the other hand the impressions of reflection include the passions, for example emotions like pride and humility. This distinction of impressions into two categories and also the other distinction show us, as the second basic result, what his intention is. In short, Hume intends to get a classification of all those states and activities (sensations, emotions, thoughts, memories, imaginings, and so on) that we associate with having a mind.

2.2.1.1. Simple and complex perceptions

Hume investigates the nature and principles of the human mind and works to provide an account of the origin, composition, connexion, abstraction of our

[12] This approach is similar to Locke's claim that our complex ideas derive from "simple ideas of sensation" or "simple ideas of reflection".

[13] Noxon, *Hume's Philosophical Development*, p. 139

ideas, which he identifies as the elements of the philosophy. He identifies the contents of our mental states and also classifies or characterizes the different intentional states in which we apprehend this content. The different activities of the mind appear in our abilities to recall, compare, distinguish, rearrange, connect and combine the ideas. We obtain this kind of ideas from sensations in order to formulate fictional images, abstract ideas, and judgments.

Hume introduces a distinction between *simple* and *complex* perceptions, which he applies to both impressions and ideas. Of these, simple perceptions "admit of no distinction nor separation," while complex perceptions may be distinguished into parts [T: 19]. In the distinction between simple and complex perceptions, there are certain aspects which we should pay attention to. First of all, each of Hume's two kinds of perception may occur either as something simple or as a complex including a number of simples, what will count as a simple impression or idea is not clear. Claudia Schmidt argues that this problematic distinction arises from "...his rather haphazard presentation of his own examples" and "an ambiguity in his account of two apparent ways in which ideas may be 'distinguished' or 'separated' by the mind." [14] As Schmidt mentioned, Hume does not give clear instances of impressions or ideas which he would count as simple. He rather confines himself to claim that every simple idea, when it first appears in the mind, is a copy of a corresponding impression.

Another difficulty of Hume's thoughts about the simple and complex perceptions arises from his use of the term "distinguishable" as either real distinction or distinction of reason. He explains it by using the example of the distinction between figure and the body figured; motion and the body moved. As he puts it:

> ....if the figure be different from the body, their ideas must be separable as well as distinguishable; if they be not different, their ideas can neither be separable nor distinguishable. What then is meant by a distinction of reason,

[14] Claudia M. Schmidt, *David Hume: Reason in History*, p. 16

> since it implies neither a difference nor separation? *distinction of reason, that all ideas, which are different, are separable.* [T: 24-5]

Hume continues that we can recognize various similarity or resemblance and differences between our simple perceptions. He thereby indicates that we may identify different aspects of these uniform perceptions through distinctions of reason, even though these aspects cannot be perceived or imagined as existing separately from a perception. These recognizable aspects of our simple perceptions include the hue or saturation of colours, the pitch or volume of sounds, and the painful or pleasurable character of our passions [T: 637]. His approach to "real" distinction and "distinction of reason" may be stated in his following claim which will henceforth be mentioned as the separability principle:

> ...whatever objects are different are distinguishable, and that whatever objects are distinguishable are separable by the thought and imagination. And we may here add, that these propositions are equally true in the *inverse*, and that whatever objects are separable are also distinguishable, and that whatever objects are distinguishable are also different. [T: 18]
>
> *…that the mind cannot form any notion of quantity or quality without forming a precise notion of degrees of each;… inverse,* distinguishable, and that whatever objects are distinguishable are also different. [*ibid*.]

In short he distinguishes between those perceptions which are "really" distinguishable and separable, or can be perceived or imagined as existing separately, and those qualities of our perceptions which we can attend to and identify by a distinction of reason, but which cannot be perceived or imagined as existing separately.

Although Hume's thoughts about the simple and complex perceptions have several difficulties, we should not overlook two consequences. Firstly, he argues that great resemblance between our impressions and ideas, which appear always to correspond to each other. Here he finds that all of our ideas resemble our impressions of sensation or reflection, and that all of our impressions may be

represented by ideas. It follows that all ideas must be derived from experience in the form of impressions either of sensation or of reflection. Secondly, the separability principle implies that if any two objects are distinct they can exist separately − either can exist without the other. And it is this consequence Hume appeals to in rejecting the possibility of real connections between distinct existences, whose rejection in turn supports his rejection of necessary connections between causes and effects, his rejection of the notion of substance (except as applicable universally to anything that can be conceived) and his rejection of a simple self distinct from its perceptions.

2.2.1.2. Ideas

Hume describes *ideas* as "faint images" [T: 1] or copies of impressions. If impressions are construed as *original* experiences, then ideas are to be seen as derivative or secondary. They are, therefore, by definition, associated with the faculty of memory, and every idea will be either a memory or a construction from elements which are memories.

In the previous sections the distinction between impressions and ideas has been mentioned, but now the texts shall be analysed in order to formulate the distinction more clearly. Hume's claim is, simply, that impressions are more lively, forceful and vivid experiences than ideas. In a paradigm case, the difference might be likened to that between, on the one hand, actually being present at a musical concert, on the other, watching the same on television. Thus, Hume thinks that there is a distinction in degree and not a distinction in kind. Although the content of the two experiences is exactly the same and Hume describes ideas as copies of impressions, these experiences are different by their degrees of vivacity. The difference, then, consists only in the rather more lively character of impressions as compared with their counterparts. To use one of Hume's own examples from the corresponding section of first *Enquiry,* when a person feels the pain of excessive heat, or the pleasure of moderate warmth, that

is an impression. But when he afterwards thinks about the sensation, or remembers it, that is an idea [EHU: 17]. *Thinking* about the sensation of excessive heat does not reach the force or vivacity of the original sensation. Hume puts the position in the same passage from *Enquiry*:

> When we reflect on our past sentiments and affections, our thought is a faithful mirror, and copies its objects truly; but the colours which it employs are faint and dull, in comparison with those in which our original perceptions were clothed. [EHU: 18]

We must make one further point. Hume allows that there will be certain situations in which the force and liveliness of an idea might almost be equal to that of an impression. He lists dreams, fevers, madness and highly emotional states as examples of such situations [T: 2]. The reverse may also be the case. Thus, our impressions may sometimes be so dull as to be indistinguishable from ideas. As he puts it:

> Every one of himself will readily perceive the difference betwixt feeling and thinking. The common degrees of these are easily distinguished; tho' it is not impossible but in particular instances they may very nearly approach to each other. Thus in sleep, in a fever, in madness, or in any very violent emotions of soul, our ideas may approach to our impressions: As on the other hand it sometimes happens, that our impressions are so faint and low, that we cannot distinguish them from our ideas. But notwithstanding this near resemblance in a few instances, they are in general so very different, that no-one can make a scruple to rank them under distinct heads, and assign to each a peculiar name to mark the difference. [T: 1-2]

The other point is how the impressions and ideas are distinguished from each other, apart from the order in which they occur. As we have been mentioned before, Hume says, they differ in their degree of force and vivacity, impressions are generally more lively than the corresponding ideas. However, an idea may acquire some of the vivacity of the impression with which it is associated. Moreover Hume vindicates that "the nature of belief ... consists in a lively idea related to a present impression..." [T: 98]. The idea, afterwards, amounts to a perceptual belief and it may be said mostly that impressions of the senses are attended in this way with *belief* [T: 84]. As Hume says about this point, we may

repeat the original impressions in a succeeding idea which will be one of memory, when enough vivacity from the impression is kept for the idea that it still will be one of belief. On the other hand, we may compose an idea (a *complex* idea) by transposing and changing ideas which have already been acquired from experience, though there is no directly corresponding impression for this idea. Thereby, by following such a way, in fact we create an *idea of imagination*. In such a case the idea is not livened up by the impressions from which this idea ultimately derives, and as a result, belief is not involved.[15]

2.2.1.3. The association of ideas

An additional feature of Hume's account of the perceptions of the mind is concerning with the *association of ideas*. It is also important for his philosophy in general terms; as he had said in 'Abstract', the original feature of his philosophy is the use it makes of the association of ideas. [T: 661-2]

In his writings Hume continually asserts the freedom of imagination, but on the other hand, he finds that the imagination is generally guided by some universal principles, as he mentioned below:

> As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases, nothing wou'd be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it, in some measure, uniform with itself in all times and places. Were ideas entirely loose and unconnected, chance alone wou'd join them; and 'tis impossible the same simple ideas should fall regularly into complex ones (as they commonly do) without some bond of union among them, some associating quality, by which one idea naturally introduces another. [T: 10]

As Hume indicates in *Enquiry,* we discover through introspection and conversation that ideas usually present themselves "with a certain degree of

[15] Instead of using Hume's concepts of relations of ideas and matters of fact, Empiricists have formulated Hume's challenge in the a priori-a posteriori, analytic-synthetic terminology introduced by Immanuel Kant. Their position, the modernized version to the extent that it is directly inspired by Hume's doctrine, can be formulated in this way: All knowable propositions are either analytic a priori or synthetic a posteriori.

method and regularity," not only in our "serious thinking or discourse," but also in our "wildest and most wandering reveries." [EHU: 23]. This method or regularity is provided by the qualities of our perceptions implying universal principles. He affirms that one idea introduces naturally another by the universal principles or associating qualities. This is *the theory of the connection* or *association of ideas*. Hume identifies three qualities of our perceptions that appear to facilitate the "connexion or association of ideas," which he also calls the "principles of union or cohesion" [T: 12] among our simple ideas: *resemblance*, *contiguity* in time or place, and *cause and effect*.

If the ideas are associated or connected in this way, then we may conclude that the occurrence of ideas in imagination is not, after all, an entirely arbitrary process, but one that is guided by certain principles. Hume argues that these principles amount to "a kind of attraction which in the mental world will be found to have as extraordinary effects as in the natural" [T: 12-3]. Pitson claims that Hume's conception of attraction provides the counterpart in Hume's science of mind to the Newtonian theory of gravity in natural science.[16]

One remarkable feature of the association of ideas in *Treatise*, which is important to understand Hume's aim and his route in further works concerning his project of "science of man", is its shortness. This is most pronounced in the standard edition of 1777. The deleted part, which Hume apparently came to regard as an unnecessary digression, examines the principles of association in literary composition, and includes a valuable discussion of narratives in epic poetry and history. [17] Why is the section so short? Penelhum proposes one explanation:

[16] Pitson, *Hume's Philosophy of the Self*, p. 14

[17] The standard Selby-Bigge-Nidditch edition is based on the 1777 edition. Much of the literary material is reincluded in Penelhum, *David Hume: An Introduction to His Philosophical system* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1992), pp. 44-5. It has also been reincluded in the new Oxford student edition of *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, ed. L. Beauchamp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), which is based on the 1772 edition.

> This progressive abridgment of Hume's account is a clear sign that he came to lose interest in the details of his Newtonian psychology, even though he has singled it out for special commendation in the *Abstract.* [18]

Several commentators have considered Hume's failure of later attention to his theory of association as evidence that he finally rejected it. And they have used this claim also as the foundation for speculations concerning Hume's philosophical development. For example, according to Kemp Smith, Hume developed his theory of association in order to explain the passions and moral sentiments, and then tried to extend it into his evaluation of ideas which led him to abandon the theory of association as a unifying foundation for his science of man[19]. On the other hand, Noxon claims that Hume formed the copy theory and theory of association as principles of both philosophical and psychological analysis respectively. But Noxon argues that Hume combines these projects in *Treatise* but attempts to distinguish them in his later works.[20] However it is very clear that Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, among these, is concerned with philosophy rather than psychology, and because of this reason it does not require any extensive reference to the theory of association.

2.2.1.4. Relations

Hume, in *Treatise*, analysed the relations of resemblance, contiguity and causation at "the full extent", in this way, he believes that he would set forth an empirical theory which is adequate to explain *all transitions in thought.* This analysis can serve as a theory of a kind of attraction, which in the mental world will be found to have as extraordinary effects as in the natural, and to show itself in as many and as various forms.

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[18] Penelhum, *David Hume,* p. 57

[19] Kemp Smith, *Philosophy of David Hume,* pp. 239-55 and 530-40

[20] Noxon, *Hume's Philosophical Development*, pp. 19-25

In *Treatise*, Book I, Part I, Section V, 'Of Relations' Hume suggests that the word "relation" is usually used in two different senses. First one of these is *natural relations* as which he refers to the three principles of association− resemblance, contiguity and causation. By this he means that they are relations by which the human mind is naturally affected, so that thought transits easily from one to another object when the objects are so related. In the other words, two ideas may be so connected in the imagination that "the one naturally introduces the other" [T: 13]. Of course, there are other relations. The term in the second sense Hume uses for relations in general is *philosophical relations*. This kind of relation obtains where it is possible to make some kind of comparison between objects or qualities, even if the corresponding ideas themselves have no natural relation to each other. Thus for Hume any relation, distance for example, is a philosophical relation, but the only natural relations are resemblance, contiguity and causation − when "the full extent of these relations" is understood. This, in a sentence, is his theory of the association of ideas. We should pay close attention that *all* relations are philosophical in so far as they involve a "comparison of objects." The particularity of his distinction is that some, but not all, of these relations are also natural ones.

Several remarkable critics of Hume's theory of relations have quoted this theory as an example of his alleged tendency to confuse logical with psychological explanation.[21] For example, Hausman points out that Hume attempts to explain this very distinction by presenting "natural relations" as the psychological principles that appear to direct the association of our ideas, and "philosophical relations" as the principles of comparison and judgment that may be applied to ideas even where there is no spontaneous connection between them in the imagination.[22] Hume develops firstly this distinction between the psychological principles of association and the logical principles of judgment further in his account of probable reasoning and his two definitions of a cause. Annand and

[21] Passmore, *Hume's Intentions,* pp. 23-28, and Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume*; pp. 250-51

[22] Hausman, "Hume's Theory of Relations", pp. 391-415

Gotterbarn have also discussed that Hume cannot explain the idea of a relation in the context of his theory of ideas.[23] However, Hume specifically identifies our idea of a relation as a type of "complex idea," obviously the idea of a set of qualities belonging to a set of perceptions, which we formulate through a distinction of reason by comparing several resembling sets of perceptions.[24]

2.2.1.5. Substance

Hume introduces a preliminary discussion of the idea of substance in *Treatise*, Book I, Section VI, 'Of Modes and Substance'. His detailed views on this subject will be discussed later by taking into consideration also Part IV in which he examines the idea of identity and its relation to the idea of a substance, and then applies his analysis to two types of objects being often regarded as substances: the mind and external objects.

Many philosophers would have convinced us of the existence of an *abiding* soul or inner spiritual substance that is the subject of all our mental states. Part of Hume's purpose in the section as a whole is to point out that, although philosophers have claimed that we are at all times intimately conscious of this soul or self, there is in fact no empirical evidence for its existence. Nevertheless, he appreciates that there is something that we call the idea of the self, and that we have an idea of continuing selves. The remaining part of his purpose is to show how this can be possible.

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[23] M.R. Annand, "An Examination of Hume's Theory of Relations," pp. 581-97; D. Gotterbarn, "How Can Hume Know Philosophical Relations?" pp. 133-41

[24] Bertrand Russell presented an effective argument that a resemblance theory of concepts, such as that offered by Hume, cannot account for relations, and thus cannot justify its own appeal to the relation of resemblance, *Problems of Philosophy,* pp. 95-97. Against this criticism, Aaron defends the resemblance theory in *Theory of Universals,* p. 153 and also Price discusses the problem from the similar perspective in *Thinking and Experience,* pp. 23-26.

Hume eventually seeks to show that our ideas of external objects and of the self are produced by the mind through its various activities in combining our perceptions, and that we have no foundation or justification for these ideas apart from the constructive activity of the imagination. For this reason, Hume criticizes the philosophers of his era who attempted to prove the existence of the soul as the *material* or *immaterial* substance in which our perceptions are supposed to inhere. Here he initially argues that we do not require a foundation to account for the existence of our perceptions, since these are immediately given to us without any indication of a supposed ground of inhesion. Indeed, perceptions may themselves be regarded as substances, according to the definition of a substance as "something which may exist by itself" [T: 233]. In the other words, according to Hume, if every idea originates in experiences, then the idea of substance is derived from impressions either of sensation or reflection. The impressions such as colour, sound, taste, etc., are provided us by our senses, but substance itself is conventionally distinguished from these qualities. Furthermore, impressions of reflection include the passions and emotions, as Hume points out, none of which "can possibly represent a substance" [T: 16]. In this way he reaches the important conclusion that:

> We have therefore no idea of substance, distinct from that of a collection of particular qualities, nor have we any other meaning when we either talk or reason concerning it. [T: 16]

Here he argues that our ideas of substances are in every case really "a collection of simple ideas, that are united by the imagination, and have a particular name assigned to them…" The idea of a substance is the idea of a "principle of union" among a collection of contiguous or causally related qualities: an idea which is extended by the imagination to produce the "fiction" of an "unknown *something* in which they are supposed to inhere." [T: 16]

2.2.1.6. Hume's causal account of the perceptions of the mind

Hume seeks to understand what accounts for our inference from the observed to unobserved. The way he approaches in order to solve this problem started a discussion of the notion of cause and effect. The consequent Humean account of causation has remained a paradigm of philosophical analysis ever since. The main dispute of this account is that though the idea of necessary connection is an essential component of our idea of the cause effect relation, there is *no necessary connection* between the things we call causes and effects themselves, so that "[a]ny thing may produce any thing" [T: 173], and any thing can fail to produce any thing.

According to Hume the idea of necessary connection is, in fact, copied from a feeling that arises when a transition is made in thought from the idea or impression of the cause to the idea of the effect. And our wrong belief that causes and effects are themselves necessarily connected is a "fiction of the imagination", which results from the mind's "propensity to spread itself on external objects" [T: 167] − that is, to regard as features of the external world that, in fact, belong only to the perceptions of the mind. The problem Hume himself formulates is:

> …whether we are determined by reason to make the transition [*from an observed cause to its effect*], or by a certain association and relation of perceptions. [T: 88-9]

His answer is important:

> …not only our reason fails us in the discovery of the ultimate connection of causes and effects, but even after experience has informed us of their *constant conjunction*, 'tis impossible for us to satisfy ourselves by our reason, why we should extend that experience beyond those particular instances which have fallen under our observation. [T: 91]

Hume asserts that our belief that every event *must* have a cause is to be explained similarly. It is *not* in fact a *necessary* truth that every event or every beginning of existence has a cause.

Hume argues that our ideas of external objects (and also of the self) are produced by the mind through its various activities in combining our perceptions, and that we have no foundation or justification for these ideas apart from the constructive activity of the imagination. The explanation of our belief in the existence of a world, he says, is beyond our senses and memory. Hume, therefore, is not concerned with the nature of the causes of impressions of sensation and also he is agnostic as to their *ultimate* explanation [T: 84]. Nevertheless he clearly ascribes them immediately to physical or natural causes [T: 275]. These impressions also have effects in the form of ideas which amount to beliefs. These ideas, in order, also have their characteristic effects in the form of impressions of reflection; therefore, our beliefs may have passional implications. The latter, as involving impressions, will bring along to further ideas (and, perhaps, beliefs), from which further impressions of reflection may come out.

Hume makes a brief explanation of how perceptions arise in the mind:

> An impression first strikes upon the senses, and makes us perceive heat or cold, thirst or hunger, pleasure or pain of some kind or other. Of this impression there is a copy taken by the mind, which remains after the impression ceases; and this we call an idea. This idea of pleasure or pain, when it returns upon the soul, produces the new impressions of desire and aversion, hope and fear, which may properly be called impressions of reflection, because deriv'd from it. These again are copy'd by the memory and imagination, and become ideas; which perhaps in their turn give rise to other impressions and ideas. So that the impressions of reflection are only antecedent to their correspondent ideas; but posterior to those of sensation, and deriv'd from them. [T: 7-8]

But we see that this formulation is not invariable, when we look through Hume's restatement of the impressions and ideas distinction at the beginning of Book II of *Treatise*. Hume talks about the distinction between the impressions of sensation and the impressions of reflection as the distinction between original and secondary impressions. Impressions of sensation as original impressions

arise in the mind through physical or natural causes, independently of any other perceptions. On the other hand the secondary impressions of reflection proceed from these original impressions either immediately or through ideas derived from impressions of this latter kind. This last distinction within the category of impressions of reflection points out that some passions are “direct”, coming immediately from experiences of pain or pleasure, while others are “indirect” to the extent that they depend upon additional perceptions. Hume categorizes as direct such *passions* as desire and aversion, as well as emotions like hope and fear, and as indirect, emotions such as pride, humility, love and hatred. It shall be mentioned later that the indirect passions especially play an important role in Hume’s account of the self.

In brief, in the first sections of *Treatise* Hume gives us a picture of the mind itself by mapping perceptions. According to this picture, the mind represents mental activity which consists in the occurrence of different kinds of perception related to each other partly by resemblance and partly by causation. Until now we have only identified here the essential ingredients of Hume’s account of mind, but this does not suffice to assert that Hume has provided us a theory of mind. First of all we should get an account of what the nature of mind is, and/or what the relation of the mind to its perceptions is. At this point we may mention two possible accounts. The first one is that perceptions belong to the mind as something which is apart from perceptions. The second possibility is that the mind just is the perceptions related with each other in the complicated way. However the first possibility appears to imply that the mind itself is some kind of thing or substance to which perceptions belong as qualities. Hume points out that this sort of assumption signifies a fiction explained by the fact that natural relations among perceptions (including resemblance and causation). Therefore all these about the mind may be taken as preparative explanations to a more clear account of mind which we subsequently find in *Treatise*, and which hereafter shall be searched into.

2.2.2. *Treatise*, 'Of Personal Identity'

Hume discusses personal identity mainly in two texts: in the main body of *Treatise* in Section VI of Part IV of Book I, entitled 'Of Personal identity' and in 'Appendix' published a year later with Book III. With the topic 'Of Personal Identity', Hume provides one of the most significant, as well as controversial, treatments in the history of philosophy and it has given rise to both interpretative and critical issues. In the present work it will be attempted to investigate some of those issues. In Hume's discussion of this topic, he distinguishes between the analysis of personal identity "as it regards our thought or imagination," and personal identity as it belongs to "our passions or the concern we take in ourselves". He discusses the former aspect of the problem of the personal identity in Book I, while he approaches the latter aspect of the personal identity as the problem of "our identity with regard to the passions" to Book II. It will be considered Hume's first account of the self as *an object of our thought and imagination*, and his second account of the self as *the subject of passion and volition*. I will label these two aspects, in the remainder of the thesis, as *the mental aspect* and *the agency aspect* of personal identity respectively.

2.2.2.1. Belief in the external world

According to Hume, although we have a natural and irresistible belief in an existence of external world, there can be no philosophical foundation for it. He takes the same general attitude towards the question of personal identity. We have an equally natural and irresistible belief in the continuing existence of persons over a period of time. He summarizes his attitude concerning the origins of the belief in an external world as follows:

> In order to justify to ourselves this absurdity, we often feign some new and unintelligible principle, that connects the objects together, and prevents their interruption or variation. Thus we feign the continu'd existence of the perceptions of our senses, to remove the interruption; and run into the notion of a *soul*, and *self*, and *substance*, to disguise the variation. But we may farther observe, that where we do not give rise to such a fiction, our propension to confound identity with relation is so great, that we are apt to

> imagine something unknown and mysterious, connecting the parts, beside their relation; and this I take to be the case with regard to the identity we ascribe to plants and vegetables. And even when this does not take place, we still feel a propensity to confound these ideas, tho' we are not able fully to satisfy ourselves in that particular, nor find any thing invariable and uninterrupted to justify our notion of identity. [T: 254-55]

Hume points out here that by the application of the mechanism of the imagination we are led to identify distinct, but related perceptions. He thinks that imagination (not senses or reason) produces our belief in body primarily by producing a belief in a continued existence. His conclusion is that mechanism of the imagination generates the fiction of personal identity and our belief in an external world. My purpose in the following part of this section is to show how this can be possible, granted Hume's own philosophical principles.

Hume's aim in his discussion of the belief in an external world is not to explore whether we are justified in our belief in it, or to raise the sceptical question whether an external world exists. He writes:

> …we may well ask, *What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?* but 'tis in vain to ask, *Whether there be body or not?* That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasonings. [T: 187]

Hume limits his enquiry to the causes of our belief in an external world by emphasizing that this is the only question we can sensibly ask.

Hume distinguishes two versions of the belief in an external world or the belief in a personal identity as the version of the *vulgar* [25] and the version of the *philosopher*. He then gives an account of the belief in its vulgar version which exhibits it as false. But the belief in its philosophical version, Hume argues, is no better. He says that according to the vulgar, their perceptions, the things they in fact perceive, do continue to exist when they are not perceived. In the other

[25] Here the term "vulgar" does not signify the modern sense of *vulgarity;* rather, it signifies that the view in question is the *ordinary common-sense view* − the one that humans naturally and spontaneously accept, prior to any philosophical reflection.

words, the vulgar believe that their perceptions exist as objects in space: or externally, as well as independently from the mind. Many philosophers, in the same way, argue that there exists an abiding "soul" or inner spiritual substance that is the subject of all our mental states. As Hume argued in the section of 'Of Personal Identity', although such philosophers have claimed that we are at all times intimately conscious of this soul or self, there is in fact no empirical evidence for its existence. Hume replies to those philosophers who "pretend that we have an idea of the substance of our minds," [T: 233] and that we cannot account for our perceptions without some "material or immaterial substances, in which they suppose our perceptions to inhere." [T: 232]. Here he reaffirms his earlier argument that we have no impression or idea of a substance apart from our perceptions nor of either a material or an immaterial substance in which these perceptions are supposed to inhere. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that there is something that we call "the *idea* of the self", and that we have "an *idea* of abiding selves".

Hume rejects that the belief in an external world is the product of the senses or reason, and argues that the imagination is responsible for both forms of the belief, directly for the vulgar version of the belief and indirectly for the philosophical version. Hume denies this belief on the basis of the following complementary arguments[26]:

I. The senses cannot be the cause of the vulgar version of the belief in an external world.
II. The senses cannot be the cause of the philosophical version of the belief in an external world.
III. Reason cannot be the cause of the vulgar version of the belief in an external world.
IV. Reason cannot be the cause of the philosophical version of the belief in the external world.

[26] Here I follow Noonan's summary of those arguments, *Hume On Knowledge*, p. 166

V. An explanation of the way the imagination operates *directly* to produce the vulgar version of the belief in an external world.
VI. An explanation of the way the imagination operates *indirectly* to produce the philosophical form of the belief in an external world.

Hume rejects the argument that the senses can produce the belief in a continued existence. For doing in such a way, because, they would have to "operate, even after they have ceas'd all manner of operation" [T: 188], in order to allow one to perceive objects existing unperceived. As Hume says, this is a contradiction.

Hume he had firstly put forward the analysis of the belief in an external world "with premising, that we ought to have an implicit faith in our senses," but then he finds instead that, "to be ingenuous, I feel myself *at present* of a quite contrary sentiment," and "more inclin'd to repose no faith at all in my senses, or rather imagination, than to place in it such an implicit confidence." [T: 217]. First, he argued relating to our ordinary idea of external existence that we must deny that "such trivial qualities of the fancy, conducted by such false suppositions, can ever lead to any solid and rational system." However, the theory of double existence[27] not only arises from the same principles but absurdly "at once denies and establishes the vulgar supposition," [T: 218] first by rejecting the distinct and continued existence of perceptions, and then by inventing unperceived objects to which we may attribute these qualities. Therefore, it is "impossible upon any system to defend either our understanding or senses," and "a profound and intense reflection on those subjects" only leads to a sceptical doubt that is "a malady, which can never be radically cur'd."

[27] Although philosophers have denied the distinct and continued existence of our perceptions, they are unwilling to give up completely the idea of continued existence. Instead, to adjust these competing impulses toward affirming both the dependence and the continuity of our perceptions, philosophers have developed a distinction between perceptions and objects. On this view, perceptions are "interrupted, and perishing, and different at every different return," while objects are thought to be "uninterrupted, and to preserve a continu'd existence and identity." These philosophers then maintain that our perceptions are caused by objects, and that perceptions resemble the objects which produce them. This philosophical theory is identified by Hume as *the hypothesis of a double existence of perceptions and objects*. [T: 211]

[*ibid*.]. Hume concludes that "carelessness and in attention alone can afford us any remedy," and he is now prepared to rely entirely upon these, trusting, whatever may be his or his reader's opinion at this present moment, "that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and internal world". [*ibid*.]

Finally, Hume's position explains why he introduces the section as he does:

> We may well ask, *What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?* but 'tis vain to ask, *Whether there be body or not?* That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasonings. [T: 187]

Hume's point is that philosophy wastes its time when it asks whether bodies exist or not, because no amount of argument or reasoning can show that they exist, and our human nature compels us anyway to believe that they exist. Rather, the proper business of philosophy is to ask: what are the principles of human nature that make us believe that bodies exist? Therefore, Hume says that "the subject, then, of our present enquiry is concerning the *causes* which induce us to believe in the existence of body". [T: 187-88]

2.2.2.2. Belief in self-identity

Hume attempts to explain belief in an external existence, or the existence of body by making a distinction between perceptions (as the items which are immediately present in perception to the senses) and objects. But this distinction belongs to philosophers who theorize about the relation, and it is one that the vulgar do not recognize. Hence, the ordinary belief in external existence has to be explained as something that arises from features of our sense-impressions, even though we do not, unless philosophizing about this, think of the objects of sense-experience in these terms. Now we may ask what is the philosophical view of the self is with which Hume is concerned.

Hume introduces to discuss the personal identity in the following way:

> There are some philosophers, who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence; and are certain, beyond the evidence of a demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity. [T: 251]

His critic is restated in 'Appendix'.

> . . . we have no impression of self or substance, as something simple and individual. We have, therefore, no idea of them in that sense. [T: 633]

The philosophers, especially those in the Cartesian tradition, commonly think that one is a self is to think that one is a simple substance, one that endures essentially unchanged in spite of many accidental changes, in particular, changes in what perceptions one has. On this view, I am the owner of the many experiences I undergo, but I am distinct from those experiences, and what I am, in the metaphysically relevant sense, is independent of what they are. But why should we believe such philosophers? Hume's arguments are intended to show that there is no good reason to do so. No demonstrative argument can prove the existence of such an entity (any more than of any other), and no evidence can be found in experience, the only source of non-demonstrative evidence for anything.

According to those philosophers whom Hume criticizes, the self is a kind of substance to which our perceptions (i.e. our mental states, activities, etc.) belong and which consequently exhibits such features as simplicity and identity. Hume argues that:

> Unluckily all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience, which is pleaded for them, nor have we any idea of *self,* after the manner it is here explain'd... there is no such idea. [T: 251-52]

Hume makes such a determination by bringing to mind his first principle − i.e. for any idea there must be some corresponding impression − and then by

arguing that we have no impression of a simple and identical self. If we have an idea of the self, but it is not a simple idea, then it must be a complex idea. The idea of the self is complex because the idea of the self "represents" [T: 278] (I) "a succession of related ideas and impressions" or (II) a "connected succession of perceptions" [T: 277]. It must be paid attention to the referent of the complex is both to ideas and to impressions, not to impressions alone.

It is clear from the whole context that what Hume is denying is that we have either the experience or the idea of a simple and identical self. In fact, he is not denying that there is a self, nor is he denying that we have an idea of the self. He is denying that we have a simple idea of a simple self. The main point of the discussion in Book I is to expose the belief in a simple self and in the simple idea of the self as a myth. He begins the discussion with the following observation:

> . . . when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other . . . I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. [T: 252]

Indeed, according to Hume, we *could* have no impression of a simple and identical self which is constant and invariable; and so it appears that there is really no such idea of the self as the one to which the philosophical view appeals. Hume draws a conclusion from this fault of philosophers who conceived the self as being understandable by the way of introspecting. His conclusion informs us that we need an entirely different account of what the self is. This is mentioned very clearly in Hume's famous remark that each of us is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement". [T: 252]

In order to make clear Hume's attempt to account for the idea of the self as something which is both simple and identical, in what way the problem arises

must be investigated in more detail. According to Hume's theory of impressions and ideas, we can only come to have a coherent idea of something that has been preceded by an impression. This theory implies that if I have a coherent idea of the self, there must also be an impression of it. But, Hume points out that there appears to be no such impression. If a piece of introspection is required in order to obtain the idea of self, we simply find out the obstacles of various particular mental experiences, but not on the self or soul that is said to be behind them. By following this way, the person might recognise, for example, that s/he has just been remembering something, or imagining something or again that s/he has just been watching something or listening to something. But s/he has no comparable impression of the self that is supposed to have been doing these things.

The idea of the self is not only empirically excluded by reference to the impressions and ideas theory, but also by reference to another of Hume's philosophical basic theory. According to this theory no one object or event ever inherently implies another. The existence of any one thing is completely self-contained. There is nothing contained in the nature of that thing which necessarily implies the existence of any other thing. The human mind no doubt automatically connects one thing to another. The human life is evidently continued only in this way, a contrary case cannot be conceived. But according to Hume, there is nothing intrinsic to an object or an event considered in itself that implies a necessary connection between it and something else. The principle had been already used by Hume in order to show that the physical properties of an object do not require inherence in a subject or substance. Hume intends here to restate the same argument: Nothing about the nature of the perceptions or experiences that "pass before the mind" can in itself show that there must be a soul or self standing behind them.

This all conspires to suggest that the idea of a self that unites all particular perceptions and makes them mine is a *fictitious* one, to use Hume's own word [T: 259]. As far as the character of our experience goes, all we are entitled to

talk about is a “bundle” or collection of perceptions. Thus, Hume’s theory of personal identity has been nicknamed the “bundle theory” ever since. However, Hume’s task does not end there. He claims that the individual perceptions themselves are not intrinsically connected and are, in any case, interrupted by sleep or periods of unconsciousness; and there is no evidence for the existence of a unifying substance lying behind them. His problem, then, is to explain how it is that we come to create such a *fiction*. The key to understanding his explanation of the causes of creating such a fiction and then personal identity lies in his accounts about the mind.

2.2.2.3. The human mind as a *system* of perceptions

Hume introduces his analysis by arguing that “what we call a *mind,* is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions” which are “united together by certain relations, and suppos’d, tho’ falsely, to be endow’d with a perfect simplicity and identity.” And external objects are said to become “present to the mind” when they attain “such a relation to a connected heap of perceptions,” as to influence these perceptions “very considerably in augmenting their number by present reflexions and passions, and in storing the memory with ideas”. [T: 207]

The ingredients of Hume’s view of the mind as a system of perceptions are present in the opening sections of *Treatise*. He provides us in those sections a picture of the mind. According to this picture, perceptions occur in causal sequences amounting to a continuous cycle of activity − at least, so long as the mind is receptive to the initial impressions of sensation. This kind of picture is expressed in the following quotation in which Hume’s account of the personal identity and characterization of the mind are indicated:

> . . . the true idea of the human mind, is to consider it as a system of different perceptions or different existences, which are link’d together by the relation

> of cause and effect, and mutually produce, destroy, influence, and modify each other. [T: 261]

The above passage also implies that the mind is nothing more than perceptions linked to each other in this way. We can find this also in Hume's characterization of the mind as a *system of perceptions*. In this point we should mention an important aspect to the different ways of describing the mind as a *bundle* of perceptions or a *system* of perceptions. The bundle view seems to be related with the claim about the simplicity of the mind which Hume denies. In other words, this view may be understood as disclaiming that there is any substantial connection between the different perceptions which compose the mind at a given time. On the other hand, the system view seems to be related with the claim about what makes it the same mind over a period of time, i.e. the identity of the mind. For the kinds of connection to which Hume refers in developing this view − where perceptions "produce, destroy, influence, and modify each other"− are evidently not momentary ones, but part of the life of the mind throughout a period of its existence. For this reason the bundle of perceptions should be understood as system of perceptions. This point is clear also in Hume's comment about his comparison of the mind with a theatre where perceptions make their appearance: "The comparison of the theatre must not be confusing. These appearances are the successive perceptions only, which constitute the mind" [T: 253]. This comparison is, in fact, particularly interesting in light of the view of the mind. A theatre is very much an organization, in which a performance is the product of a number of individuals dealt with different sorts of works. We may no doubt make a distinction between the theatre as a building and as the company who perform in it: it is just this aspect of the comparison that may misguide us. But rather as the performance itself is in some sense reducible to the activity of a number of

individuals. From this perspective, according to Hume's account, the mental life consists in the activity of the perceptions which go to make up the mind.[28]

With related to a few metaphysicians' description of the idea of self, Hume says that while they might claim to discover a separate impression of themselves, he attempts to affirm for himself and the rest of the human species that we are each of us "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement." In order to account for the idea of the self, we must therefore explain our propensity "to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions, and to suppose ourselves possest of an invariable and uninterrupted existence thro' the whole course of our lives" [T: 252-53]. For this reason, in Hume's discussion of personal identity his main focus is upon the idea of the mind. According to him, the mind consists entirely in a sequence of perceptions that are *distinguishable* and *separable* from each other. But, although we cannot discover any "real bond" or "real connexion" between our perceptions, he argues, as mentioned before, it is the imagination which attributes identity to the mind, based on the relations of resemblance and causation that we discover within this sequence of perceptions.[29] Therefore, by following up his initial reference to the mind as a "heap or collection of different perceptions", he adds that these perceptions are "united together by certain relations" [T: 207]. Hume's own word *system* exactly captures this point.

In brief, the perceptions which compose the mind occur in a causal sequence. This kind of an occurrence makes us to identify aspects of the mind as belief,

[28] A similar moral might be drawn from the other comparison used by Hume in presenting his system view of the mind or self, namely, that of the republic or commonwealth in which, as he proposes, "the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination, and give rise to other persons, who propagate the same republic in the incessant changes of its parts"- [T: 261]. If we could succeed in finding some way of representing the members of the republic and their relationships accordingly, we should not expect to be accused of having failed to provide an account of the republic itself.

[29] However, Hume's account of the influence of these relations on this activity of the imagination is rather obscure, and indeed he himself appears to have become dissatisfied with his own analysis, judging by his reconsiderations in 'Appendix'.

memory, and emotion. These mental phenomena are represented as the product of causal relations among our perceptions. According to Hume, "the true idea of the human mind, is to consider it as a system of different perceptions" which are "link'd together by the relation of cause and effect". In other words, the mental phenomena as the aspects of the mind may be represented not only as the product of causal relations between our perceptions, but also as being the source of future relations of this kind. There is a causal flow among impressions and ideas, occurring with impressions of sensation, with particular impressions of reflection, volitions and the passions. Such a flow gives rise not only to ideas but also to the actions we perform. On this account, the mind is *organized* in a certain way, with volition, belief, passion, etc. Each of them performs certain functions and produces bodily behaviour by their interaction. In such a case, memory as the faculty discloses both the succession of our perceptions and the relations of resemblance and causation between them. Hume therefore maintains that memory "not only discovers the identity, but also contributes to its production," and for this reason memory should be regarded as the "source of personal identity". [T: 260-62]

2.2.3. Hume's account of identity

Until now with only one aspect of Hume's discussion of the self was concerned. This aspect is based on his rejection of the self as something simple and identical which underlies our perceptions. Hume suggests an alternative to this in the form of an account of the mind as a bundle or system of perceptions. But this still leaves central aspects of Hume's discussion in 'Of Personal Identity' to be considered including, for example, his treatment of the idea of identity. Firstly, this point shall be considered and then Hume's account of the idea of *personal identity* be analysed.

2.2.3.1. The principles of identity

Hume addresses the question of identity in the section 'Of Scepticism with Regard to The Senses'. Here he deals with the mechanism in an attempt to explain the genesis of the vulgar man's false belief in an external world existing independently of being perceived. He seeks the principles of human nature, "from whence the decision [to believe] arises" [T: 188]. He does not present any experiential reports and principles of experiential evidence that together might render the decision rationally defensible. In his investigation about this false belief, he presents a more detailed analysis of the mechanism of its genesis, which he refers to as his *system*. Firstly, Hume introduces his analysis by explaining the *principium individuationis,* or principle of identity.

Hume lists identity as one of the seven kinds of philosophical relations, but this topic is not explored in any detail until Part IV of *Treatise*. This important treatment of identity, however, unlike the superficial remarks in Part III, is developed in Part II which draws heavily on the theory of space and time. But, first, I shall explore his analysis of identity as philosophical relation.

As Hume pointed out below, identity is an instance of a purely philosophical relation, in other words, identity is not a natural relation.

> *Identity* may be esteem'd a second species of relation. This relation I here consider as apply'd in its strictest sense to constant and unchangeable objects; without examining the nature and foundation of personal identity, which shall find its place afterwards. Of all relations the most universal is that of identity, being common to every being, whose existence has any duration. [T: 14]

In this approach he makes two important claims: the first one is that in "its strictest sense" the relation applies to objects which are constant and unchangeable; and the other is that identity is the most universal relation, belonging to anything that exists for any time at all.[30] It seems that Hume

[30] The implication of Hume's view that identity is a philosophical but not also a natural relation is that the ordinary use of a word like *same*, which is governed by the influence of natural relations, may fail to reflect the demands of the philosophical notion of identity − as, indeed, is

implies here two kinds of case. In the first of these cases identity is ascribed to something which has duration and may be described as constant and unchanging; but in the second, identity may be ascribed to something which does not have duration and, thus, cannot therefore be described in such terms. The universality of the relation of identity in the second case signifies to nothing more than the fact that the description of something as being the same with itself may be applied to anything at all. The corresponding idea of identity, for Hume, cannot be a rightful one, because he regards the description of something as being the same with itself as essentially a meaningless one. As he puts it:

> As to the principle of individuation; we may observe, that the view of any one object is not sufficient to convey the idea of identity. For in that proposition *an object is the same with itself,* if the idea expressed by the word, *object,* were no ways distinguished from that [one] meant by *itself,* we really should mean nothing ... One single object conveys the idea of unity, not that of identity.
>
> On the other hand, a multiplicity of objects can never convey this idea, however resembling they may be supposed. [T: 200]

This puzzle, in brief, is due to the fact that identity is a *relation,* but a relation a thing can have only to itself. The perception of one object, Hume thinks, can never give us the idea of a relation; on the other hand, the perception of more than one object can never give us the idea of a relation a thing can have only to itself. He puts into words this difficulty in the following way:

> Since ... both number and unity are incompatible with the relation of identity, it must lie in ... neither of them. But to tell the truth, at first sight this seems utterly impossible. Betwixt unity and number there can be no medium. [T: 200]

In Hume's analysis of our idea of identity, according to his system, we must explain what we mean when we predicate identity of an object, and we must

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confirmed by the discussion of 'Of Personal Identity' in *Treatise*. He goes on to make one other distinction, within the category of philosophical relations, between those that are, and those that are not, affected by the order in which the related ideas come before the mind [T: 'Of Knowledge', 69]. The relation of identity belongs to the former category.

account for how the mind comes to have this idea of numerical sameness. His beginning argument remarks that the view of a single object is not by itself sufficient to give us the idea of identity. Here Hume departs from what appears to be his view of identity in Part III of *Treatise* and argues that we do not say simply that an object is identical with itself.

In order to remove the difficulty Hume applies to the idea of *time* or *duration*. He argues that time implies succession (change) and that the idea of time or duration is not applicable in a proper sense to unchangeable objects:

> …the idea of duration is always derived from a succession of changeable objects, and can never be conveyed to the mind by any thing steadfast and unchangeable ... it inevitably follows ... that since the idea of duration cannot be derived from such an object, it can never, in any propriety ... be apply'd to it, nor can anything unchangeable be ever said to have duration. [T: 37]

If we conceive an unchanging object as having duration, then, this is only by a "fiction of the imagination", by which "the unchangeable object is suppos'd to participate of the changes of the co-existing objects and in particular that of our perceptions" [T: 200]. The unchanging object does *not* endure, strictly speaking, but this "fiction of the imagination almost universally takes place". Hume thinks that we get the idea of identity by means of this fiction of the imagination.

On the other hand, in the Section 'Of Personal Identity', Hume goes on to draw a distinction between *numerical* and *specific identity*[31]. In the case of *specific* identity, there is a relation of exact resemblance between two objects. In the numerical identity, on the contrary, something remains one and the same object. If we ascribe numerical identity to an object which is perceived brokenly, Hume says that this is actually an example of causal reasoning. Since, in fact, what we

[31] This term is also called by using a term of Hume's as "*imperfect* identity" (Ashley and Stack, "Hume's Doctrine of Personal Identity"). Noxon ("Senses of Identity in Hume's *Treatise*") seems to equate the term with "*specific* identity".

do is to infer that the object would have resulted in "an invariable and uninterrupted perception" had we perceived it throughout. [T: 74]

Hume maintains the case of the latter kind in 'Of Scepticism with Regard to The Senses' [T: 187-218] where he searches to explain the belief in the existence of body. What is it about our perceptions that guide to the idea of an external existence, though they are generally broken and interrupted? According to Hume, there are certain characteristics of perceptions (sense-impressions) which lead us to ascribe an identity to them in spite of their interruption. We change or remove this sort of interruption by forming the idea of a "real existence" that connects them throughout. But what is, then, the principle of identity? Here Hume makes a distinction between "the idea of identity", on the one hand, and "the ideas of unity and number (or multiplicity)" on the other hand. As said above, a single object at any particular moment in its history conveys the idea of unity rather than identity. On the other hand, a number of objects also does not convey the idea of identity.[32] A multiplicity of objects gives us only the idea of number. The idea of identity is neither that of unity nor that of number, but must somehow lie between these two ideas. As Hume says, there seems to be no "medium" between the two ideas of unity and number. But, how are we to account for this idea? In order to account for or in other words to bridge this *gap* Hume introduces the notion of *time*. He notes that the analysis of time has previously shown that time is a succession of objects, so that:

> …when we apply its idea to any unchangeable object, 'tis only by a fiction of the imagination, by which the unchangeable object is suppos'd to participate of the changes of the co-existent objects. [T: 200]

Since this account of time has been presented as a piece of conceptual analysis, Hume cannot say simply that our idea of a single object persisting through time does not fit the real world. He must rather say that we do not have this idea at all, even though we appear to. The problem of identity then becomes, for him,

[32] Hume subsequently refers to this idea as *the idea of numerical identity*.

that of explaining how it is that we seem to be able to think of a single, individual object lasting over an interval of time.

Here Hume presents the idea of identity as a relation. This relation belongs to an object considered at different times. In relation to these different times we think the object in different ways. In so far as the object exists at these different times we may appeal the idea of number to it, as we do to the times themselves. But by thinking that the change in time occurs without any variation or interruption in the object, we form the idea of identity (i.e. of the object at one time with itself at another). According to this way of thinking of the object, we can apply to it only the ideas of number or unity. But by virtue of the idea of time and duration we are able to form the idea of identity as a kind of medium between the ideas of unity and number.[33] As a result of this account of the way in which the idea of identity is formed, Hume presents such a formulation of the principle of identity: namely, "the *invariableness* and *uninterruptedness* of any object, thro' a suppos'd variation of time". [T: 201]

This principle is central to Hume's explanation of how we attain to the idea of an external existence that our ascriptions of identity do not necessarily depend on the experience of invariableness and uninterruptedness. We regard a succession of related objects especially as if they were constant and uninterrupted, thus, succession is confused with identity. This is a very important component in Hume's account of how the idea of an external or continued existence arises as the means by which our interrupted perceptions are united in accordance with this ascription of identity. Here he gives an instance for the principle of association of ideas; as he says in introducing this principle,

[33] By virtue of Hume's view of the idea of time itself, his position is inexplicit. In short, according to Hume, an idea is derived not from any single impression but, rather, from the "succession of our perceptions". Then he deduces that an unchanging object cannot give us the idea of time. For this reason, to apply the idea of time to an unchanging object by thinking of it in conjunction with a succession of perceptions is possible only through a kind of fiction. It is through this fiction of the imagination, according to him, that an object which is observed for a time without obviously undergoing any interruption or variation is able to give us the idea of identity.

"our imagination runs easily from one idea to any other that *resembles* it" [T: 11]. When a succession of related objects is experienced the imagination replies as if it were presented with something invariable and uninterrupted. In this way, the idea of a distinct or continued existence is at last produced. Therefore, this idea here may be described as a *fiction of the imagination*.

2.2.3.2. The idea of personal identity

According to Hume's basic philosophical approach, the only things with which we are truly acquainted are perceptions − i.e. impressions and ideas. However, there are no real or principal connection between impression and ideas, and each of our simple ideas is a copy of corresponding impression and causally dependent upon an earlier simple impression. These principles, as pointed out before, make Hume conclude that the only idea of the external world or substance we could have is "nothing but a collection of simple ideas, that are united by the imagination" [T: 16]. The collections of impressions that compose such objects sometimes contain temporal gaps, their successive members often display a qualitative diversity, and they usually contain a number of simple impressions at any given moment; hence, they are rarely *uninterrupted*, *invariable*, or *simple*. Nevertheless, both the vulgar man and the traditional philosopher attribute all these three features to the external world and its material objects, and Hume is concerned to explain why this is so. In his attempt to explain it, the problem of personal identity comes into question.

In the way of Hume's discussion of personal identity, he distinguishes between the analysis of personal identity "as it regards our thought or imagination," and personal identity as it pertains to "our passions or the concern we take in ourselves." He addresses the first question in Book I, but his discussion of "our identity with regard to the passions" postpones to Book II. When he seeks this second aspect of personal identity in Book II, he explores the role of the passions, sympathy, and the will in our formulation of the particular ideas we

have of ourselves as empirical subjects. This later analysis of personal identity shall be discussed in the second part of my thesis. Now I seek Hume's understanding of the personal identity within the terms of invariableness, uninterruptedness and simplicity.

Hume introduces his discussion of the personal identity by equalizing the idea of the identity or sameness of an object with that of its invariableness and uninterruptedness through a supposed variation of time:

> Thus the principle of individuation is nothing but the *invariableness* and *uninterruptedness* of any object, thro' a suppos'd variation of time, by which the mind can trace it in the different periods of its existence, without any break of the view, and without being oblig'd to form the idea of multiplicity or number. [T: 201]

Hume discusses *uninterruptedness* in the way of his attempt to explain why the vulgar men fail to realize that they are acquainted only with internal perceptions and instead believe that they are directly aware of the external world or material objects that possess a continued existence outside the mind even when not perceived. This can happen only if they mistake perceptions for external objects. Such errors are likely to occur when the members of a sequence of perceptions display either *coherence* or *constancy*.

A series of perceptions displays of its members which resemble each other. When the imagination regards such series, it characteristically associates its members. But it does not stay with this, for the mind's disposition when it surveys the series is much like that when it considers a *single*, uninterrupted sequence of perceptions. This is so, because of the resemblance between the perceptions in the series, as well as that between the mental acts by which they are surveyed, the imagination is likely to go on to take the perceptions to be strictly or numerically identical. And since Hume thinks that our idea of strict identity demands the interruptedness and invariability *through a supposed*

variation of time of the objects to which it is ascribed, this identification requires that we mistake the several perceptions for a single uninterrupted thing.[34] Such mistakes are exposed by nearly every change in our view. Yet rather than abandon our misattribution of uninterruptedness, we instead try to disguise their incompatibility with the existence of intervals in perceptions. And we do so by supposing that the perceptions which we have misconstrued as single object have an uninterrupted − and hence mind independent − existence even when not perceived.

The tendency to such errors may present in everyone, however, realizing that we are typically acquainted only with interrupted sequences of perceptions, the philosopher views through the vulgar man's way of disguising the tension between the interruptions and the belief that material objects are continued. This belief is so natural, however, that even the philosopher cannot easily save himself from it aid accordingly he is likely to replace the naive realism of the vulgar with the (false) philosophical view that material objects hold an uninterrupted existence outside the mind while causing our fleeting perceptions which represent then.

The vulgar also conceive material objects as *invariable*, "continuing the same" through a variation of qualitative changes. Hume's discussion of coherence provides some explanation for this belief, but he mentions coherence only to drop it. However, he goes on to give a quite different account that draws upon mechanisms similar to those invoked in his discussion of constancy, telling us that even in the case of a series of perceptions that would commonly be taken to be a highly changeable material object, immediately successive members of the series are likely to resemble each other. When this occurs the imagination's easy transition from one member to the next will seem much like the act of contemplating a single, unchanging perception, and this will readily "deceive it"

[34] When modifying "identity", "strict" is often treated as synonymous with "perfect" [T: 203, 207], "numerical" [T: 69, 202, 217, 257], and "real" [T: 63].

identifying the distinct perceptions and considering them as *one continu'd object* [T: 220]. In most cases, however, a piece of reflection is needed to see that the perceptions further removed from each other in time are quite dissimilar and that the overall series is not invariable at all. The unease caused by the contradiction between this rather obvious fact and our misattributions of invariability should provide an impetus for us to disguise our error. And, Hume tells us, this may be done by "feigning" the existence of an underlying substratum or substance which persists unchanged throughout the observed variations.

In this respect the important point is that the idea of the identity or sameness of an object should be distinguished from the idea of *diversity*, which is basically that of a succession of related objects. This is so, because the imagination as the mind's associative faculty is able to construe diversity as identity by means of various 'devices'. We might put it by saying that our imagination is able to disguise or conceal from us the recognisable fact that, in many cases, our experience actually consists of a number of isolated and unconnected perceptions. For this reason, as mentioned above, we may come to see a certain series of events as being continuous when in fact it is not. However, when imagination is at work, we are placed in the same state of mind as if our imagination is identical with something invariable and interrupted. In such case we tend to confound identity with diversity [T: 254-55]. This tendency is on bad terms with the recognition that we are presented with a related succession that is variable and interrupted, but it is maintained by the supposition of something that connects the related objects together. "In order to reconcile" this contradiction between identity and diversity, "the imagination is apt to feign something unknown and invisible, which it supposes to continue the same under all these variations; and this unintelligible something it calls a *substance, or original and first matter.*" [T: 220]. Therefore, we acquire the fiction of a substantial self, or (in the case of the 'vulgar') a self as something unknown and mysterious that connects our changing perceptions. According to Hume, this is the very opposite of what he means by identity or sameness.

The other fictional component in the vulgar man's concept of material objects is *simplicity* which Hume accounts in a somewhat similar way. According to this account, by substance as substratum or subject of inhesion we "feign a principle of union as the support of this simplicity" [T: 263]. Although an idea of a momentary material object will typically be a composite of discrete ideas like colour, size and shape, we tend to regard the whole as simple. This is so, because the mind is inclined to respond to an object with closely related co-existent parts much as it would do to something simple and indivisible, because of this reason we confound simplicity with composition. But we find that it is really presented with distinguishable and separate qualities, it feigns an "unknown principle of union" among these qualities.

Hume means that these remarks about identity are applied not only to persons or selves but also to organic bodies as well as to inanimate objects. From this point of view we may say that the way in which we judge concerning the identity of persons can seem essentially no different from the way in which we judge concerning the identity of other things. Thomas Reid thinks in a similar way and argues that "Our judgments of the identity of objects of sense seem to be formed much upon the same grounds as our judgments of the identity of other persons beside ourselves."[35] According to Hume, in all such situations we tend to attribute identity to things which are variable or interrupted, and in doing so to create fictitious subjects of identity. We act in this way, because these things "to which we ascribe identity, without observing their invariableness and uninterruptedness" consist in a succession of perceptions that are related to each other by "resemblance, contiguity, or causation". This explains why, for example, we ascribe a perfect identity to a mass of matter which undergoes some increase or decrease in its very small parts, usually distinguishing a small change from a change in the identity of an object "by its proportion to the whole". Hume mentions this case in his example is that "the addition or

[35] Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, p. 205

diminution of a mountain wou'd not be sufficient to produce a diversity in a planet," although a change in "a very few inches wou'd be able to destroy the identity of some bodies." According to Hume, this type of identity, which we attribute to objects from an interrupted series of resembling perceptions, or a coherent series of changing perceptions, may be called "imperfect" identity [T: 256]. On the other hand, Reid thinks that "the identity ... which we ascribe to bodies, whether natural or artificial, is not perfect identity; it is rather something which, for convenience of speech, we call identity."[36] Identity, he says, "has no fixed nature when applied to bodies; and questions about the identity of a body are very often questions about words." As applied to persons, however, identity "has no ambiguity and admits not of degrees. It is the foundation of all rights and obligations, and of all accountableness; and the notion of it is fixed and precise."

According to Hume's other principle by which we attribute the imperfect identity to changing objects, we may also regard the human ability to direct each in a series of those objects toward a "common end or purpose" as a basis for attributing identity to a sequence of perceptions as a single object. This remark is clear in Hume's example of ship whose "a considerable part has been chang'd by frequent reparations." [37] In point of fact, Hume finds that many attributions of identity are determined by human devices or conventions as these apply to a causal sequence. This is evident in his example of church. When we say, after an old brick church has fallen into ruin, that "the parish rebuilt the same church of free-stone, and according to modern architecture," even though "neither the form nor materials are the same, nor is there anything common to the two objects, but their relation to the inhabitants of the parish." We may even

[36] *Ibid*. p. 206

[37] One of Hume's examples is that of a ship, most of the parts of which may be replaced during the course of its life, yet we all the while regard it as the same ship, because the various parts remain organised in the same way [T: 257]. In the case of animals and vegetables also, we may ascribe a continuing identity even though every constituent part has been replaced. This example of ship, which has been often used in the discussion of the identity, is known in the history of philosophy as "The Ship of Theseus".

consider a "republic or commonwealth" to maintain its identity through all of the "incessant change of its parts," including not only new generations of inhabitants, but also changes in its "laws and constitutions" [T: 255-58, 261]. But in the case of organic bodies there introduces an additional factor. This factor implies that some common end is not only served by their parts, but their parts are *organised* to achieve this end by virtue of the causal relations among them. This allows us to ascribe identity, though the parts in question change completely, for example, as in the case of the oak[38] which grows from a kind of small plant to a large tree. Another sort of case in which an object saves its identity in spite of a complete change in its parts is where the object is by its nature "changeable and inconstant" − for example, as in the case of a river.[39]

Hume thinks our all attributions of identity (of mind or self) with respect of its mental aspect, which have been mentioned above, as fictitious products of the imagination. Now we should remind that Hume in fact concerns with two kinds of idea associated with the idea of personal identity: one of these concerns the mind or self *at* a given time; and the other concerns the mind or self *through* time. In both of these cases we ascribe a certain kind of unity to our perceptions. Hume talks about the former case in which we make a judgement of *simplicity* and the latter case in which we make a judgement of *identity*. For this reason simplicity is confused with composition and identity with variation. In both of these cases a kind of identity or unity is ascribed to the mind, which may be

[38] The example of the oak tree is used by Shaftesbury in his discussion of identity ["The Moralists", in *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. L. E. Klein, p. 299]. Although there are several similarities between Hume's discussions of identity and Shaftesbury's, Shaftesbury makes inferences about personal identity very differently from Hume's conclusion. Shaftesbury argues that we remain the same in virtue of a "strange simplicity".

[39] Hume, in fact, does not think that we have always an absolute standard in every case for determining the identity of the object through every possible change, and accordingly he concludes that many of our discussions on the identity of an object might seem to be "merely verbal," although the parties in these discussions appeal to the philosophical concept of identity insofar as "the relation of parts gives rise to some fiction or imaginary principle of union". [T: 262]

called as *synchronic* and *diachronic*, respectively. [40] We may mention in this point a direct parallelism between mind and body. In the case of the mind or self *through* time, according to Hume, we think a collection of qualities as one thing and, as if this thing continues as the same thing whatever changes occur.

Therefore, the body is a fictitious construct by virtue of the imagination of material substance as the principle of union and identity among the qualities which compose a body. The notion of the mind may be described in a similar way. The mind is also a fiction of the imagination of a material or an immaterial substance as the result of the principle of union and identity among our perceptions. In the next section the details of Hume's conceptions of the idea of a simple and identical mind shall be investigated, and also considered some of the issues which Hume's bundle or system account of the mind or self gives rise.

2.3. Hume on the idea of the self

One part of Hume's purposes in *Treatise* is to show that, although philosophers have claimed that we are at all times intimately conscious of soul or self, there is in fact no empirical evidence for its existence. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that there is something that we call the idea of the self, and that we have an idea of continuing selves. The remaining part of his purpose is to show how this can be possible, granted his own philosophical principles. Until now I have focused on describing his account for these principles in general, and especially on the idea of the self as something which is both simple and identical. In this way I have tried to explain his position concerning the mental aspects of the self. This position at the same time represents Hume's accounts about what the self is *not*.

[40] This distinction is adapted from Galen Strawson's explanation about the mental self as a *single* thing that is single both *synchronically* considered and *diachronically* considered [in Galen Strawson, "The Self", pp. 405-28 and in "The Sense of the Self", pp. 126-52]. A similar distinction of the self is made also by Pitson in *Hume's Philosophy of the Self*.

But we can mention another side of his position concerning the identity of the self. I hereafter shall concern with this side which includes Hume's account of how we ascribe an identity to the mind and his own explanation of the mind as a system of perceptions. I shall look in detail at Hume's views on our belief in the mind's identity, especially by taking into account *memory*, and his bundle or system view of the self. First of all it shall be explored his explanations about the function of memory in the formation of personal identity and the self.

2.3.1. The continuing identity of the mind: Memory and personal identity

The faculties of memory are discussed in *Treatise,* Book I, Part I, Section III, and in Book I, Part III, Section V. Hume has been already indirectly suggested an account for the function of memory in his treatment of impressions and ideas. It will be recalled that, while impressions are the given data of the senses, ideas are the faint copies of these and therefore at all times involve the memory of them. Imagination comes into play when the simple copies of impressions are put together to form more complex ideas. In the case of the idea of the mind or self, according to Hume, the relations of perceptions form this idea by virtue of memory. In such a formation, we get the idea of the mind or self by ascribing a continuing identity to the perceptions of the mind, though there are explicit variations and interruptions among these perceptions. This kind of idea of mind or self, as Hume says, remains the same over time, this means that the mind or self has a diachronic identity.

We ascribe a continuing identity to the perceptions of the mind or the self, since these perceptions have certain features resulting in an association of their ideas in the imagination. These are resemblance and causal relations. There are resemblances especially among the perceptions of the mind (as a system of perceptions) arising from memory and there are also causal relations with impressions giving rise to ideas, and these ideas to other impressions. The causal relations and resemblances contribute to a transition in the imagination from one

perception to another, and the result, as Hume says, is the fiction of an identical self or mind. [41] This is a brief explanation of Hume's thoughts about the continuing identity ascribed to the mind or the self. But, in order to make clear the function or role of memory in his account about the mind or self, we should survey those thoughts in more detail.

2.3.1.1. Memory and resemblance

The mechanism which produces the belief of the "antient" philosophers in substance and the belief of the vulgar in the existence of external world, Hume thinks, is exactly the same in the case of personal identity. This same mechanism of the imagination in the case of personal identity is at work and it produces contention and mistake in just the same way. In order to make clear his thoughts about the personal identity we should look at closely the role of memory in ascribing to a continuing identity to the perceptions of the mind.

Hume's thought is that the relation of resemblance among the perceptions of the mind in the general bundle is actually increased by the activity of remembering those perceptions. He claims that memory not only observes or discovers the resemblances that are already there, but also it *produces* the relation of resemblance among the perceptions of the mind. To remember something, for Hume, is to have an image or a series of images. Since the image is, in this case, a copy of something that has already been present to the mind, the relation of resemblance among two or more perceptions necessarily obtains on every occasion that one remembers something. We might say, then, that similarity between perceptions is rendered more widespread by the faculty of memory. At this point memory thus helps, substantially, to facilitate the easy transition of the mind along a line of perceptions.

[41] Some interpreters of Hume regard such an ascription of identity to the self and formation of the self in this way as a logically false construction. For example, Ashley and Stack argue that Hume's theory of the self as a "logical-Construction" theory is mistaken. [L. Ashley and M. Stack, "Hume's Theory of the Self and Its Identity," pp. 239-54]

According to Hume, above all, what unites the successive perceptions that collectively constitute a mind or self is *memory*. Here memory seems to have fundamental importance, because the natural relations would not arise without memory, thus we would not ascribe a continuing identity to the mind or self. As Hume himself puts it: "Had we no memory, we never shou'd have any notion of causation, nor consequently of that chain of causes and effects, which constitute our self or person" [T: 261-62]. The relations which unite our successive perceptions so as to bring about the uninterrupted progress of the thought are resemblance and causation.

Hume argues that the succession of the perceptions is merely a succession of separate related objects. Since the objects in the succession are closely related with the action of the imagination at that time. And the succession is "almost the same to the feeling" as the action of the imagination, in other words, in both cases the object is considered as an uninterrupted and invariable object. As in the other cases, the similarity between the two actions of mind makes us confuse the two situations and thus we are led to regard the succession of related perceptions as really united by identity. And in this way we are made believe in the unity of the self, which is as much a fiction as in the other cases of the operation of the mechanism, and, "proceed[s] entirely from the smooth and uninterrupted progress of the thought along a train of connected ideas according to the principles above explain'd". [T: 260]

Our perceptions at successive times resemble each other for a variety of reasons, of course, but the one, Hume emphasizes, is that, we are able to remember our past experiences:

> For what is the memory, but a faculty by which we raise up the images of past perceptions? And as an image necessarily resembles its object must not the frequent placing of these resembling perceptions in the chain of thought, convey the imagination more easily from one link to another, and make the whole like the continuance of one object? [T: 260-61]

Hume gives such a copy theory of memory, then, he says that we are able to take into account memory not only as providing us with access to our past selves, but also as contributing to the bundles of perceptions. In this way we can look at elements which represent, and thus resemble, earlier elements; and so, since resemblance is a relation which enables the mind to flow easily along a succession of perceptions. Then, by virtue of this particular case, Hume puts forward that "memory not only discovers but produces personal identity". [T: 166]

One other important point is the presence of past actions or experiences among our perceptions. This is the ultimate source of the idea that we are temporally extended beings. But such presence of memories need not be factual, since we do not remember all our past actions or experiences. But although we cannot remember the experiences or events of certain past days, we do not assert that the present self is not the same person as the self of that past time. Such a case implies that there must be something else as conveying our identity beyond our memory, and so that we are able to think of our identity. Hume emphasizes that memory is not the only source of the resemblances among our perceptions, we can imagine such resemblances extended beyond our memory, and in this way we can comprehend ourselves as existing at times we have now forgotten. For the explanation of such an understanding he does not apply to causality, but what he applies to that kind of explanation can be followed his account of "the true idea of the human mind":

> …the true idea of the human mind … a system of different perceptions or different existences, which are linked together by the relation of cause and effect…. Our impressions give rise to their correspondent ideas: and these ideas in their turn produce other impressions. One thought chases another, and draws after it a third, by which it is expelled in its turn. In this respect I cannot compare the soul more properly to anything than to a republic or commonwealth, in which the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination, and give rise to other persons, who propagate the same republic in the incessant change of its parts. [T: 266]

Hume says, when we think of ourselves as existing at times, we cannot remember we do so by imagining the chain of causes and effects, but we remember extending beyond our memory of them.

> But having once acquir'd this notion of causation from the memory, we can extend the same chain of causes, and consequently the identity of our persons beyond our memory, and can comprehend times, and circumstances, and actions, which we have entirely forgot, but suppose in general to have existed. [T: 262]

So the causal links among our perceptions, as well as their resemblances, are crucial to our belief in a continuing self which exists at times it no longer remembers. Therefore, Hume says:

> In this view,… memory not so much *produces* as *discovers* personal identity, by shewing us the relation of cause and effect among our different perceptions. [T: 262]

This shows also what Hume takes the mind to be. According to his discussion of memory, the mind as complex, dynamic, ever-changing can be thought of as an active agent (being part of the succession of perceptions which constitute the mind) in the formation of our beliefs about everything, including even the formation of the belief in its own identity. The formation of the identity of the self in this way is involved a kind of complex perception which takes the successive perceptions of the mind as its *object*. Since we are conscious not only of each of our perceptions individually as they occur, but also we are conscious of ourselves as a *succession* of such perceptions. [T: 277]

2.3.1.2. Memory and causation

In the previous section we have been focused on the role of memory on the basis of resemblance among perceptions in bringing about the idea of an identical self. As mentioned before, the relation of resemblance among the present and past perceptions of our actions or experiences results from memory. In a similar way,

the other role of memory is based on the relation of causality which gives rise to the belief in self-identity among the perceptions of mind.

Hume asserts that memory is the source of personal identity, since the self is formed by a "chain of causes and effects" among our different perceptions. As he points out, there are many things from our past experiences that we simply do not remember. Although there are gaps in our memory, we regard ourselves as having continued as the same self through these gaps. Hume's claim is that it is the principle of causality that helps us to bridge this kind of gaps. By virtue of the causal link among our past and/or present experiences, according to him, the mind makes possible the transition from one experience to the other. In such a transition from the one perception to the other there is nothing to obstruct our tendency to regard ourselves as continuing persons. For this reason, memory, resemblance and causality are basic points in his account of the *fictitious* idea of personal identity.

Memory is the only means by which there can be any awareness of the causal connections among perceptions over time. The idea of identity of the self is constituted by the relations of resemblance and causality; this is the other reason to consider memory as the source of personal identity. But at this point, once more we should underline that Hume regards the identity involved as *fictitious*, since there are no necessary connections between the perceptions in themselves. The continuity is something that is attributed to them by the mind. This means that the identity is not intrinsic to the series of our perceptions, but arises from our *reflection* on these perceptions. Thus, Hume does not see the memory as the only source of the personal identity, since, for him, in order to argue that I am the same person now as the person at some earlier time by remembering my actions in the past is required to remember almost all my past actions, but this is impossible. For this reason, he says, it cannot be affirmed that memory produces entirely our personal identity. But he suggests that we remember comparatively few of our past actions. And by showing us the relation of cause and effect

between our distinct perceptions he points out that the memory does not so much produce personal identity as discover it. Such an account for the part played by imagination in giving rise to the idea of an identical self shows us that the relation of cause and effect has greater importance than the relation of resemblance.

2.3.1.3. Contiguity

Hume's discussion of personal identity, both in the original text of *Treatise* and in the 'Appendix', as indicated before, proceeds on the basis of the idea of the mind. He argues that the mind consists entirely in a sequence of perceptions. These perceptions are distinguishable and separable from each other, and we cannot discover any "real bond" or "real connexion" between our perceptions. By virtue of the imagination, he argues, we ascribe identity to the mind. This kind of imagination is based on the relations of resemblance and causation that we discover within this sequence of perceptions [T: 259-60]. It should be remembered that Hume argued previously in *Treatise* contiguity as a quality in the ideas which produce association and as a relation which is essential to the idea of causation itself [for example; T: 11, 75]. But he subsequently excludes contiguity from his account of the identity of the mind or self as having "little or no influence in the present case." [T: 260]. In other words Hume now denies that contiguity has any influence on the association of impressions with each other, but he denies also that causation has any influence in this case [T: 261-62]. He does not see the spatial contiguity as an essential part of the idea of causation. Hume's denial of contiguity in the account of the identity of self may be explained more clearly by approaching to his conception of unity concerning with the mind and self.

Hume thinks that the perceptions of the mind do not exhibit a genuine unity and identity, and we ascribe the qualities to them because of the effect of certain relations (resemblance, contiguity and causation) among perceptions on the

imagination. These relations that lead to an association of ideas, are responsible for the transition of imagination and it results eventually in the fiction of something invariable and uninterrupted, or of something mysterious and inexplicable [T: 255]. Such an associating quality of contiguity is equally apparent in the functioning of the imagination:

> 'Tis likewise evident, that as the senses, in changing their objects, are necessitated to change them regularly, and take them as they lie *contiguous* to each other, the imagination must by long custom acquire the same method of thinking, and run along the parts of space and time in conceiving its objects. [T: 11]

Why contiguity is excluded from account of the belief in the identity of the mind or self is related with Hume's thoughts about the relations of resemblance, contiguity in time or place and causation. He identifies these three qualities of our perceptions that appear to facilitate the "connexion or association of ideas," which he also calls the *principles of union or cohesion* among our simple ideas. But in his discussion of which objects are susceptible for a local conjunction, he suggests that our perceptions are *incompatible* with local conjunction with matter or body [T: 236]. In that case, then they cannot be spatially contiguous to each other. He says of spatial contiguity:

> We may suppose it such *(i.e.,* an essential part of the idea of a cause), according to the general opinion, till we find a more proper occasion to clear up this matter, by examining what objects are or are not susceptible of juxtaposition and conjunction. [T: 75]

The reason is found in *Treatise*, Part IV, Section V, where he points out that sounds and smells, passions and volitions cannot properly be said to have shapes or positions at all, but do enter into causal relationships.

According to Hume, though smells, sounds, and tastes do not have spatial location, they appear to be spatial. He argues that the taste and the figure of an object are related by "causation and contiguity in the time of their appearance"

[T: 237]. He argues that "when objects are united by any relation, we have a strong propensity to add some new relation to them, in order to compleat the union" [*ibid*.]. In the light of this propensity, we "endeavour to give [the taste and the figure of the object] a new relation, namely a *conjunction in place*." [*ibid*.]. This brings about the belief that the taste is conjoined in place, conjoined spatially, to the object. This is a mistake or an "illusion" due to the propensity to add a new relation to related objects. However, reflection shows that the local conjunction of taste with object is "unintelligible and contradictory" [T: 238]. This produces the belief that the taste is not conjoined with the object's extension. Hume maintains the discussion:

> Here then we are influenc'd by two principles directly contrary to each other, *viz*. that *inclination* of our fancy by which we are determin'd to incorporate the taste with the extended object, and our *reason*, which shows us the impossibility of such an union. Being divided betwixt these opposite principles, we renounce neither one nor the other. . . . We suppose, that the taste exists within the circumference of the body, but in such a manner, that it fills the whole without extension, and exists entire in every part without separation. [T: 238]

His conclusion is that "we cannot refuse to condemn the materialists, who conjoin all thought with extension" [T: 239]. This perhaps indicates a case that we have experienced the relations of causation and contiguity in time of appearance of objects. In such a case, as said before, we *add* the relation of local conjunction in order to allow of a transition of the imagination among the objects concerned.[42] For this reason, Waxman argues that the spatial contiguity of perceptions seems irrelevant to Hume's explanation of the identity of the mind.[43] The natural relation of contiguity includes both spatial and temporal contiguity. Thus, we may still ask why Hume does not consider the possible influence of the temporal contiguity of perceptions in contributing to the identity

[42] However, Hume himself appears in 'Appendix' to have become dissatisfied with his analysis of the influence of these relations on the activity of the imagination. In the Chapter 3 of the present study, this point shall be reevaluated.

[43] Wayne Waxman, *Hume's Theory of Consciousness*, p. 228

of the mind or the self, especially given the importance of memory in his theory.[44]

We may mention at least two factors that should be taken into account here. The first factor is that the succession of perceptions. This characteristic of perceptions constitutes the mind or the self as being *interrupted*. This means that there are times when no such perceptions exist, as in sleep or other periods of unconsciousness. Hume accepts that during these times we or, at any rate, our minds no longer exist [T: 252]. In other words, the successive bundles of perceptions at a time which constitute the mind or self over time need not be temporally contiguous to each other. The second factor is that the relations of temporal contiguity occur among our perceptions and these relations are often not preserved in memory. And for this reason the relations of temporal contiguity do not themselves influence our tendency to ascribe an identity to our perceptions. By virtue of the existence of both these sorts of *gap* in our perceptions, it is more understandable why Hume considers contiguity to have little, if any, influence on the imagination in proceeding from the one perception to the other.

2.3.2. The bundle theory and the mind

Hume's views about the mind and self imply the final emancipation of modern philosophy from dependence on the Aristotelian and Scholastic sources. His position is the final stage in the development of empiricist thought about substance, beginning with Locke's uneasiness with the notion of an unobservable *something, we know not what* underlying the observable qualities in things, followed by Berkeley's emphatic rejection of the notion of *material* substance and his attempted accommodation of the concept of the substantial self under the guise of a notion rather than an idea.

[44] This application of the principle of temporal association might indeed have anticipated Kant's account of time as the form of inner sense, including empirical self-consciousness.

The notion of substance is a fundamental concept for Descartes, as it is for his rationalist successors Spinoza and Leibniz. Descartes argued that the mind was an immaterial substance "really distinct" from and independent of body, or material substance. Hume completely rejects it, and with it dualism in the Cartesian form. For the notion of "substance" as independent existence, he claims, applies to everything that can be conceived, since there are no real connections and everything is, therefore, "really distinct" (in Descartes' sense) from everything else. "Substance" is, therefore, at least an empty term (and consequently of no use to anyone) and possibly a meaningless one. Hume argues that the mind or the self, in particular, is not an immaterial substance, but a "bundle of perceptions" and the Cartesian "I" is a fiction. This is called as the bundle theory of mind or self.

According to the bundle theory, every object of awareness is an individual perception and "what we call a mind, is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions, united together by certain relations..." [T: 207]. In other words, Hume is saying that what we are aware of is a stream of perceptions, none of whose members is a perception of a simple, invariable, constant mind. However, given his account of (strict/perfect) identity, an acceptance of the bundle theory seems to entail the rejection of the continuous existence of any mind. Put differently, if true the theory seems to require that the very idea of a mind continuing through time is a fiction. This raises the following problem which Hume must address: Since the vulgar (ordinary) person has a great propensity to ascribe identity through time to minds [T: 253], from the point of view of a study of human nature, it is important to provide an answer to the question: why do the vulgar persons have such a propensity?

Hume's probable answer to this question depends upon the recognition that it is only the idea of a simple, invariable and constant mind that he believes is fictitious. Once this is seen, it follows that the ascription of strict identity

through time to a mind or self must, in accordance with Hume's account, be a result of the activity of the imagination. As Hume puts:

> ...identity is nothing really belonging to these different perceptions, and uniting them together: but is merely a quality, which we attribute to them, because of the union of their ideas in the imagination, when we reflect upon them. [T: 260]

Although the qualities that unite ideas typically include causation, resemblance and contiguity, Hume excludes contiguity as a factor in the case of ascriptions of strict identity through time to minds and restricts his attention to the relations of resemblance and causation. Of these two relations, a number of commentators have found the relation of resemblance especially problematic.

Lawrence Ashley and Michael Stack criticize the bundle theory as a "logical-construction" theory is mistaken. [45] According to them and also the most prevalent criticism of Hume commentators, the problem arises from Hume's contradiction concerning to the reality of personal identity. This criticism points to that Hume denies the reality of personal identity in Book I, yet he explicitly uses this concept of the self in Book II of *Treatise*.[46] But the contradiction is in fact only on the surface. As Penelhum notes, Hume does not deny that we have any idea of self, only that we have an idea of self "after the manner it is here explain'd" [T: 251], i.e., as something constant, invariable, simple and identical.[47] The idea of self which surfaces in Book II is not this type of idea of self; it is not, as Penelhum puts it, "the idea of the pure ego constructed by the rationalist philosophers."[48] After all, Hume is quite careful to define the self as a "succession of related ideas and impressions" and not as a self-identical substance that unifies all perceptions. There is, however, at least one other

[45] Ashley and Stack, "Hume's Theory of the Self and Its Identity", pp. 239-54

[46] See D. G. C. MacNabb, *David Hume: His Theory of Knowledge and Morality*, p. 251 and Passmore, *Hume's Intentions*, pp. 82-3

[47] Penelhum, "The Self of Book 1 and the Selves of Book 2," p. 282

[48] *Ibid*.

passage that cannot be explained away so easily. Further on in Book II, Hume declares:

> 'Tis 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 'tis not possible to imagine, that any thing can in this particular go beyond it. [T: 317]

Now this is a rather strong statement, one, in fact, that resembles exactly the type of statement Hume discredited in the section of *Treatise* on personal identity; for, here something very much like a constant and invariable impression of self is posited; and it was precisely this kind of idea of self that Hume denied we ever had.

Ashley and Stack have striven to overcome the mistake of Hume's theory of the mind or self as a "logical-construction" theory. They interpret the phrase "after the manner it [the idea of self] is here explained" in Book I, Part IV, section 'Of Personal Identity' to mean only "a self which has *perfect identity and* simplicity."[49] But on the same page Hume evidently denies that there is any impression constant and invariable throughout our lives, and he begins the section by stating, "There are some philosophers, who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF" [T: 251], a claim that he most obviously seeks to dispute. Now if we were truly to have an impression that was always intimately present, I cannot see how it could be anything other than a constant and invariable perception, i.e., one of which we were continually conscious. Don Garrett has supplied an alternative interpretation of the troubling passage. Garret argues that Hume does not mean that there is a single impression of the self, which remains constant and invariable; all that is required is that at any one time there be "an idea of a bundle of perceptions that are related by resemblance and causation."[50] Just as with the idea of space there is not one impression of space that is constant and invariable, but rather many

[49] Ashley and Stack, "Hume's Theory of the Self and Its Identity", p. 241

[50] Don Garrett, "Hume's Self-doubts about Personal Identity'', p. 340

spatial impressions, any of which could, when used as an abstract idea, give rise to the idea of space, the idea of self can be formed from a variety of impressions. In fact, as Garret points out, the idea of the self could be formed by any impression at all, since all impressions are supposed to be included in the bundle of perception forming the self. [51]

The other criticisms for Hume's bundle theory are concerning the *singularity* of perceptions and the *particularity* of perceptions. The first criticism is that the mind can scarcely be conceived as a bundle of perceptions unless we can make sense of the possibility of these perceptions occurring singly − and this, so it may be claimed, is not a meaningful possibility. But if perceptions can exist only as members of the minds to which they belong, then it would seem that any account of the mind in terms of relations between perceptions would be viciously circular.[52] At this point we need an example of a system. This system is plausibly considered as a kind of construction from its members or components, though these components are not capable of existing independent from this system to which they belong.[53] A game like chess as an example provides a good analogy for explaining better Hume's view of the mind and the self.[54] It evidently appears that we can pay no attention if any sense of the idea of a move occurring outside the context of the game in which it occurs. This might be explained by pointing out that a move in chess *is* a move only within the context of a game consisting in other moves. Nevertheless it does not follow that the game chess itself is something different than the moves it contains − a sort of obscure *principle of union* relating the different moves together. In this

[51] Besides clearing Hume of obvious contradiction, this interpretation has the advantage that it is precisely this kind of self that is integral to Hume's arguments concerning the love of fame, pride, humility, etc.

[52] Ayer, *The Problem of Knowledge*, p. 192

[53] The case of the republic obviously is not an applicable example for the case; because though the republic itself is arguably nothing more than its individual members related to each other in different ways, it seems possible that any one of these members might have led an independent existence (as in the case of the hermit). It is worth noting, however, that Hume has a very strong view of the dependence of individual human nature upon society: "We can form no wish, which has not a reference to society". [T: 363]

[54] Brennan, "The Disunity of the Self ", p. 178-9 and Carruthers, *Introducing Persons*, p. 53-4

point, it may be admitted the view that mind is covered by perceptions, rather than being separately existing entity. In fact any perception cannot exist independently of the mind to which it belongs.

The *particularity* of perceptions, which is the subject of the other criticism for the bundle theory, may be described in the following way. It seems that perceptions are individuated by reference to the minds to which they belong, but not vice-versa. However, if minds themselves are nothing more than bundles or collections of different perceptions, how can this be so? It seems, on this latter view, that in order to explain better what makes a mind the particular mind it is we have to apply to the particular perceptions in which it consists. But such criticism for the bundle theory of perceptions is that it wrongly takes the particularity of perceptions as being prior to the particularity of persons or their minds, when the opposite is the case.[55] In this point it may be replied to this criticism on Hume's behalf in the following way. It is acceptable that perceptions cannot occur independently of the minds to which they belong. But it doesn't mean that therefore individual perceptions must be individuated by reference to the minds of which they are constituents − as opposed to being individuated by reference to other constituents of these minds. According to Hume's system account of the mind, the individuation of a perception will depend upon its relation to those perceptions which are its immediate causes and effects.[56] Such an explanation in fact provides a foundation for the account of the synchronic and diachronic unity of the mind. This also means that the particularity of a perception depends on the wider structure or system to which it and the other related perceptions belong. However the crucial point here is that we can recognise the dependency of perceptions upon minds, but we, like Hume, can insist at the same time that minds themselves are nothing more than constructions from those perceptions.

[55] See Carruthers, *Introducing Persons*, pp. 57-8; also Brennan, "Disunity of the Self", p.179

[56] A sampling of this idea would be provided, for example, by Hume's account of the way in which the indirect passions of pride and humility arise in the mind. [T: 285-90]

2.3.3. Problems with Hume's accounts of the belief in continuing identical self and the bundle theory

Until now I tried to analyse Hume's account of identity on the basis of three associative principles − resemblance, contiguity and cause. These are taken by him as basic, as laws of thought which we cannot go beyond. In his account of identity as a philosophical relation, he seems to be committed to the view that, strictly speaking, *my belief that I remain the same person from one time to another is false*. Thus, the basic question for him is why we should have such a belief. Hume's account of this belief refers to relations among our perceptions (resemblance and causation, but not contiguity). These relations are supposed to result in an association of ideas in the mind, and so that we treat them as the perceptions of a continuing identical self. Now we shall consider whether the belief in a continuing identical self can be adequately explained in these terms or not.

Discussions on Hume's view about the personal identity as continuing identity generally proceeds on the assumption that it is his object to justify ascriptions of identity to persons or the self. Nathan Brett argued that Hume is successful in this[57]; P.F. Strawson and David Pears claimed that he is not. Strawson and Pears are inclined to attribute what they see as Hume's failure to solve the problem of personal identity to his neglect of bodily criteria[58], Penelhum to his mistaken idea that invariance is a necessary condition of numerical identity.[59] In spite of partial disagreement by Penelhum in 1955, this view of Hume's purpose is almost always taken for granted, and contrary evidence, if noticed, discounted. Pears for example, who considers Hume ironical elsewhere, thinks that his dissatisfaction with it in the 'Appendix' shows that it would be a "complete misinterpretation" to take his account of the personal identity as anything but serious. Brett, though troubled by Hume's view about the identity of the mind or

[57] Brett, "Substance and Mental Identity in Hume's *Treatise*", pp.116-25

[58] Strawson, *Individuals*, pp. 103, 133 and Pears, "Hume on Personal Identity", pp. 289-99

[59] Penelhum, "Hume on Personal Identity", pp. 571-89

self as "the product of confusion", is nevertheless convinced that he put forward a positive theory and did not intend to deny that a "proper" account can be given.[60] Even Penelhum thinks that such a purpose is inconsistent with Hume's belief that only invariant and uninterrupted things can be regarded as one. Penelhum in fact was inclined to think that Hume got confused in that belief.

Apart from the critics of the above commentators, in fact, Hume did not try to *justify* ascriptions of identity to persons. In 'Of Personal Identity' of *Treatise* where, because he details the features in virtue of which we ascribe identity, he is generally supposed to have been engaged in this task, he was concerned with quite a different problem, that is why it is that identity is ascribed to persons. This position of Hume concerning the belief in continuing identity is that since being one at a particular moment − unity − requires *simplicity* and *indivisibility*, being one over time − identity − *invariance* and *uninterruptedness*, persons, together with most other things, are not one. The basic difficulty in the nature of Hume's account of the self as continuing identical and his method of resolving is concerning his conception of the self as a mere bundle of perceptions. The argument rests on the mistake concerning his supposition that there is no "real connection or relation" uniting our perceptions in a single mind. This implies that logically necessary connexion is the only relation which may unite our perceptions in a single mind or the self.

In the original text Hume argues that the mind, "tho' involv'd in infinite obscurities, is not perplex'd with any such contradictions, as those we have discover'd in the natural," in considering our idea of external existence [T: 232]. However, in 'Appendix' he admits that "upon a more strict review of the section concerning *personal identity*," he finds himself "involv'd in such a labyrinth" that he doubts his ability to defend a consistent position. While he reaffirms his argument against "the strict and proper identity and simplicity of a self or thinking being," he now questions his earlier account of the "principle of

[60] Brett, "Substance and Mental Identity in Hume's *Treatise*", pp. 119-20

connexion" that is supposed to bind our perceptions and give us an idea of their "real simplicity and identity." He still maintains that "no connexions among distinct existences are ever discoverable by human understanding," and instead that "we only *feel* a connexion or a determination of the thought, to pass from one object to another." However, he is apparently dissatisfied with his failure to provide a more specific account of "the principles, that unite our successive perceptions in our thought or consciousness". He is thus left with two allegedly inconsistent propositions, "that all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences, and that the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences" [T: 636]. The problem for us is to find what he means here by a "real connexion," and why he now regards his initial failure to give an account of this connection as a difficulty for his analysis. In his original discussion, Hume did not appeal to a strict connection between our perceptions to account for personal identity, instead presenting the relations of resemblance and causation as the "uniting principles" which lead the imagination to formulate the idea of personal identity. He even reminds us that all our judgments of causation, even those that contribute to our idea of personal identity, rest on a "customary association of ideas" rather than any "real connexion". [T: 259-60]

Hume never explains why he has come to regard the absence of any explanation of the "real connexion" between our perceptions as a difficulty for his earlier theory of mental identity. However, it seems evident that in 'Appendix' he is acknowledging the inadequacy of some aspect of his general theory of perceptions, including their relations according to the natural principles of association, for supporting a satisfactory theory of the mind. Several commentators[61] have suggested that in recognizing a problem in his analysis Hume is anticipating Kant's theory of the transcendental unity of apperception, in which we find the unity of the mind to be presupposed by any activity of combining perceptions according to any principles of relation. This comparison

[61] Robison, "Hume on Personal Identity," pp. 181-93; Waxman, "Hume's Quandary Concerning Personal Identity," pp. 243-45 and *Hume's Theory of Consciousness,* pp. 326-27, 32n; Brook, *Kant and the Mind,* pp. 192-94 and also Garrett, *Cognition and Commitment,* pp. 169-71.

is perhaps supported by Hume's own indication that the "self or person" may be characterized as "that to which our several impressions and ideas are suppos'd to have a reference" [T: 251]. Whatever might be the precise character of the difficulty that he is attempting to address in 'Appendix', it seems clear that Hume does not regard this difficulty as a threat to his larger philosophical argument in *Treatise.* He initially hopes that his account of the mind will not be "perplex'd" with such contradictions as those in his discussion of external existence [T: 232]. While he abandons this hope in 'Appendix', he also reminds us that this new difficulty is only another of the many "contradictions, and absurdities" which have already been "abundantly supplied" in *Treatise*. [T: 633]

After we gave a brief explanation of the problem, we should analyse it which rests on the mistake supposition that there is no "real connection or relation" uniting our perceptions in a single mind. Hume argues that all our perceptions are distinct and separable existences, and they require nothing to support their existence [T: 239]. But how then can they belong to a self, how can they be connected with it? Hume's argument seems to say that our particular perceptions are different, distinguishable, and separable from each other, capable of being considered separately, and have no need of anything to support their existence; they cannot belong to a self or be connected with it.

The argument seems to be complex. It is very difficult to realize just what follows from the premises suggested to us. First one of these premises tells us that any perception is logically independent of all other perceptions. This means that it involves no contradiction to suppose any given perception that is preceded, accompanied and followed by the other perceptions. This approach also includes a basis for the central thesis of Hume's rejection of objective necessary connexion. The second premise tells that every perception is logically independent of the existence of any other entity. The occurrence of a perception does not logically require the existence of any other thing, for example, a mind

to which it belongs, or an external substance that causes it. In this point it is very clear that the non-existence of the self does not follow from both of these premises or only one of them.

Hume claims that we never find logically necessary connexion between distinct existences. But this connexion is evidently not the kind of connexion which is required to explain the unity of self or mind. For, we cannot suppose that all the perceptions of a person's mind are logically connected like the axioms and theorems of a geometrical system. For example, there is no logical connexion between being in pain yesterday and hearing a bird yesterday. In fact the only problem is what relation unites these perceptions in one self or mind. According to Hume, this relation is not similarity, causation, or local or temporal conjunction. These kinds of relations (except local conjunction) can be comprehended between the perceptions of different minds as much as between the perceptions of a single mind. Hume thinks that these relations are not evaluated as the only alternatives. But it may be suggested an empirically given relation as an alternative. According to his bundle theory of perceptions, the occurrence of a person's particular perceptions is necessary and sufficient for her/his existence. As long as they occur, s/he is; but when they stop, s/he is not. Therefore s/he is they. This means that, firstly, a mind or self without a perception does not, as a matter of observable fact, ever occur. Secondly, a mind or self without a perception as a matter of logic is inconceivable. The interruption of all her/his perceptions would be as complete an annihilation of her/himself as s/he can imagine. But if we should consider Hume's distinction between logical connexions and factual conjunctions, it can be concluded that it is not a perception, but the existence of perceptions is logically necessary to its existence. From this point of view we can say that if the self is something distinct from its perceptions, then the perceptions cannot be logically necessary to the existence of the self. On the other hand, if perceptions are logically necessary to the existence of the self, then the self is not an entity distinct from

its perceptions. This is rather a form of relational pattern in which they are combined.

The conclusion to which we are driven is that the self is not an entity distinct from its perceptions, but consists of perceptions suitably related. The relations required to unite them are not only similarity, causation and spatial and temporal conjunction, but also co-presentation and co-existence. Hume failed to recognise the existence of this relation as an empirical fact, and therefore found himself in the difficulty described in 'Appendix' to *Treatise*. All these mean that the self is not a mere bundle of perceptions; it is at least a very peculiar form of relational unity of perceptions.

2.3.4. The existence of the self

In Book I of *Treatise*, Hume is concerned to show that our most fundamental beliefs − e.g., about the continuing and distinct existence of object, about what we are not presently observing, and in the existence of the self − are not acquired by reason, but instead by the imagination, influenced by custom and habit. In this main argument, he assigns to the mind certain activities which, he claims, are instrumental in generating belief in and awareness of the very mind or self. He talks about customs and habits of the mind and the expectations arising out of these, of the acts of *observing*, *noticing* and *associating*, of *believing*, of *feigning*, and so on, acts which the mind is required to perform in order for us to be able to explain along acceptable empiricist lines how the idea of a continuing self arises. Such talk, it seems, already presupposes the existence of a self and our possession of the idea thereof. So does, of course, the talk involved in Hume's accounts of the external world and of causality. Insofar as these involve his theory of belief, they, too, seem to presuppose a self which is more than a fiction, more than a product of the imagination. Yet the account he gives of the self seems to yield precisely a fiction in just the sense in which our ideas of the external world and of its causal connections are ideas of fictions.

Quite generally, then, if Hume's theory of belief presupposes a continually existing self, what sense can be made of his arguments to show that our belief in such a self is the belief in a fiction?

As suggested in the previous section, the self is not an entity distinct from its perceptions, but consists of perceptions related. The relations required to unite them are not merely similarity, causation and spatial and temporal conjunction, but also co-presentation or co-existence. This idea can be expressed by saying that there is something that makes the various thoughts and experiences of which the person is aware at the moment hers/his; and that there is some respect in which s/he remains this same person or self from one time to another. Hume claims that in the first case the imagination responds to co-existent perceptions as it would to something that really is simple and indivisible, and the self is feigned as a principle which would unite these perceptions. In the second case, the relations among perceptions result in the imaginative fiction of an identical mind or self which connects the perceptions over time. In this point Hume's position may be shortly explained with his words: "There is properly no *simplicity* in it [the mind] at one time, nor *identity* in different" [T: 253].[62] One way of understanding what he argues that there is no real "core" to our experiences at any given time that makes them the experiences of a distinctive self. In the similar way, there is nothing at the centre of the experiences which occur at different times to connect them as experiences of the same self. This may appear equal to reject that there is the self, and that the sense of a person's self which s/he has apparently is anything more than an illusion.

In fact Hume does not intend to reject the existence of the self. The main problem for him is the mistaken belief in a continuing self. Apart from this obvious problem, the fact is that Hume's theories in Books II and III of *Treatise* require a self as the subject of the passions and moral sentiments. These books respectively deal with those aspects of the self as the subjects of the passions

[62] Parenthesis is mine.

and moral. Not only this, but an explanatory principle on which the other theories rely (namely the principle of sympathy), indicates that we should have an idea of self. And with this idea of the self it is possible to arrive at the idea of other persons as the subjects of sentiments or passions [T: 316-18].[63] In this case it is evident that the idea of self to which Hume refers is the idea of a certain collection of perceptions, rather than that of something distinct from the perceptions themselves. But also in this case Hume does not so much reject the existence of the self as, rather, a certain theory about "the nature of the self". Hume in fact rejects a simple and identical self.

According to Hume, identity is, strictly speaking, destroyed by the change which the object undergoes. Thus, for him, the identity which is essentially ascribed is no more than an "imperfect" one [T: 256]. But on the other hand Hume evidently does not deny that there *are* such things as mountains, ships, rivers, oak trees and men, though he is committed to denying that they have a genuine identity and simplicity. This shows us how we should understand what Hume says about persons or selves: He says that persons or selves exist, they exist as collections of perceptions, and there are certain conditions that connect to our attribution of identity to them. But these conditions prevent them to have a *strict identity* or *simplicity*. First of all, these conditions have to do, in part, with resemblance among perceptions, though these perceptions are variable and interrupted. But our attributions of personal identity do not necessarily depend on the existence of such resemblances. Since, we are prepared to identify a present with a past self, though the present self is incapable to remember events from the life of the past self. But in this point we may ask, according to Hume, what constitutes a self. He argues that a certain chain of causes and effects constitute a self or person, and this may be extended to times which we are not able to remember now. Therefore, the imperfect identity ascribed to selves must

[63] I shall say more in the second part of my thesis about the way in which the idea of self might help to generate the idea of other selves.

depend on a certain kind of continuity among the perceptions, and the mind or self consists only in such a kind of continuity.

The important point in the case of the present self is that while the parts of which a thing consists may endure an entire change, they continue to be *organised* so as to serve their purpose. The perceptions of a person's mind, similarly, may change entirely from one time to another (these perceptions as momentary and interrupted existences can not preserve a numerical identity), but they are still connected systematically by the relation of cause and effect. By this way we are prepared to recognise the perceptions as those of the same self. This point indicates the distinction between the mental and agency aspects of the self. Hume seems to accept the view that a person may satisfy the conditions for (*diachronic*) the self associated with the mental aspect.[64] In other words, he is committed to the view that there should be systematic causal relationships among the perceptions forming her/his mind or self at different times; even though this person may not remain the same person from the perspective of the agency aspect and also s/he is no longer the same kind of person. In just the same way a republic may be regarded as remaining the same, even though changes occur in its laws and constitutions as well as in its members, as Hume says that "the same person may vary his character and disposition, as well as his impressions and ideas, without losing his identity". [T: 261]

Until now we have mentioned only some of the various issues raised by Hume's account of the mind or self and our belief in its identity. It may at least be said on Hume's behalf that he is able to provide an account of the mind or self as a system of perceptions which provides a significant alternative to the accounts of some philosopher which he rejects. This does not, of course, mean that the bundle or system theory, as presented by Hume, is fully defensible. But this theory, at the same time, indicates the development of a crucial approach in

[64] The mental aspect is the conditions − whatever they are − associated with our ordinary ascriptions of identity to persons over time.

which Hume places self-identity in the relations among perceptions rather than in the continuing existence of some mysterious and perhaps unintelligible principle of unity. This, however, calls the question of what Hume's position respecting the question of the relation of the mind or the self − whether understood as a substance or as a bundle of perceptions − to body. This is one of the questions with which I shall concern in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE AGENCY ASPECT OF THE SELF

So far I have been concerned with only mental aspect of the self in Hume's discussion of the self. The crucial result of his discussion is his rejection of the self as something simple and identical which underlies our perceptions and his alternative to this in the form of an account of the mind as a bundle or system of perceptions. But this still leaves another aspect of the personal identity in Hume's discussion of the self. This is the agency aspect of the personal identity.

In this part of my thesis I shall focus on Hume's analysis of the perception bringing to light the fact that he no longer considers the self a fiction. Hume doubts the possibility of an intellectual awareness of the self in Book I, whereas he turns to recognition of the awareness of the self in his books on the passions and on morals (Book II and III, *Treatise*). From this point of view, it is obvious that, though Hume questions the idea of the self in the context of the interpersonal relations that are constitutive of sentimental and moral life, he does not make the person's awareness of her/himself depend on the image that others have of her/him. The self is not a mere reflection of the image that others have of us; rather, in these discussions, Hume identifies the self in a more determined awareness of that which we find morally worthy or unworthy of approval in our own character. For this reason, I first say something about Hume's treatment of this agency aspect of the self on the basis of the character which in *Treatise* is taken in such a way that it provides a connecting link between the mental and the agency aspects of the self.

3.1. Character, personal identity and the self

Many commentators of Hume's theses on the self and personal identity accept that the conclusions reached in Book I of *Treatise* should be considered in light of what he additionally says on these themes in Book II and Book III.[65] In fact, the explanations of Hume's ideas on the self insist on the continuity between the analyses developed in Book I and those of Books II and III. For example a unitary view of the self in three books of *Treatise* seems to be advanced by J. L. McIntyre, who suggests that Hume's discussion of passions and morality manages to reconstruct the same self that he engaged at the intellectual level in Book I.[66] She writes:

> As is well known, Hume rejected the view that the self is a substance, arguing instead that the self is a collection of perceptions [T: 252], and perceptions are generally thought of as fleeting. Yet Hume also maintained that actions derive their moral significance from their connections with thinking beings endowed with persisting mental qualities. . . . Though he cannot explain these features of persons as states of an underlying mental substance, it should not be concluded that Hume can therefore provide no account of character traits. Hume's realism about character must be integrated, however, into his overall metaphysical and epistemological position.[67]

But when the theses of Hume on the self in *Treatise* are explored as a whole, it should not be lost sight of what he declared in Book I, that "we must distinguish betwixt personal identity, as it regards our thought or imagination, and as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves" [T: 253]. The relationship between what he writes on the self in Books II, III and the discussion of that topic in Book I has been seen differently, as a mere continuation, as a new development in a continuous interpretation or rather, as a

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[65] For example, Penelhum integrates the views of the self in three books of *Treatise*, see "The Self of Book 1 and the Selves of Book 2," pp. 181-91. But some commentators think that to integrate these various views on the self is impossible. For example, Passmore presents an explicit accusation of contradiction; see *Hume's Intentions*, especially pp. 126-27.

[66] Jane L. McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account," pp. 193-206, especially p. 195; and also all of McIntyre's illuminating articles on this topic, in particular "Personal Identity and the Passions," pp. 545-57.

[67] McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account," p. 195

completely new way of asking the question, with its own new solution.[68] In addition to Hume's explanation of the nature of the self in Book II, the analysis of the self that makes reference to the passions and to sympathy in Book II must also be explored. This self in Book II proposes a way to connects to the discussion of the self and its character in Book III, which is presented there at the center of evaluations in terms of virtue and vice. In fact, Hume works to search out indications on how a person becomes aware of her/himself by perceiving her/himself mentally, by considering her/himself at the center of her/his own passional life, or by considering her/his own character from a moral point of view.

What Hume thinks about character is interested in issues with the relation between human and animal nature, the nature of agency, and our knowledge or awareness of the mental states of others. The concept of character is also crucial to Hume's position on the problem of freedom ('liberty') and determinism ('necessity') as well as to his account of virtue and vice. Therefore, it is important to show that his account of character is consistent with what he has said about the mental aspect of the self.

3.1.1. Hume's account of character

In *Treatise* Hume describes the idea of character as our idea of the passions and dispositions of an individual, which are expressed in the actions of that person. In *Enquiry* he applies the term character to the samples of motivation, or sets of dispositions, we ascribe to human beings on the basis of their actions. Thus he makes us consider the *diversity of characters* that seems in different social and historical contexts, among the two sexes, and at different stages in the whole human life, as well as the dispositions (e.g. temperaments and mental habits,

[68] The many different views have been presented for complementary analysis of the self in Book I with that of Books II and III. These views are categorized by W. Waxman in *Hume's Theory of Consciousness*, p. 224.

cultivated or uncultivated, disciplined or undisciplined, and the like) *peculiar to each individual*. He even refers to the distinctive judgments, or the *prejudices* and *opinions* of individuals, as if these were to be included in our concept of their character. [EHU: 85-6]

Several of Hume's essays are concerned with describing different types of character, such as those being inclined to a *delicacy of taste or of passion* [E DT: 3-8] and to the different temperaments he attributes to the Epicurean, the Stoic, the Platonist, and the Sceptic [E Ep: 138-45; E St: 146-54; E PI: 155-58; E Sc: 159-80]. He also suggests the study of literature and history as a way for advancing our ability to judge the *characters of men* by widening our experience of human life [E DT: 6-8; E SH: 567-68]. In other words he claims that we may advance our judgements relating to the motives for any particular human action by considering the *character* of the agent. This means that the distinctive set of beliefs, desires, and passions in that agent improve our ability to judge her/his character. Thus, Hume argues that the study of the character of an agent may help us realize the motives of that agent by discovering the distinctive passions and beliefs that lead that agent to regard various objects as sources of pleasure or displeasure and various courses of action as effective for either achieving or avoiding these objects. The motive for an action consists in the beliefs and desires that are the immediate source of the action, and these may, in turn, be explained as products of the character and circumstances of the agent.

Hume considers that we often conceive the *circumstances* or *situation* of an agent as it influences her/his motives for performing a particular action. He, in first place, applies the term "situation" to the context of an action within a particular state of affairs as this is explicitly recognized and evaluated by an agent. However, a change of circumstances (including the particulars of "sexes, ages, governments, conditions, or methods of education") may influence the motives and character, and consequently the actions of any given person. And another point is that the person also may not consciously realize the occurrence

of that change. These kinds of circumstances include both the natural or biological features of human life, as we might arguably find in the cases of age or sex, and the customs and traditions of a given society, since these tend to explain particular beliefs and desires of individuals. [T: 401; EHU: 85-6]

We may consider Hume's account of character with three basic issues. First, there is the nature of character traits, both as distinguishing features of persons and also as features which belong to persons collectively. Second, there is the relation of these traits to the perceptions of the mind as they are categorised by Hume. And third, there is the contribution of these character traits to what might be described as one's sense of the self. According to Hume, the character of a person is closely related with what sort of person s/he is. This is observed in the way that Hume connects the notions of character and reputation: "Our reputation, our character, our name are considerations of vast weight and importance" [T: 316]. In this sense the character of a person is subject to moral *approval* or *disapproval*.

Hume argues that moral approval and disapproval have human characters, rather than individual actions, as their objects. It is important that he takes the terms *virtuous* and *vicious* as the paradigms of moral language, thus making it easier to persuade us that evaluations are directed toward persons rather than their works: "If any *action* be either virtuous or vicious, 'tis only as a sign of some quality or character." [T: 575]. He says that actions which do not reflect constant states of character in their agents "are never consider'd in morality" [*ibid*.]. In the generation of approval and disapproval we can see that the effects have certain states of character. If by a disinterested examination − an examination conducted "without reference to our particular interest" − we find that a particular character trait is agreeable or useful, or disagreeable or harmful, to the agent who has it, or to others, then the mechanism that generates approval or disapproval can begin [T: 472]. Therefore, according to Hume, humans can be responsible for only their actions which are an expression of their character. He

points out that labels such as *criminal* are applied to actions only in so far as they reflect certain principles of mind [T: 411-12]. For this reason the concept of character may be understood to refer to the mental qualities or principles. These qualities and principles, collectively, make someone the kind of person s/he is and construct her/him as a *moral agent*. Hume also uses the concept of character, however, to distinguish particular mental qualities; for example "the character of eloquence" [T: 322] and the "character for judgement and veracity" [EHU: 123]. In these cases, he refers to particular traits of character consisting in the mental qualities. We approve these traits, in the case of *virtue*, on account of their agreeableness or utility, and we disapprove, in the case of *vice*, on account of their contrary tendencies. Hume includes among these traits of character what might be described as epistemic virtue and vice. The case of vice is given as an example for a blundering understanding which amounts to an imperfection of character. [T: 587-88][69]

Hume's notion of personal merit includes also "the *companionable virtues* of good manners and wit" [EPM: 280, 262], together with "eloquence" and "sound reasoning" [EPM: 263]. A person's character also depends partly on the degree to which he possesses delicacy of taste and sentiment as the capacities to discern beauty and deformity in objects [EPM: 294], and virtue and vice in the other persons [T: 471-72]. Moreover, Hume argues that there is an important relation between character and temperament. A person's character is formed partly by her/his passional propensities [EHU: 94, 1n]. These traits of temperament provide further respects in which humans are liable to differ from each other. A person's character reflects not only the particular kinds of passion by which s/he is motivated, but also the way in which these passions are *experienced*, with

[69] In one of Hume's letters he writes that ". . . a man is not a rogue and rascal and lyar because he draws a false inference" [NL: 61]. The point is that a person's character is impugned only to the extent that he is the sort of person who is prone to such errors. I will be saying more about this kind of point in the discussion of the nature of character traits which follows. The fact that Hume is prepared to count wisdom, for example, as a virtue - given that it is a mental quality of which we approve on account of its utility to the agent himself [T: 611; EPM: 242-43]- reflects his rejection of the distinction between natural abilities and moral virtues. [T: 606-14; EPM: Appendix IV]

her/his state of happiness dependent on achieving a mean between violence of passion and indifference. [E Sc: 167]

Apart from the aspects of character distinguishing a person from another, there are also traits of character which are more or less *universal* and appear to belong to human nature as such. These traits include, for example, *curiosity*, namely the general desire of the mind for exercise and employment [E In: 300]; and *avarice*, namely a universal vicious passion [E RP: 113] which is associated with selfishness as a universal human trait [T: 486-87]. Hume also defines ambition, vanity, friendship and generosity as universal passions [EHU: 83]. These common features of human nature shows us the importance of Hume as historian, as well as philosopher, for records of humans in various circumstances provide us evidence of "the constant and universal principles of human nature . . . the regular springs of human action and behaviour" [EHU: 83]. This kind of evidence may be employed in moral philosophy rather as experiments involving external objects contribute to the discoveries of natural philosophy. However, it remains true that humans differ from each other in the degree to which they are influenced by such passions as curiosity, selfishness and generosity. Indeed, this is an important part of the basis for the distinction between the natural virtues and vices.

In Hume's account of character we observe also a significant social dimension. In addition to the traits of human character which distinguish a person from others by making her/him the kind of person s/he is, there are other features which may be common to the group or groups to which that person belongs. Thus, Hume says that there are national characters; but he warns us that the vulgar men are inclined to take national characters to extremes [E NC: 197]. Hume clearly believes that certain qualities of character are more closely associated with some nationalities than with others [T: 402-03]. According to Hume the differences in character between different nationalities are due either to *moral causes* (like the nature of a country's government, the country's

economic situation and its relation to its neighbours, etc.) or *physical* causes (in particular, climate, geographical characteristics). In the case of moral causes we are concerned with factors which "work on the mind as motives or reasons"; in the case of physical causes, with factors which "are supposed to work insensibly on the temper". Hume's conclusion is that the kind of moral causes predominate. For example, though nations are geographically very close and share the same climate, these nations may exhibit apparent differences in their qualities of character [E NC: 202-04; T: 316-17]. For this reason, the character of a nation may change as its government changes, or as it is influenced by the people of other nations, for example, as a result of conquest [E NC: 206]. Therefore, national character, unlike the universal characters to which Hume refers, is changeable.

Hume mentions that there are also other kinds of character trait. He seems to associate these character traits with persons classified as groups. For example he sometimes offers that differences in character may relate to *gender* [E RP: 133], or to *races* [E NC: 208, 10n], and also there are the differences in character associated with different *professions*. For example, Hume claims, the philosopher is someone possessed of a natural tendency to inquire into the basis of humans' ordinary beliefs, the directing principles of their actions, and the distinction between moral good and evil.[70] The sentiments which belong naturally to her/his disposition are those of curiosity and an ambition to contribute to the advancement of knowledge. In this point, curiosity is obviously to be identified with *the love of truth*.[71] Philosophers are motivated to pursue truth mainly because of the exercise of understanding which is necessarily involved in this project. Hence the comparison which Hume draws between the passions of philosophy and hunting: in each case the result is uncertain and pursued with some difficulty, while the activity and its end are themselves ascribed a certain worth or value. [T: 451]

[70] The character of philosopher is described in some detail in *Treatise*, pp. 263-74.

[71] 'Of Curiosity, or The Love of Truth', in [T: 448-54]

3.1.2 Character and personal identity

Hume argues that "personal identity, as it regards our thought or imagination, and as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves" [T: 253]. It is obvious that he takes the character as a ground on which there is a connecting link between the mental and the agency aspects of the self. Character is related with our possession of certain kinds of mental quality which can be found in the account of the mind or self provided in 'Of Personal Identity' section of *Treatise*. According to Hume, it is crucial both in the explanations of people's actions and also our evaluations of those actions.

The concept of character has a direct bearing on Hume's discussion of personal identity. As mentioned in previous sections, according to Hume, our perceptions are incapable of a strict identity (continuing and unchanging identity) and the identity we ascribe to ourselves and to other things is of an imperfect kind. When such an (imperfect) identity is ascribed to a person or a thing, he claims, we regard someone as being still the same person, though s/he has undergone a significant change of character. Personal identity may thus continue a change in the habits and dispositions of the mind and inevitably in the individual perceptions which go to form the mind or the self itself. On this point Hume's position may seem puzzling. In the views of the mind or self as substance, why or how it would remain the same, though there are changes in its properties, can be explained partly by applying to the notion of substance itself. But in the kind of bundle or system of the mind defended by Hume, though there are changes in the constituents, various dispositions and properties of mind, there is an obvious question as what is meant by saying that the mind remains the same. The possible answer for Hume is whatever changes of these different kinds the mind or self undergoes, its different parts "are still connected by the relation of causation" [T: 261]. In other words, there is assumed a certain kind of *continuity* belonging to a person's mind or self in virtue of which we regard that person as remaining the same. But this does mean that it requires either that the person should have a continuing consciousness (in the form of memory) of each of

her/his past perceptions or actions, or that s/he should hold the same sorts of mental disposition. And also it does not require that the mind or the self itself should be some kind of substance.

Hume says that "in this view our identity with regard to the passions serves to corroborate that with regard to the imagination", for example, "by giving us a present concern for our past or future pains or pleasures" [T: 261]. When I remember my past experiences they are still able to affect me by producing "new impressions of desire and aversion, hope and fear" [T: 8], and when, for example, I foresee especially a painful event, even as a mere possibility, it is liable to produce fear. For this reason, there are various kinds of causal connection among the perceptions that form my mind or self at various times and the existence of these connections makes us ascribe an identity to that mind or the self. The existence of such connections does not require that the person should continue to possess whatever properties or dispositions are distinctive of her/his as a person and, to this extent, her/his identity is independent of continuity of character.

The other problem arises from the contrast which is specified by Hume between the identity of a person and her/his character. It is believed that we have a sense of our own identity as a person. Such an identity is taken as being dependent on retaining certain sorts of trait or disposition. In such a case what makes *me*, is not just what I am able to remember or what experiences in the future I am able to prospect, but also I am a certain sort of person with traits of character which I get to know as being manifested in my behaviour at various times and in various kinds of context. From this aspect I may think it difficult to conceive what it is like to be a different sort of person, one whose propensities are definitely very different from my own − and, even more so, to conceive what it would be like for *me* to be that kind of person. This kind of change would be obviously involved in one's sense of oneself as a certain kind of person. For this reason, there appears to be a sense in which a person's identity is bound up with the kinds of values and projects associated with her/his possession of a certain sort

of character. It seems obvious at the same time that there is a distinction to be drawn between *identity* in this sense (i.e. where it has to do with remaining the same *sort* of person over time) and *personal identity* in the sense with which Hume is concerned in 'Of Personal Identity' in *Treatise*. It appears that we should distinguish between the *identity* I may ascribe to myself as a person over time notwithstanding the many changes I undergo; and, on the other hand, my sense of what makes me the person I am which arises from reflecting on the various traits which go to make up my character at different times. Before looking in more detail at what is involved in the relation between character and the self, Hume's account of the notion of character itself and its connection with mind shall be considered.

3.1.3. Character and mind

In the previous sections I have focused on Hume's account of character and its wide variety of features. Now, I shall express better how these features are to be accommodated within Hume's view of the mind as a bundle or system of perceptions. But, first of all, there should be mentioned a problem that seems to arise in this context. As said before, Hume defines the character in conjunction with motives, dispositions, mental qualities, and principles of mind. The durability of these principles is a distinguishing feature as compared with the actions themselves. The character of a person indicates relatively permanent features. Although some of these features are related with human nature generally, some of them are related with the society in which the person lives. But there are other features which distinguish that person as being the kind of person s/he is. In this point, if we take into consideration Hume's account of mind in terms of the distinction between impressions and ideas as different kinds of momentary perception, we may ask how it is possible for character to involve such relatively permanent qualities of mind.

In fact, as McIntyre pointed out, some of those features of the mind in Hume's account of "character" are explicitly identified with passions.[72] Hume categorizes certain passions as *selfish* [EPM: 275-76] in contrast to *social passions* which include humanity and benevolence [EPM: 303]. This approach offers a direct relation between traits of character as involving distinctive sorts of passions and the virtues and vices. According to Hume, virtues are approved of on account of their agreeableness or utility. Therefore, the personal virtues are agreeable or useful to their possessor, whereas the social virtues involve qualities useful or agreeable to others. Thus, we realize a direct relation between traits of character and the passions, on the one hand, and between the passions and the virtues and vices.

According to Hume's categorization of the traits of character, these traits function as the causes of the actions. This indicates that passions (rather than reason) act as a motivating influence on the will [T: 414]. Hume points out that persons are responsible only for their actions in so far as they proceed from some cause in their characters [T: 411; EHU: 98]. From this perspective, it is seen that traits of character are themselves passions in the causal relation between character and action. Emotions of vanity or friendship explain why we act in certain ways. And these also provide the objects of passional responses to those actions. On the other hand, one important feature of character traits is their *durability* as compared with the temporary nature of actions themselves. But Hume thinks that some perceptions (for example, sense impressions) are *transient* and *perishing phenomena* [T: 194; EHU: 98]. In this respect, the identification of those traits with passions seems as a problem. Therefore, according to Hume, ". . . 'tis not the present sensation alone or momentary pain or pleasure, which determines the character of any passion, but the whole bent or tendency of it from the beginning to the end" [T: 381]. McIntyre interprets by arguing that this may suggest that certain passions, at the agency aspect of

[72] McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account", p. 200

personal identity at least, involve perceptions which are comparatively long lasting and resistant to change.[73]

Hume intends to suggest that the perceptions involved in the passions have genuine duration [T: 381]. He makes a distinction between indirect passions like pride and humility which are "pure sensations" and the others which are related to action through the presence of desire. For example, benevolence is the desire or "appetite" related to love. In fact, Hume's view of duration seems to suggest that the traits of character as durable features of mind cannot simply consist in occurrent perceptions as such. But rather, for someone to have a certain trait of character is for that person to be *disposed* to experience a distinctive kind of impression of reflection. In other words, certain kinds of situation will tend to give rise to certain feelings and, other things being equal, the person will act accordingly. Thus, we already know something about the person's character on the basis of her/his past behaviours, we have expectations about the actions which s/he will perform under certain circumstance. If the traits of character fundamentally require the existence of certain dispositions, then it might be speculated in terms of Hume's thought about the basis for such dispositions. He says that "an intention shows certain qualities, which remaining after the action is perform'd, connect it with the person" [T: 349]. Here is a crucial point that Hume does not offer a reductionist definition of the traits of character as consisting, for example, in certain kinds of behavioural disposition. On the contrary, as some commentators argued, [74] his view concerning such traits of character is a realist one, as he points out their causal relation to action. The character traits are mental causes in the form of recurring perceptions which belong to the bundles or systems of perceptions in which our minds consist. And these traits play an important role in providing continuities among these perceptions which contribute to the sense of self which most of us have. This

[73] McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account", p. 201

[74] Bricke, "Hume's Conception of Character", p. 109; McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account", pp. 199-200; Baier, *A Progress of Sentiments*, p. 194

concept of character with related to the self is clearly of importance for Hume's position generally.

The traits of character presented above give us clues of how the *public* aspects of a person might be described. In fact, when he describes the self as an individual person, he names it as an originator of actions. This prepares us for the way he will locate the self in a social world. By this way, the self becomes visible to others and subject to their judgments of moral character and personal merit.

A person's character reflects generally the fact that he is a social or public being. The traits of character belong to the mind rather than the body. These traits do not, at least for the most part, exist independently of a person's relations with others. And these relations depend on a mutual awareness of the bodily behaviour that persons or selves reveal. This kind of bodily behaviours make possible, by virtue of the external resemblance, for the minds of persons to be "mirrors to one another" [T: 365]. By this way, qualities or principles of mind reflect fundamentally our social nature. Such an establishing is true for the personal as well as the social virtues. Thus, the personal virtues include qualities − such as temperance, frugality, perseverance, vigilance and industry. These qualities are applicable for a person's business or action in the social sphere [T: 610-11], therefore, we approve on account of their utility. But it should be noted that, according to Hume, natural abilities are valued for the same sort of reason [T: 588, 610]. Therefore, few traits of character which construct a person's character or self are independent of that person's place in society and her/his influence on others. All these points show us that character has concern with the public dimension of a person or self as an agent, in contrast to the fundamentally private dimension represented by the mental aspect of the self which depends on relations among the person's perceptions.

3.1.4. Character and the self

According to Hume's analysis character provides a certain kind of continuity for the bundles or systems of perceptions in which selves consist. It has crucial role in our sense of self, since our character makes us think that we remain the same sort of self or person over time and so retain an identity. But this does not mean that the self is reducible to character. In fact, as Paul Russell reminds us,[75] Hume obviously denies the reductionist approach that reduces the self to the character of a person, admitting that a person can, after all, change her/his character [T: 412]. It is also true, however, that Hume argues that "it being almost impossible for the mind to change its character in any considerable article" [T: 608]. Thus the person who changed character naturally is aware of herself/himself as of a person who changed character (almost a new person) considering this change worthy of approval or of blame. As underlined again by Russell, Hume in his account of the self means to extend to the self all those things ascribed to character, including principally the notion that we cannot choose or create our character, which is in general a matter of "constitutive luck." [76] But from this standpoint, Hume's insistent view on the impression, or idea, of the self as the product of processes (or even sometimes as the product of natural and biological organs like the body) makes clear that one of his purposes is to naturalize not only the sentiments of moral responsibility, but the moral subject itself, understood as a whole. In doing this, after that, Hume continues to follow his own distinctive way, developed in terms of sentiments − a way that suggests a remarkable alternative to the rationalist and constructivist way followed by Kant.

Finally, linking the awareness we have of ourselves with the moral sentiment directed by our character generally also leads us to privilege a particular type of pleasure as the essential point of the sense that we have of ourselves. Hume is

[75] Paul Russell, *Freedom and Moral Sentiment: Hume's Way of Naturalizing Responsibility*, p. 108, 24n

[76] *Ibid*., pp. 130-33

urgent about the crucial role of this notion both the 'Conclusion' of Book III, in *Treatise* [T: 620-21] and discussing the reply that could be given to the "sensible knave" in *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* [EPM: 282]. It is in this context of "peaceful reflection on one's own conduct" [EPM: 284] that we can find that "general character or present disposition of the person" [T: 418] that provides her/him that "strength of mind" that allows her/him to prevail over the violent passions. The awareness of the self as a pleasant moral sentiment of the virtuous qualities of one's own character seems in Hume as a calm and strong passion. Thus understood, the sense of self fully explains that "impression of ourselves . . . [that is] always present with us" as well as "our consciousness" that "gives us so lively a conception of our own person". [T: 317]

In this sense the notion of *character identity* implies our identity as persons. In 'Of Personal Identity', Book I of *Treatise*, Hume mentions that persons are represented as bundles of perceptions, but his latter account of character offers that these bundles or collections of perceptions possess a certain kind of "structure". But this may be true, as Amélie Oksenberg Rorty pointed out, if the traits of character construct a person's character, these traits are not supposed to be strictly unified.[77] But for Hume there is still possible for a person's character to have a certain kind of unity. Hume himself underlines this point by a different ways, for example, by his notion of personal merit. He uses it as a "complication of mental qualities". [EPM: 173]

According to Hume, when we speak about a person's character, we generally apply to a bundle of interdependent traits. These kinds of character traits belong to the different categories identified in past. This situation allows us to identify a person as representing a certain kind of character. Although some traits of character are inclined to be bundle, some others may have a certain dependence on what makes someone the kind of person s/he is. This depends on the fact that

[77] Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, "A Literary Postscript: Characters, Persons, Selves, Individuals", p. 305

the different traits of character generally group or bundle to make a distinctive kind of character.

As a conclusion, we may shortly add another argument in favour of Hume's analysis of the self and character by showing that he appears to apply the same passional conception of the self at the biographical level as well.[78] Hume wrote this biographical document only a few months before his death as a document of the awareness that David Hume achieved of his own self. In this document Hume makes clear what kind of awareness conducted his own life [ML: 1-7]. We find in the document obvious points that he considered it crucial to look to the passions that have given continuity and distinctiveness to a person's character in order to give an account of her/his life. He explained that "a passion for literature ... has been the ruling passion of my life, and the great source of my enjoyments" [ML: 1]. The motives of this passion are responsible for the important events of Hume's life, which he narrates here, showing special attention to avoid vanity. We find that Hume gives great importance to the pleasures derived from the awareness that the principal motivations of one's own conduct − which have given continuity to one's character − are morally praiseworthy; not least for the general moderation and tranquillity that these qualities have made possible. Finally, Hume declares:

> To conclude historically with my own character − I am, or rather was (for that is the style, I must now use in speaking of myself; which emboldens me the more to speak my Sentiments). I was, I say, a man of Mild Dispositions, of Command of Temper, of an open, social and cheerful Humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of Enmity, and of great Moderation in all my Passions. Even my Love of literary Fame, my ruling Passion, never soured my humour, notwithstanding my frequent Disappointments. [ML: 7]

[78] This perspective on Hume is made use of in particular by Donald T. Siebert, *The Moral Animus of David Hume*, especially pp. 187–212

3.2. Human and non-human animals nature

Hume's explanations concerning the similarities and the differences between human and non-human animals[79] are explicitly important in his philosophy and particularly in his project of science of human. He is concerned in general to underline the basic similarities and continuities between human and animal nature. His account on the relation between human and animal nature represents a philosophical revolution. Since, by virtue of his arguments, the view of man as a unique creation in God's image is replaced with that of man as a natural object differing only in degree from other non-human animals. Although the differences are in degree, they have considerable philosophical significance; they converge on the difference in moral status between humans and animals. In this section, therefore, I shall concern in some detail with Hume's account of the relationship between human and animal nature and its issues. As we shall see, his participation in the discussion about the nature of animal mentality has important issues not only for determining the kinds of reasoning capacity we ascribe to ourselves, but also our status as moral agents.

3.2.1. Background of Hume's views on human and animal nature

Hume's arguments on the relation between human and animal nature have changed the traditional view of human as a unique creation in God's image, and instead of it, introduced the view of man as a natural object differing only in degree from other non-human animals. The doctrine of the *image of God* implies that human is made in the image of God.[80] An important philosophical inclusion of this doctrine is that we are similar to God and this similarity is reflected in our cognitive faculties (i.e. in our capacities for acquiring knowledge and, especially, knowledge of necessary truths, as in the case of mathematics). This

[79] Hereafter I shall use loosely "humans and animals", instead of "human and non-human animals".

[80] Craig, *The Mind of God and the Works of Man*, pp. 13-8

point is observed in Descartes' attempt to construct a new system of knowledge in the *Meditations*. It is based on the consideration that starting from the Archimedean view of certainty concerning our own existence we are able to arrive by the use of reason alone (via demonstrations of the existence of God) at certainty about the existence of others and, more generally, of a world external to ourselves.

Many philosophers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries reflect the influence of the image of God doctrine in their claims. The one of these claims concerns the relation of cause and effect. According to it, this sort of relation is possible or intelligible by the use of reason to establish *why* the events in question are so related. This is related with the view that there must be a similarity between effects and their causes. This means that there must be something which effects and causes they share in common. God as a perfectly rational being creates a natural world in which anything that happens does so for a reason; and we are equipped to recognise these rational connections as manifested in the similarities between effects and their causes. The rationality of the universe itself is comprehensible by the cognitive powers which reflect our likeness to God. However, according to Hume, an entirely different direction is required, namely, the natural world as it is revealed to us by physical science or in his terms, "natural philosophy". In fact, what Hume proposes is a science of mind based on the model provided by mechanical scientists like Boyle and Newton. In effect humans are approached as *natural* objects rather than as objects which carry the imprint of the divine mind. A crucial respect in which Hume parts from the image of God doctrine is certainly in his rejection of regarding mind as a *substance* or even to attach any real content to the idea of substance itself.

In *Treatise* Hume attempts to discredit a particular view of human nature, central to which is a certain conception of the nature and function of human reason. Descartes is the best known philosopher who discussed this conception,

though it was also held by others, especially by the rationalists. Descartes' view about the nature of the mind associated with the image of God doctrine is based on a kind of spiritual or immaterial substance, in fact this kind of view can be found in other supporters of the doctrine such as, for example, Leibniz, Malebranche, Clarke, Berkeley and Butler. In order to understand better this traditional picture of mind, it may be useful to explore shortly some certain features of Descartes' view.

Descartes thinks that the ability to reason is a capacity distinguishing humans from animals. This is a God-given power which makes it possible for us to be aware of truth. According to this view, acceptance is always a subject of free will; we choose to believe what we do. Therefore, we can obtain beliefs as the result of impulse and conjecture, as well as by reason.[81] If we do not obtain a belief through reason, this means that we tend to make error. On other hand, if our beliefs turn out to be true, it is merely accidental, since we lack of good reasons in support of them. For this reason, Descartes remarks impulse is a source of error, because as he puts:

> It is a case of composition through impulse impulse when, in forming judgements about things, our mind leads us to believe something, not because good reasons convince us of it, but simply because we are caused to believe it, either by some superior power, or by our free will, or by a disposition of the corporeal imagination. [82]

According to the traditional conception, we follow the directions of reason when we come to believe something, since we have certain and indubitable reasons to think it is true. But Hume holds that if reason were like this, then it would not determine our beliefs about the unobserved or the continued and distinct existence of objects. Hume attacks reason as traditionally considered by arguing that it plays no role in obtaining basic beliefs. And he explains how we attain

[81] Descartes, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Vol. I, p. 47

[82] *Ibid*.

our beliefs, and to do so he proposes a different, naturalistic conception of what reasoning is like, based on observations of what goes on when we make inferences.

Hume views that the transition from the observed to the unobserved is one of inference and reasoning. He discusses this in both *Treatise* and the first *Enquiry* entitled "Of the Reason of Animals" [EHU: 104-08], and in both he insists on a "touchstone, by which we may try every system in this species of philosophy" [T: 176; see also EHU: 104-08]. Here Hume claims that animals "like us" reason and infer the existence of objects from other objects. He argues that the actions of animals "proceed from a reasoning, that is not in itself different, nor founded on different principles, from that which appears in human nature" [T: 177]. For instance, he describes the case of a dog who "infers his master's anger... The inference he draws from the present impression is built on experience, and on his observation of the conjunction of objects in past instances. As you vary this experiences, he varies his reasoning" [T: 178]. This sort of inferences appears because Hume argues that "no truth appears to me more evident, than that beasts are endow'd with thought and reason as well as men" [T: 176]. The similarities that Hume finds between human and animal minds imply a more than merely epistemological or psychological significance. Descartes claims that we are not only superior in reasoning power than animals but also different from them in possessing a mind or soul which is immortal. Descartes, for example, presents the use of *language* as a distinguishing mark of rationality, as an essential feature of human mind, but animals, unlike humans, have no language.[83] Hume thinks that any such claim about the immortality of soul or mind is not acceptable. If we accept that the minds of animals are mortal, then the analogies between their mental capacities and ours should lead us to reach a similar conclusion about human minds. [E IS: 597]

[83] Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, p. 1, 140; *Descartes' Philosophical Letters*, pp. 206-07, 244-45

Hume's account of the similarities and differences between humans and animals has an important bearing on some of the issues with his views on the nature of the human mind and its relation to body. This point arises from reflection on the doctrine of the image of God, in which the human mind is conceived as a sort of immaterial substance. At the same time it brings naturally about the view that there is a fundamental difference in this regard between humans and mere animals which have obviously not been made in the image of God. Hume does not only deny the conception of mind associated with this doctrine, but his position on the nature of animal mentality is very different.

Descartes' explanations on animal and human nature represent a crucial stage for the philosophical discussions which Hume evidently criticises. These explanations include Descartes' dualism between body and mind. Descartes conceives a human as a combination of mind, as substance whose essence is placed in thought, and body as spatially extended substance. Descartes considers the body itself as a sort of *machine*, unlike the mind in which our ability to fulfil freedom of will originally belongs. In the case of animals, he thinks that they are no more than machines, for, unlike humans, animals have not minds or souls. Hence, the behaviours of animals could be explained in purely naturalistic and even mechanistic way. On the other hand, a human could never be completely part of the natural world since s/he possessed free will and reason. Thus, distinctively human thought and behaviour is forever beyond the possibility of natural explanation. In short Descartes argues that animals are a sort of *natural automata*.[84] This argument is evidently controversial, and it is associated with a significant dispute in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries about the mentality of animals. Hume, by contrast, insists that all human life is naturalistically explicable and, emphatically rejecting Descartes' view of them as mere *automata*, insists that we can speak as legitimately of the "reason" of animals as we can of that of man. "No truth appears to me more evident than that beasts are endowed with thought and reason as much as men". [T: 176]

[84] Descartes, *Descartes' Philosophical Letters*, p. 244

3.2.2. Human and animal minds

Hume observes at the beginning of the section of "Of the Reason of Animals" that no truth appears to him to be more evident than that animals are endowed with thought and reason as well as men. He claims that humans and their nature are continuous with the rest of animal nature. He emphasizes that we are an animal species, that our "reason" is a form of reason in animals, a form of animal intelligence and animal instinct. And almost all our passions have their analogues in the so-called "higher" animals, who surpass us in the scope of their love for others and some of them cooperate instinctively and more successfully than we do. For, like men, animals adopt means to ends in seeking self-preservation, obtaining pleasure and avoiding pain. Hence, Hume says, we must ascribe these actions to the same causes (that is, thought and reasoning) as in the case of humans. Therefore, Hume maintains, there is

> a kind of touchstone by which we may try every system in this species of philosophy ... when any hypothesis ... is advanc'd to explain a mental operation, which is common to men and beasts, we must apply the same hypothesis to both; and as every true hypothesis will abide by this trial, so ... no false one will ever be able to endure it. [T: 176-77]

According to Hume, animals are not stupid or horrid, in comparison with us, but we have special features separating us from animals. These are a faculty of reflexion, of turning mental processes and passions on themselves as well as their normal objects, and inventiveness. Hume emphasizes the feature of *inventiveness* which includes the preliminaries to his account of social artifice. He calls it as nature's unnatural gifts to us in the way of "natural" equipment to survive, that is to survive without relying on human inventions, social and other. An "unnatural conjunction" [T: 485] of extreme need and infirmity typifies, not merely the human infant, but our species, if one subtracts the products of our own collective inventiveness.

According to Hume, apart from physiological similarities between humans and animals, there is also a close resemblance between the anatomies of their minds, and the differences between mental capacities of humans and animals are only in degree. He argues that "animals undoubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will, and even reason" as we do, but in a "more imperfect manner" [E IS: 592]. Humans and animals have equipments in order to acquire beliefs from experience, and also they have intelligence to act directly on the natural world by means of both prudence and intelligence [E Su: 582]. But in some actions which require more complex behaviours, for example avoidance of fire, there is seen the difference between animals and humans. He says, a dog "that avoids fires and precipices, that shuns strangers and caresses his master" [T: 177]. Such actions, Hume argues, proceed from a process of reasoning that is not itself different from that which appears in human nature. But such alleged distinction, for Hume, is in the conditioning effects of experience and is based on a process of association. In the other words what responsible for our own expectations about the conditioned responses of animals is *habit*. In this sense, Hume says, instead of seeing instinctive behaviours in animals as oppose to reason in humans, it should be recognised that reason itself typically functions as a kind of instinct arising from past observation and experience. Hume underlines that some behaviours of animals display a degree of intelligence − for instance, in the case of nest-building. It is known that this kind of activities is in general instinctive. On the other hand, some animal behaviours display an experimental character, and this kind of experimental activities seems to contrast with behaviour of a merely vulgar nature. Hume intends to point out concerning such observation is that if philosophers overlook such resemblances between animal and human behaviour, it is because they ascribe a sort of *refinement of thought* to human beings which would go beyond not only the capacity of animals, but also the capacity of many humans themselves. According to Hume, if we realize that reasoning in humans is something for maintaining the conditioned propensity to form expectations on the foundation of past experiences, then we also observe that there is no obstacle to acknowledge the evident resemblance between humans and animals (at the

internal level of belief as well as that of the external actions we share in common).

The other point of resemblance with which Hume is concerned belongs to the passions. Hume says that "the chief spring or actuating principle of the human mind is pleasure or pain" [T: 574]. According to Hume, the capability to feel pain is a natural disposition in both humans and animals.[85] In this point we have no reason to defend that animals are different from the point of pleasure or pain, because as Hume pointed out, animals, like us, are motivated to get pleasure and avoid pain [T: 176-78]. This implies that they are also subject to experience the same kinds of passion or emotion (both "indirect", as in the case of pride and humility [T: 277] and love and hatred [T: 329-32, 397], and "direct", as in the case of fear and grief [T: 277, 398, 439-40]). In the similar way, humans share *volition* as the immediate effect of pleasure and pain in common with animals [T: 574]. According to Hume, animals experience the same sorts of passions as humans, this means that they are also sensitive to the same mechanism for the communication of passions, namely, sympathy, as Hume affirms. [T: 398]

Hume also remarks that there are differences between human and animal nature. As said before, Hume differs fundamentally from Descartes in arguing that the differences between human and animal mentality are in degree only. According to Hume, such differences belong to the same areas of mental life. From this point of view, he identifies the differences between understanding and passion, and so, he finds humans as superior to animals for human's superior knowledge and understanding. Hume argues that "men are superior to beasts principally by the superiority of their reason." [T: 610] In this respect, we may say if it is true that a human may obviously go beyond another in the capacity to reason (in attention, memory and observation), it seems also to be true that humans collectively go beyond animals [EHU: 107, 1n]. In fact, Hume's remarkable

[85] This capacity also provides the most powerful argument against the existence of an omnipotent and benevolent creator.

determinations about the differences between humans and animals remind us that humans have capability or ability to carry their thoughts beyond their immediate situation to remote places and times, and to theorise about their experience [E DM: 82]. But in the case of animals we cannot argue they have the same abilities. Although animals obtain beliefs from experiences and act directly on the natural world by means of prudence and intelligence, they seem to be without such ability to carry their thoughts or to theorise about their experiences, they have no curiosity or insight. Hume says:

> Beasts certainly never perceive any real connexion among objects. 'Tis therefore by experience they infer one from another. They can never by any arguments form a general conclusion, that those objects, of which they have had no experience, resemble those of which they have. [T: 178]

The thoughts of animals are limited with the things around them [E Su: 582]. Hume also presents us a natural explanation for the difference in reasoning powers between humans and animals. He argues that nature provides humans with the intelligence required to meet their needs [E St: 147]. This standpoint makes Hume's position wholly consistent with an evolutionary account of the development of such powers. The other kind of difference is related with passions. Although animals are able to acquire pleasure and to avoid pain, they are, compared with humans, "little susceptible either of the pleasures or pains of the imagination" [T: 397]. In fact this difference shows that the feelings of animals also cannot go beyond the immediate situation. For this reason, we may express this point in more general terms is that, animals are less likely to experience those passions which require some effort of thought or imagination. [T: 398]

3.2.3. The reason of animals and moral sense

Hume's account of the similarities and differences between humans and animals is crucial for understanding both his general philosophical position and his moral theory. His account is based on an observation that conclusions about

factual matters depend on analogical arguments. In other words, where causes are similar, we expect similar effects and when we get greater similarity, the analogy becomes better, and so the more confidence we can place in the conclusion drawn. Thus, according to Hume, anatomical discoveries can be extended from one species to all animals, as, for example, in the case of the circulation of the blood. Here is applied to the second of Newton's "Rules of Reasoning in Philosophy": "to the same natural effects we must, as far as possible, assign the same causes"; this principle is exemplified by, among other things, "respiration in a man and in a beast".[86] In fact Hume does not apply this principle only to the bodily activities of both human and animal, but to compare their mental activities as well. He is obvious about this point, holding that analogical reasoning of this kind can be applied to his own enquiry into human mental activities:

> These analogical observations may be carried farther, even to this science, of which we are now treating; and any theory, by which we explain the operations of the understanding, or the origin and connexion of the passions in man, will acquire additional authority, if we find, that the same theory is requisite to explain the same phenomena in all other animals. We shall make trial of this, with regard to the hypothesis, by which we have, in the foregoing discourse, endeavoured to account for all experimental reasonings; and it is hoped, that this new point of view will serve to confirm all our former observations. [EHU: 104-05]

This section of the *Enquiry* implies that humans are part of nature; Hume's such experimental method is itself built on the supposition that this is a plausible outlook.

The application of experimental method to moral subjects means that mental activity is essentially analogous to bodily activity. There are the similarities between humans and animals, since, in fact, the processes that support human practice are not rational, because they are ultimately founded in mechanical operations. Therefore Hume claims that we discern that various characteristics

[86] Newton, *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 398-400

of animal behaviour are not due to experience, but "derive from the original hand of nature" [EHU: 108]. This kind of behaviours is called as *instincts*. We are disposed to find them considerable and inexplicable. On the other hand, our sense of wonder at such animal capabilities may be reduced when we become conscious of the ability to learn from experience which we share with (higher) animals. This ability, which is extremely crucial to our existence as agent in the practical life, is itself a sort of instinctive ability. As Hume puts, this is thus best considered as a set of mechanical operations, which work in ways we cannot comprehend:

> …the experimental reasoning itself, which we possess in common with beasts, and on which the whole conduct of life depends, is nothing but a species of *instinct or mechanical power,* that acts in us unknown to ourselves; and in its chief operations, is not directed by any such relations or comparisons of ideas, as are the proper objects of our intellectual faculties. Though the instinct be different, yet still it is an instinct, which teaches a man to avoid the fire; as much as that, which teaches a bird, with such exactness, the art of incubation, and the whole economy and order of its nursery. [EHU: 108]

The ability of humans to direct their lives in the light of experience does not distinguish humans from the animals, since animals are able to behave in the same way. The crucial point is here is that such learning, in cases of both humans and animals, is not founded on processes of reasoning. Instead of the similarity and the non-rational foundation, both may be explained by the same theory in the following way: humans and animals are similar not only in their physical being, but similar also (at least) from the point of all those mental processes. Both the formation of factual beliefs and the conduct of life depend upon these mental processes which are best understood to operate according to mechanical principles. Hume argues that humans are not semi-divine beings (in the image of God) isolated from the natural world, but they are, at least in very large part, part of that world. In other words humans are also a world of mechanical processes.

Hume's position is based on the absence in animals of what he calls a moral sense [T: 326]. In other words, animals are not moral agents. As we have mentioned before, Hume traces the origins of morality not to reason, but to sentiment, thus our moral judgements do not arise through reason, but the activity of a moral sense. In this point we may ask how Hume reconciles his position with his account of morality itself. In order to explain this point and make clear his recognition of the fundamental similarities and continuities between human and animal nature, we should survey what he says about the distinction between virtue and vice as moral qualities. These qualities are included in certain sorts of motive with related to which actions themselves may be evaluated as virtuous or vicious [T: 477-78]. Such motives reflect the character of the agent which is the real object of moral judgements. According to Hume this kinds of moral judgements arise through the activity of a moral sense rather than through reason. Therefore, the motives or traits of character which provide the objects of moral judgements are realised through the occurrence of particular sorts of pleasure and pain. In Hume's analysis, moral judgements are a product of the general point of view rising from the motives and traits of character, and in turn virtues and vices are a product of moral judgements. As Hume puts it:

> Take any action allow'd to be vicious: Wilful murder, for instance. Examine it in all lights, and see if you can find that matter of fact, or real existence, which you call *vice.* In which-ever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volitions and thoughts. There is no other matter of fact in the case. The vice entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object. You can never find it, till you turn your reflexion into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action. Here is a matter of fact; but 'tis the object of feeling, not of reason. It lies in yourself, not in the object. [T: 468-69]

As Christine M. Korsgaard pointed out, an animal who never viewed things from the general point of view would make no moral judgments, and for such an

animal, there would be no virtues and vices.[87] There cannot be intelligibly argued that such an animal would take up the general point of view in order to bring morality, of which he has no prior conception, into existence. When Hume argues that the motives or traits of character are discerned through the occurrence of particular kinds of pleasure and pain, he evidently identifies these feelings with the moral sentiments of approval and disapproval [T: 471-72, 580-81 and 607-08]. Thus, the feelings have an *evaluative* and also *epistemological* role as indications of the motives or traits of character in which virtue and vice consist. The moral sentiments are experienced in conjunction with the indirect passions aroused in us both by our own qualities of mind as well as those of others' minds. There is an important point should be remarked is that Hume distinguishes between qualities of character of which we *naturally* approve or disapprove according to whether, for example, they tend to the good of mankind [T: 578] and, on the other hand, virtues and vices which produce pleasure and pain in us by *artifice* [T: 477]. Hume accordingly classifies the latter kinds of qualities of character as *artificial*. According to him, it is evident that animals are not able to have the *artificial* virtues and vices. Although animals are similar to us in their capability to reason, there is however a crucial dissimilarity in the degree to which they are able to put into practice this capability. This, at least, explains why animals are not moral agents and why animals are lack of the artificial virtues and vices.

In Hume's analysis, *justice*, as an example for artificial virtue, is an institution which arises from the particular circumstances and necessities of mankind; there is a direct contrast between humans, in respect of the divergence between their needs and the means of satisfying them, and other animals whose capacities are broadly proportioned to their wants [T: 484-85]. In order to overcome this "unnatural conjunction of infirmity and necessity" it is necessary for humans to engage in social relations with each other; they do so in recognition of the

[87] Christine M. Korsgaard, "The General Point of View: Love and Moral Approval in Hume's Ethics", pp. 3-42

advantages of society, where this has been made evident to them by their experiences within the family [T: 486]. In fact, as said before, the ability of humans to conduct their lives in the light of experience does not distinguish them from the animals, since animals behave in the same way and, like humans, live in social groups; but the institution of justice, its rules and property distinguish evidently them. The world as perceived by the animal is organized around its interests: it consists of the animal's food, its enemies, its potential mates, and if it is social of its fellows, its family, flock, tribe or what have you. But in animals' such perception of world, they obviously have no need of the institution and they are incapable of the sense of common interest from which the relevant conventions arise. As we may observe, in some cases animals live in social groups, but it seems implausible to think that they live in such a way because of their recognition of the advantages of such an existence.

The basic problem about the moral status of animals is closely related with their capabilities of acting from motives or qualities which constitute *natural* virtues and vices. According to Hume's view, animals may have ability of possessing traits which may be the objects of love on our part, and of pride on the part of animals themselves. However, it should be noted that in the case of animals pride appears to be limited to *bodily* qualities rather than any qualities of mind [T: 326]. In addition, we may, in fact, approve or disapprove of animals in various respects, but whether such an approval or disapproval is really moral approval or not is obviously another problem. As Hume points out, our approval of an inanimate object on the basis of its utility is to be distinguished from our approval of moral virtue. [T: 617; EPM: 213, 1n]

In brief, Hume argues that the most important general difference between humans and animals is humans' superiority in reason. He relates the difference between humans and animals in point of pride and humility directly to humans' superior knowledge and understanding. On the other hand, this point is also the foundation for his argumentation about animals having "little or no sense of

virtue or vice" [T: 326]. Hume argues that there are various differences between humans and animals in terms of thought and understanding. This seems to be based on the account for the distinctive features of the moral sentiments (i.e. their dependence on a common view which abstracts from our immediate circumstances), and the kind of corrected sympathy on which these sentiments also depend. This also provides in this way an explanation of why humans are able to experience a greater variety of passions than animals. By this way Hume ascribes the moral difference between humans and animals ultimately to the superiority of human's reasoning abilities and experiencing passions.

3.3. Hume on agency

The topic which I now discuss is directly related with the second part of my thesis − "the agency aspect of the self" − concerning Hume's view of the self as an agent. Now I shall mention new issues about his views of the self in addition to those which I discussed in the previous chapters. First of all I shall look more closely Hume's explanations about the passions in *Treatise* and the relation of the passions to action. Secondly, the agent in Hume's account is sometimes thought as a kind of fiction, but I shall work to show that there is nothing fictitious about Hume's understanding of the agent. Then I investigate his account of the nature of action itself and try to explain why the passions play such an important role in his account of the nature. My discussion shall be finalized with some remarks upon Hume's position in relation to the ideas of moral agency and sympathy.

3.3.1. The self and passions

Hume's view on the passions is not only a contribution to the philosophical discussion of the passions but also an integral part of his philosophy as a "science of man," or a study of the principles of human nature. Hume also presents his first affirmed view of the social and historical dimension of human

existence in 'Of the Passions'[88], Book II of *Treatise* where he defines the human subject as an emotional, active, and social being.

Hume, in his first classification of perceptions in Book I of *Treatise*, identifies human's "passions, desires, and emotions" as "impressions of reflection". He points out that the distinctive feature of these impressions, in comparison with impressions of sensation, are arised "in a great measure from our ideas." In other words, the impressions of reflection occur only as the result of the presence of other perceptions in the mind. Therefore, in arranging *Treatise* he reverses the order that might at first seem to be "most natural," by suggesting "a particular account of ideas, before we proceed to impressions" [T: 8]. In his further classification, he defines impressions of reflection as "internal impressions" which "proceed from some of these original ones, either immediately or by the interposition of its idea" [T: 275], in contrast to the outward impressions which arise from physical states of the body and the influence of external objects on the senses [T: 33; EHU: 22]. For this reason, the impressions of reflection may also be classified as *secondary* impressions, on the other hand, the impressions of sensation are *original* impressions. These secondary impressions include the passions, and other emotions resembling them.

In Book II Hume makes also a further and important distinction between two sorts of passions as *direct* and *indirect* passions [T: 276]. The *direct passions* include various kinds of mental state as desire, aversion, joy, hope, fear, security and despair. This sort of passions arises immediately in the mind from (good or evil) pain or pleasure. The *indirect passions* include pride, humility, ambition, vanity, envy, pity, malice, generosity, love and hatred. This kind of passions

[88] Both Selby-Bigge and Kemp Smith describe Book II as the least successful major division of *Treatise,* and 'Of the Passions' as the worst of Hume's writings (Selby-Bigge, "Editor's Introduction," in *Treatise*, pp. xxi-xxii; Kemp Smith, *Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 160 and pp. 535-36). Many other interpreters have described Book II of *Treatise* as lengthy, mechanistic, and dreary, while 'Of the Passions' has been charged with presenting an even more desultory, dry, and uninspired version of the argument in Book II. For examples of these criticisms can be found in Passmore, *Hume's Intentions*, p. 128; Noxon, *Hume's Philosophical Development*, p. 23 and Flew, *David Hume*, p. 144

arises from the same principles, but depends on the existence of certain additional qualities. These qualities have to do essentially with the self. In other words, the indirect passions arise from a "double relation of ideas and impressions". In such a relation the idea of an object or a quality tends to produce pleasure or pain. And thus as the object of a direct passion, it is associated with the idea of a person, who becomes the object of the indirect passion, as a distinct but correspondingly pleasurable or painful impression of reflection [T: 286-87]. In this analysis Hume applies his theory of association also for passions. He claims that the passions may be associated with each other either by our tendency to associate the ideas of their objects, or directly through their resemblance to each other in their pleasurable or painful qualities [T: 282-84]. He follows this way of associations in his analysis of the indirect passions. He begins this analysis with pride and humility, and then turns to love and hatred, and finally he considers the various modifications of these passions.

First of all Hume argues that pride has the same object with the contrary passion of humility − namely, the self [T: 277]. Since the source of these passions is considered only in relation to oneself. In this context, Hume suggests that we should understand the reference to self in accordance with the bundle or system theory. For, the self as an object of both pride and humility is a "succession of related impressions and ideas", or a "connected succession of perceptions". It is clearly seen that the object, which pride and humility as contrary passions have, cannot also function as the cause of these passions. In the other words, Hume argues, there should be made distinction between the "cause" and the "object" of the indirect passions, or "that idea, which excites them, and that to which they direct their view, when excited." [T: 278]. He accordingly points out that each of the indirect passions may be described by identifying the *object* and the *cause*, along with the pleasurable or painful character of the direct passion aroused by the cause. And by analysing the examples of the indirect passions in our ordinary experience, we discover that the object of an indirect passion is always the idea of a self. Therefore, the self cannot be the cause of pride and

humility. But the natural and more immediate causes of these passions are qualities of mind and body that is *self*. [T: 303]

Hume does not accept any kinds of characterization of the passions through a "just definition," or a description of their phenomenological feeling-qualities based purely on introspection. Since, he argues, every passion is a simple and uniform impression without any parts that could be enumerated in a definition. For this reason, he does not attempt to suggest definitions of the individual passions, or even to describe their distinctive sensations. Instead of such definitions, he presents a description of the individual passions by identifying their "nature, origin, causes and objects," or in other words the particular objects, circumstances, and relations that gives rise to each passion, as a specific modification of pleasure or pain [T: 277, 329]. In this way, Hume classifies the different kinds of passions as intentional states which are directed toward an object. And these intentional states are derived from the evaluation of the object and its relation to the self. In this analysis, every evaluation of an object is potentially a source of good or evil within the context of such a subjectively judged relation. This kind of evaluation produces a distinctive sensation within the human subject which is a variation of pleasure or displeasure. Then such sensations are generally revealed by using representative signs and speech. In these kinds of public expressions, the passions are ascribed to other persons on the base of similarity between them. Hume attempts to analyse the passions as intentional states of consciousness. This analysis includes distinctive inner sensations which are caused by and directed toward objects on the basis of a cognitive evaluation of these objects, through our judgments of their nature and their relation to ourselves. He also points out that we use names for the passions by discerning the similarities in how they are publicly stated, as we observe these statements in ourselves and in other persons.

Hume describes the role of the self firstly as the object of pride and the contrary passion of humility or shame, in accordance with the bundle account of the self

as a connected succession of perceptions. But this explanation is not enough to define the notion of self in this context. For example, when I think of myself in relation to my beautiful car which is a source of pride, it is obvious that I am thinking of more than my mind as a bundle or system of perceptions. In this case, pride depends on a relation of ownership between me as the object of the passion and the car as its subject. But there is a crucial point is that this kind of relation is possible only for an *embodied self*. Ownership of property depends usually on a system of rules or conventions. This system implies the fact that humans are social-beings and their "outward circumstances" are in common and give them an interest in forming system of rules or conventions. And the ideas of justice, property, right and obligation arise from this kind of system [T: 484-501]. For this reason, in the analysis of the pride Hume describes the self as the object of this passion. Thus, he discusses the distinctive relations among the perceptions involved in pride by saying that its object is self "or that individual person, of whose actions and sentiments each of us is intimately conscious" [T: 286]. In the similar way, he introduces his discussion of indirect passions of love and hatred by underlining that "the immediate *object* of pride and humility is self, or that identical person, of whose thoughts, actions, and sensations we are intimately conscious" [T: 329]. From this perspective it is obvious here that Hume thinks bodily actions as objects of consciousness. In other word, the self to which Hume refers is a corporeal person. This person or this self, from one point of view, is the object of pride and from another is a human discerning that person's relations to some appropriate subject or cause − is the object of love. This implies also that Hume recognises the corresponding qualities of the immediate cause of pride and humility as some quality of both body and mind as well. As Amélie Oksenberg Rorty points out, the identity of the self has to represent more than relations among the perceptions of the human mind.[89]

In brief, Hume's analysis of passions shows us that the self, as the object of the indirect passions of pride and humility, is an agent. This self as an agent is not

[89] Rorty, "Pride Produces the Idea of Self: Hume on Moral Agency", p. 258

merely a succession of impressions and ideas, but the supposed subject of the particular attributes, experiences, dispositions, and actions that we trace in our memories and then ascribe to ourselves as comprising our personal histories and characters. The concept of the self therefore emerges, not only from reflecting upon the sequence of perceptions that is disclosed to us by our memories, but also from the activities of the imagination and understanding, by which we identify the qualities of our minds in our remembered engagements with persons and objects in the world. The self is also the object of our concern, since we are each interested in our own impressions, especially of pleasure and pain, not only as these are given to us in the present, but as they are remembered in the past and anticipated as possible in the future [T: 261, 469]. In other words, as Hume points out, although we do not have a simple impression or idea of the self, each of us develops a complex idea of our self, which includes ideas of our own body, mind, and history, from the sequence of perceptions that is disclosed by the memory and which we expect to continue into the future. Hume concludes that this discussion of the identity of the self, "as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves," serves to "corroborate" his analysis of the idea of the self "with regard to the imagination" and thought. [T: 253, 261]

3.3.2. The nature of action

In the previous section we have concerned Hume's explanation of the self as agent which arises from his theory of the passions. Now I come to the question of whether his account of action is reconciled with his conception of the self. This is closely related with the question of, if the self is considered as a bundle of perceptions, how this bundle can act. In fact, this concern about Hume's account of the self was firstly presented by Thomas Reid. According to Reid, the notions of agency and responsibility imply the existence of a self which is more than merely a set of ideas or perceptions.[90] Not only, for Reid, is there a

[90] Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, p. 35 and *Essays on The Intellectual Powers of Man*, p. 622

question as to how a succession of perceptions can do anything; there is also a question as to how it could be held responsible for what another set or succession does at a different time. On the other hand, when the self or mind, so understood, is embodied, the question of how this kind of account provides the existence of agency arises.

Hume's analysis of the principles of action is crucial in his general philosophy, or his epistemology. In this discussion first of all he examines volition, along with the passions, in Book II of *Treatise,* after his analysis of our idea of causation in Book I, and before turning to his moral theory in Book III. He later separates the main topics in this discussion by considering the problem of freedom and determinism in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* the relative influence of reason and passions over the will in "Of the Passions," in *Treatise* and the relation between voluntary action and morality in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Hume's discussion of the principles of human action continues at various intervals in his writings. He presents a preliminary account of these principles while developing his analysis of volition in *Treatise* and *Enquiries.* He then extends his analysis of these principles in his essays and historical writings. Finally, he also applies these principles throughout his works to the study of particular actions, including both individual and collective actions, in various cultural and historical settings.

Hume argues that the basic conditions for human action are the occurrence of volition and an effect in the form of bodily movement or the occurrence of an idea [EHU: 64]. These conditions bring to a basic notion of agency which appears to offer the following structure of action: We experience a sensation of pleasure or pain and give a reaction in accordance with either desire or hatred with volition. When we hope to realize these kinds of sensations, we experience probable direct passions. A number of these passions may motivate us to act in a certain way. In this point, our relation to the causes of the pleasure or pain will bring about the occurrence of a variety of indirect passions. This kind of action

structures may also be observed in the behaviour of animals. If the structures of these actions display a more complex occurrence, this means that they presuppose a degree of intelligence or understanding adequate to recognise the suitability of acting in response to our passions. For this reason, human actions present evidence for human's thoughts, feelings, and motives, and more generally the character with which they are associated.

Hume remarks about voluntary action as the simplest case of physical action. He describes volition as a distinctive impression that appears in our consciousness whenever we *knowingly* perform any action of mind or body. In this sense, volition and voluntary action are contrasted to movements in which the body is compelled by an external force, since such movements are not accompanied by this impression [EHU: 95]. Although Hume does not attempt to define the subjective quality of the impression of volition as such, he searches to explain the relation between the occurrence of this impression within the subjective consciousness of an agent and the performance of a voluntary action by that agent. In an addition to *Treatise* in the 'Appendix' he criticizes the assertion that when we perform a voluntary action "we feel an energy, or power, in our own mind," which we directly recognize as the source of "the motions of our body, and the thoughts and sentiments of our mind." Instead, he argues that the impression of volition "has no more a discoverable connexion with its effects, than any material cause has with its proper effect," since this connection is not directly given to the senses or to reason in either case. Indeed, he reminds us that many philosophers have found the causal connection between actions of the mind and the body to be even less explicable than causal connections between physical events. As an alternative to the preceding view, he argues that our ascriptions of causal efficacy to our impressions of volition arise from our experience of a constant conjunction between this subjective feeling of volition and the movements of our body or succession of our ideas [T: 632-33]. In *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* he further notes that a person who is "suddenly struck with a palsy in the leg or arm, or who had newly lost those

members" often claims to feel an impression of volition when attempting to move the paralyzed or missing limb. Thus, although the influence of the will on our actions is "a matter of common experience," since we each recognize the regular succession between our impressions of volition and our voluntary actions, we must conclude that the "power or energy by which this is effected" is just as "unknown and inconceivable" as the power involved in the production of any physical event [EHU: 66-7; cf. 64-5, 92]. Although Hume considers both actions of the mind and movements of the body as effects of the will, his discussion in Book II is largely concerned with the relation between volition and bodily movement. His application of his analysis of volition to the inner operations of the mind seems problematic, as a result of his appeal in his general analysis of the causal relation to the point of view of an observer, since this point of view is unavailable to us when we are attempting to account for the influence of one mental state on another.

Hume's position in this point may be summarized as follows: Firstly, if we were aware of a necessary connection between the will and its effects in voluntary action, then we would understand how the mind interacts with the body. Since we do not grasp *the secret union of soul and body*, because of this reason we are not aware of any such connection. As Hume puts:

> ...is there any principle in all nature more mysterious than the union of soul with body; by which a supposed spiritual substance acquires such an influence over a material one, that the most refined thought is able to actuate the grossest matter? Were we empowered, by a secret wish, to remove mountains, or control the planets in their orbit; this extensive authority would not be more extraordinary, nor more beyond our comprehension. But if by consciousness we perceived any power or energy in the will, we must know this power; we must know its connexion with the effect; we must know the secret union of soul and body, and the nature of both these substances; by which the one is able to operate, in so many instances, upon the other. [EHU: 65]

Secondly, if we could detect a power or force operating when we exercise the will in order to control our body, then we would understand exactly why we can voluntarily control some parts of our body (e.g. the legs and fingers) but not

others (e.g. the liver and spleen). For then we would be aware of this force's presence in the former cases, and of its absence in the latter cases. But, Hume argues, "we cannot assign any reason besides experience, for so remarkable a difference between one and the other" [EHU: 65]. All we know is that, in some cases, willing a certain bodily movement is followed by that movement; while in other cases, the movement does not occur no matter how intensely we may desire it. Third, science teaches us that the immediate effect of the will in voluntary movement is not the intended movement itself. Rather, it is an event of which we are wholly unaware and probably ignorant − presumably a brain event.[91] This brain event in turn causes a series of neurological and physiological events, of which we are equally unaware, until at last the desired movement occurs. Now since we are unaware of the brain event, we are obviously also unaware of any necessary connection between it and the will. Again, all we are aware of is that willing a certain movement is followed by that movement. We are not aware of any necessary connection between volition and the brain event that initiates the sequence of neurological events, muscular contractions, etc., which ultimately leads to the desired movement. All these points we have searched are concerning Hume's account of agency on the basis of the self conceived as a bundle of perceptions. But now his conception of agency requires to be expressed in terms of what happens to a bundle. Such a conception of agency indicates the capacity for bringing about change to the extent that certain kinds of perception occur within the bundle. But Hume argues, rather, that the causal relations among perceptions themselves together with their effects, in the case of volition, on movements of the body, are adequate to explain the phenomenon of action. He rejects any demand for an explanation as to how certain perceptions bring about the movements of body on the basis that no causal relation is ultimately explainable or intelligible. Therefore, we are agents by virtue of the fact that there are (indirect) causal

[91] Although Hume himself does not here mention brain events, from our twentieth century perspective, it may be helpful to illustrate his point by reference to them.

relations between our volitions and the bodily movements with which they are properly associated.

3.3.3. Moral agency

Hume begins *Treatise* by suggesting that all the sciences, morals included, rest on human nature. And he continues that it would be a poor philosophy indeed that attempted to carry the explanation of human nature to unobserved principles or causes allegedly more ultimate than this nature as it is observed [T: Introduction, xvi-xix]. Hume claims elsewhere that there are in the "mental world" effects as extraordinary as in the physical, and that the causes of these effects "are mostly unknown, and must be resolv'd into *original* qualities of human nature, which I pretend not to explain" [T: 13]. Near the end of *Treatise* he refers to "particular *original* principles of human nature, which cannot be accounted for" [T: 590], while in the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* he is equally explicit:

> It is needless to push our researches so far as to ask, why we have humanity or a fellow-feeling with others. It is sufficient, that this is experienced to be a principle in human nature. We must stop somewhere in our examination of causes; and there are, in every science, some general principles, beyond which we cannot hope to find any principle more general. No man is absolutely indifferent to the happiness and misery of others. The first has a natural tendency to give pleasure; the second, pain. This every one may find in himself. It is not probable, that these principles can be resolved into principles more simple and universal, whatever attempts may have been made to that purpose. But if it were possible, it belongs not to the present subject; and we may here safely consider these principles as original: happy, if we can render all the consequences sufficiently plain and perspicuous! [EPM: 219, 20n][92]

[92] As Norton also points out, this passage from *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* may be taken to be evidence of a crucial change in Hume's position concerning his project of human science: "the substitution of the principle of humanity or fellow-feeling for the principle of sympathy that is central to the theory presented in *Treatise.* This may well be the correct inference to draw from the passage, but Hume's strategy remains unchanged. Whatever may be the ultimate, observable principles of human nature, it is with these original principles that our investigations must end." [Norton, "Hume, Human Nature, and the Foundations of Morality", p. 178, 16n]. On the question of Hume's (possibly) changing view of sympathy, more details are found in Stewart, *The Moral and Political Philosophy of David Hume*, pp. 329-37; and in Capaldi, *Hume's Place in Moral Philosophy*, pp. 195-248.

In fact Hume works to determine a role for cognition in moral assessment and motivation, and also seeks to determine objective standards for moral judgment, although he maintains that the underlying basis for our ability to make moral distinctions ultimately lies in our passions or sentiments. More specifically, in Hume's view, our recognition of moral distinctions arises from our ability and disposition to consider the *harmful* or *beneficial* effects of persons' actions and characters upon society, through our sympathy with the pleasure or pain of others, and to articulate principles of conduct on the basis of this perspective.[93] But now we shall seek, on the basis of this approach, the question of what constitutes moral agency. Hume's position concerning this question is related with his account of the motives of the will and the influence of these motives on human action. In this account, it is not reason, but passion that motivates humans to act. In such situation, reason itself is *impotent* in respect to performing or preventing actions [T: 457-58]. But this does not mean that reason has no direct motivating force, because of this reason it cannot have any effect on human actions. He concludes that the moral principles should be the products of moral distinctions that ultimately arise from the passions. The passions which provide the grounds for moral distinctions are "original facts and realities, complete in themselves," which unlike ideas, cannot enter into relations of "agreement or disagreement" with any other objects. Human actions may thus be *laudable* or *blameable*, but cannot be *reasonable* or *unreasonable* in the strict sense of these terms; and therefore we cannot simply identify *moral conduct* with *reasonable conduct*. [T: 457-58; EPM: 172, 294]

Hume does not accept the claim that moral distinctions are based on, or recognized by, or *conformable* to reason, even outside of any question of their

[93] According to Hume, these principles then receive an objective formulation in two stages: first, in the different historical systems of popular morality; and second, in the critical principles we derive from a philosophical examination of these systems, which may then be used to criticize a given system of morality. Accordingly, both a popular system of morality and the philosophical principles of morality allow us to derive particular judgments of moral evaluation and obligation from a set of moral rules, although these rules ultimately arise from our sentiments.

motivating power. He indicates that reason is "the discovery of truth or falsehood," which consists in discovering the agreement or disagreement of our ideas "either to the *real* relations of ideas, or to *real* existence and matter of fact." If moral distinctions could be recognized through reason, or by thought and understanding, virtue and vice would consist in a relation that is evident to us either by intuition as a *relation of ideas* or as a *matter of fact* discovered by observation [T: 458, 463]. In short, he rejects both versions of moral rationalism.

Hume maintains, in contrast to the moral rationalist view that moral distinctions are discovered through reason, that moral distinctions arise from our passions or sentiments. First of all, as we have indicated, moral precepts evidently "produce or prevent actions," and must therefore arise from the passions. Second, the only matter of fact that can provide the basis for a moral judgment is "a feeling or sentiment" of blame or approval, which arises in us from the contemplation of certain actions and characters. Hume also argues, apparently by a disjunctive syllogism, that if moral distinctions are not discovered through reason, they must be determined by "some impression or sentiment." He concludes that morality is "more properly felt than judg'd of," since it is discerned by the passions rather than cognition. [T: 457, 468-69, 470]

Here Hume uses the term "sentiment" as an alternative for "impression," and thus includes the moral sentiments of approval and disapproval more precisely among the "passions, desires, and emotions" he has already identified as "impressions of reflection" [T: 470, 7-8, 275-76]. Hume also suggests additional identifications that moral sentiments are included among the passions. First, moral sentiments arise "in a great measure from our ideas," specifically from our ideas of various qualities belonging to human character when these are considered from a particular perspective. Second, moral sentiments are modifications of pleasure or pain, since "the impression arising from virtue" is *agreeable*, while "that proceeding from vice" is *uneasy*. Third, the sentiments of

moral praise or blame are each distinctive sensations we can recognize and identify through introspection, and which we may describe by enumerating their causes, although these sensations cannot be defined. That is, a moral perception is "a pleasure or uneasiness of a particular kind," since "to have the sense of virtue, is nothing but to *feel* a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character." We may also characterize our moral sensations as calm passions, since a moral sentiment "is commonly so soft and gentle, that we are apt to confound it with an idea" [T: 7-8, 470-71, 583-84]. Finally, Hume argues that the moral sentiments, like the other passions, are implanted in the human mind by the "primary constitution of nature". [T: 296, 287, 474]

As indicated before, Hume argues that the passions are "diversify'd" by our evaluation of the pleasure or pain we expect to receive from an object, and of person's *situation* with related to an object of enjoyment or aversion. For example, the object may be more or less attainable or avoidable, or it may be associated either with the self or another person [T: 574]. The moral sentiments of persons are also the result of a judgment about the situation of a given quality of character in relation to the self. But, while the other passions emerge within persons in response to their ideas of objects as possible sources of pleasure or pain to ourselves, the sentiments of praise and blame emerge within them "when a character is consider'd in general, without reference to our particular interest" [T: 472]. That is, persons feel the moral sentiments of approval or blame when they take into consideration the character of an agent by accepting a general point of view, on behalf of other possible subjects, toward the qualities of character in this agent. This aspect is the distinctive situation of the self, with related to an intentional object, which brings about the moral sentiments, and distinguishes these sentiments from the other modifications of pleasure and pain in Hume's theory of the passions. Therefore, we reach the conclusion is that everything in human action that gives us uneasiness upon a general survey is called *vice*, and on the other hand, "whatever produces satisfaction, in the same manner" is called *virtue*. [T: 499]

Hume's position with regard to the moral agency also relates to his theory of liberty and necessity. His notion of liberty in *Treatise* applies to human action in the terms of *liberty of spontaneity* which seems to consist basically in freedom from constraint. Such understanding of liberty appears to be contrasted with *liberty of indifference*, which signifies acting in a way that is not caused, at least to the extent that "the will itself is subject to nothing" [T: 408]. Hume describes this kind of liberty in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* as consisting in "a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will" [EHU: 95]. This is the starting point on which he develops the "reconciling project" of showing that the theories of liberty and necessity are in fact compatible. For this reason the notion of liberty plays an important role in Hume's discussion of moral or legal responsibility. Accordingly, if humans perform actions in ignorance of their nature or consequences, they are not blamed or punished for these actions; because these sorts of human actions are not caused by their characters or mental dispositions. In other words, it seems that human agents are possessed of what might be defined as a certain kind of moral liberty which is compatible with necessity in so far as we find a constant union "of some actions with some motives and characters" [T: 404]. But in this point we should consider how such understanding of liberty is to be reconciled with Hume's theory of the self and its identity, and how humans are responsible for their voluntary actions resulting their characters or dispositions. In order to response to these questions there are needed some points in Hume's bundle theory of the mind. According to the bundle theory, there is a significant continuity between the perceptions which forming the human's mind at different times and in particular there is a continuing disposition to experience certain sorts of passion and to act accordingly. From this perspective, a person is still responsible for her/his action, because, at least, one of those perceptions reflects her/his present state of mind.

We examined some issues concerning the agency aspect of the self in the terms of passions, the nature of action and moral agency. In the next section, the agency aspect of the self shall be searched relating to the question of humans' relation to other selves. It is obviously a central characteristic of humans' existence as agents that they interact with those around them on the foundation of ascribing to them the same kind of mental life that they experience in their own case. This, without a doubt, seems to be reflected in the nature of humans' mental life in so far as beliefs about, and attitudes towards, the thoughts and feelings of others form an important part of its content. But how do we acquire these beliefs and attitudes? In the next section we shall examine the question of what sort of explanation Hume is able to provide of the way in which we acquire such beliefs and attitudes. Can he even account for our acceptance of the very existence of other selves?

3.3.4. Hume's account of other minds and sympathy

The notion of other minds or selves is generally used in philosophy from the perspective of both epistemology and the philosophy of mind. The epistemological point is concerning the question of what are the nature, extent and basis of our knowledge of other minds, or of whether we can have such knowledge at all. But it should be noted that Hume, in fact, does not seem directly to be interested in the question of how our beliefs about the existence of other minds are to be explained. But by virtue of his philosophical texts, it can be easily observed that according to Hume it is possible to be aware of the thoughts and feelings of others.

The basis of the problem of other minds seems to arise from an underlying view of the nature of the self, is that Descartes' body-mind dualism. Hume's position in the problem of the other minds is closely related with his conception of human capacity for acquiring awareness of the mental states of others. The existence of others as the subjects of mental states is presupposed both in

Hume's discussion of the understanding in Book I of *Treatise,* and also in his discussion of the passions − in particular, the indirect passions in Book II. By his explanation of sympathy he attempts to make clear how it is possible for us to be aware of the contents of other people's minds. This implies the fact that though Hume rejects Descartes' substance dualism, Hume accepts some kind of dualism: the mind, considered as a collection or system of perceptions, is to be distinguished from the body on which these perceptions are causally dependent. In Hume's account there is a crucial complementary part of the idea of body that is our ascription to body of a *continued* existence, i.e. one which is not restricted to those times at which they are present to the senses. The one other part is the belief that bodies have an existence which is distinct from human minds and perceptions. As Hume points out, there is a close connection between the two principal ideas of continuity and distinctness. According to him, anything to which we attribute a continuous existence particularly must also have an independent and distinct existence. [T: 188]

Apart from this point in Hume's approach to the problem, we should seek his position concerning the other minds on the basis of his general response to the question of how we know external objects. Hume argues that objects and perceptions are supposed to be related as *cause* and *effect*, and thus conjoined with each other, but we are quite unable to observe any conjunction between them [T: 212]. In this philosophical system we can directly experience only the perceptions themselves and not the objects that are supposed to correspond to them. For this reason, we are not able to justify any inference from one to the other [T: 193, 212], since such inferences depend upon our experience of cause and effect in the form of an observed constant conjunction between the items concerned. It is entirely consistent with perceptions occurring in the mind as they do that they should be the product of the mind itself or some other spiritual cause [EHU: 153]. We can not appeal to experience as providing any rational basis for the claim that our perceptions are caused by external objects [T: 216].

But what is meaning of this epistemological issues for the problem of other minds or selves?

In the case of other minds it should be noted that according to Hume we can never directly examine other person's passion, even though sympathy allows us to feel it because of the external resemblance between other persons and ourselves. According to Passmore this cannot be acceptable as a proof of other minds, because, as we mentioned, Hume's general theory of causality bases on the observed past conjunction, and of course we could not have directly observed the passions of others.[94] Hume, no doubt, would response a prospect of pointing out to Passmore that what reason is incapable of doing, namely, to get us to believe in the passions of others, nature has provided for in the sympathy process. Not only do we believe in the minds of others, we feel the analogous passion in certain specific cases. This only reinforces Hume's whole critique of the rationalist model.

Hume accepts that the contents of other person's mind are not immediately perceived by us, but are known only by their "signs" or effects [T: 151]. In accordance with this, his account of human testimony treats the ideas of others as causal links between the facts or objects represented and the words or discourses through which we are made aware of these facts [T: 113]. Thus, Hume's account of the way in which we acquire an idea of the other person's state of mind assumes in general a causal relation between mental states and behaviour as a person's utterances. These utterances may be regarded as "external signs" of the mental states in question. This is implicit in the account of sympathy, where "affections" are said to be known by their effects [T: 317]. Hume elsewhere refers to the cause and effect relation by which we are convinced of the reality of the passion with which we sympathise [T: 320], and to the effects of passion in the person's voice and gesture [T: 576]. All these presuppose a causal relation between the mental and the physical, a possibility

[94] Passmore, *Hume's Intentions,* p. 128

which Hume has tried to establish earlier in *Treatise* I iv 5, in which he argues the general principle that anything may be the cause or effect of anything, with experience determining that mental and physical occurrences are indeed causally related. Furthermore, Hume gives an account of sympathy on which it does appear to involve a type of causal inference:

> No passion of another discovers itself immediately to the mind. We are only sensible of its causes and effects. From *these* we infer the passion: And consequently *these* give rise to our sympathy. [T: 576]

Now the parallel with the perceptual case, as premediated in the "new system," seems quite close. There is an inference to the existence of something which can never immediately be known (the state of mind of the other person) from its associated causes and effects. But can this be justified, any more than the corresponding inference from perceptions to objects? If not, after all Hume would apparently be committed to questioning the extent to which we can be said to have knowledge of other selves or minds.

According to Hume's account of the nature of probable reasoning, all reasoning consists in a comparison. In the case of probable reasoning, this is one between an object present to the senses and an object or objects not present; and a comparison of this kind depends on a relation of causation among the objects involved. Since the belief of other minds is beyond our senses, it can be a product of probable reasoning only if it is established in the relation of cause and effect. In other words, this belief in the existence of the other mind would have to depend upon a form of causal inference. This sort of supposition, according to Hume, is the product of experience. The experience of the constant conjunction of the different kinds of objects or events to which the cause and effect in question belong, which is enable us to infer from the present occurrence of the one to that of the other. [T: 87]

At this point, the remarks about person's awareness of the mental states of others which occur in the context of Hume's account of sympathy should be taken as another factor. For instance, he says:

> When any affection is infus'd by sympathy, it is first known only by its effects and by those external signs in the countenance and conversation, which convey an idea of it. [T: 317]

Hume refers to the influence of resemblance and contiguity when we are informed of the real existence of an object by an inference from cause and effect, and by the observation of external signs. He explicates also "the great resemblance among human creatures", with respect to "the fabric of the mind" as well as that to the body [T: 318]. Hume says additionally that "the minds of all men are similar in their feelings and operations", and he continues, thus:

> When I see the *effects* of passion in the voice and gesture of any person, my mind immediately passes from these effects to their causes . . . In like manner when I perceive the *causes* of any emotion, my mind is convey'd to the effects . . . No passion of another discovers itself immediately to the mind. We are only sensible of its causes and effects. From *these* we infer the passion. [T: 576]

We may conclude that the question of the other minds appears to be based in causal inference as the product of experience of constant conjunction, and thus be accounted for by reason.

Hume, in fact, ascribes the other minds belief to the *imagination*. This is implicitly claimed in his characterization of sympathy. He describes sympathy as:

> that propensity we have to sympathize with others, and to receive by communication their inclinations and sentiments, however different from or even contrary to our own. [T: 316]

Hume's ascription of the belief in other minds to the imagination is based on the following explanation. He thinks that we presuppose a *contrast* between the activities of reason or the understanding and the activities of the imagination.

Hume sometimes indicates that these provide mutually exclusive alternatives for explaining how a certain idea arises from experience (for example [T: 88-9]). But he writes elsewhere of the understanding (along with memory and the senses) being "founded on the imagination" [T: 265], and his discussion of causal inference in *Treatise* results in the claim that the mind is determined in this process not by reason, but by associative principles of the imagination [T: 92]. So perhaps there is not, after all, a choice to be made between reason and the imagination as providing different ways in which the belief at issue is to be explained, since reason itself (i.e. probable reason in this context) turns out to be an activity of the imagination.

In other words, Hume does not describe sympathy as a cognitive process in which we acquire knowledge of the other persons' mental states. In fact, the reference to "communication" suggests that sympathy is a process by which the other persons' mental states are someway transferred to us. Hume seems to explain the notion of sympathy on the basis of analogy with the process of motion in which motion may be transferred from one object to another − in accordance with Newtonian theory. In the case of motion we observe that motion is communicated through impulse, although, in fact, what we really observe is that the movement of the one ball, for example, as it comes into contact with the other, is followed by the movement of the second ball. Hume's comparison between sympathy and the communication of motion from one object to another may be more understandable by the following passage:

> As in strings equally wound up, the motion of the one communicates itself to the rest; so all the affections readily pass from one person to another, and beget corresponding movements in every human creature. [T: 576]

Elsewhere Hume says that the human mind resemblances to a string-instrument [T: 440]. The sitar has "sympathetic strings" which are not touched, but resonate in response to the primary strings. So we can say that sympathy allows us to "tune into" the mental states of other persons. A sympathetic response can arise without actually seeing the sufferer, but merely contemplating the thought of

her/him. He uses other analogies to make clear his view of the relation between us and other persons. For example, he says:

> In general we may remark, that the minds of men are mirrors to one another, not only because they reflect each others emotions, but also because those rays of passions, sentiments and opinions may be often reverberated, and may decay away by insensible degrees. [T: 365]

There is a remarkable point is that when sentiments are reflected from one mind to another, this process may continue until the original sentiment has perhaps decayed away [T: 365]. In this sense, Hume confirms that sympathy is more than just a matter of a kind of cognitive recognition of the feelings of others, as he points out that "The sentiments of others can never affect us, but by becoming, in some measure, our own" [T: 593]. This reflects the fact that humans, after all, resemble each other. It is also to be expected that where there are particular points of resemblance between oneself and some other person (having to do with manners, nationality, etc.), this will make possible the process of sympathy. As Hume constantly points out, the associative relations of contiguity and causation have naturally a similar influence. He makes it obvious here that the transition by which the mind is carried from its own perceptions to those of others is one that is made by the imagination.[95] His explanation of the process of sympathy is stated in the terms of his association theory and, especially, of the notion that an idea may be converted into an impression through the enlivening effects of a related impression. In this point, the idea is that of a perception conceived of as belonging to another mind, and the related impression is that of oneself [T: 317-18], i.e. as a "succession of related ideas and impressions" [T: 277]. But neither reason nor the senses are responsible for the supposition of a causal relation between objects and impressions: and also it cannot be ascribed to any original tendency of the imagination. The persons'

[95] Hume applies to the notion of "imagination" also in an inclusive way to comprise the activities of reason or the understanding itself. [T: 265-68]

attribution of mental states to others in the light of their behaviour, on the other hand, is obviously supposed directly to reflect propensities of the imagination.

3.3.5. Sympathy and the self

Sympathy as an instance of the double association of ideas and impressions begins with a belief about the affections of other persons. This belief is the result of "those external signs in the countenance and conversation" [T: 317] which are customary effects of the affection in question, and is converted into the very impressions it represents. This conversion requires a source of vivacity, and according to Hume, this source is found in the impression of the self.

An independent impression of pleasure or pain is produced by the idea which is the cause; this first impression is linked with other pleasant or painful impressions like pride and humility; then the impression of pride or humility brings about the idea of self. This is a transition from an idea to an impression; from the first impression to the second resembling one; from the second impression to the second idea. In sympathy, the idea of the self, that is the second idea, obtains the vivacity of the second impression which brings about a corresponding affection within us.

Once again we observe that Hume's theory of the passions with respect to sympathy is analogous to his explanation of belief. Hume underlines that sympathy is "exactly correspondent to the operation of our understanding; and [it] contains something more surprising and extraordinary" [T: 320]: namely, the impression of the self. Belief is obtained upon the conversion of an idea into an impression by means of vivacity, and for that reason belief has such an influence on behaviour. Since ideas are the cause of the passions, these ideas can influence us only by becoming like impressions. One of the natural consequences of Hume's previous conclusions is his explanation of action. There is no self-consciousness which sits in judgment on the rest of our experience. Not all

direct passions respond to the expectations of pleasure and pain, on the contrary these are the original drives on which all subsequent action is based [T: 280, 439]. All subsequent action depends upon ideas which give rise to the indirect passions.

A number of critics, like Reid and Laird among the moderns, have discussed that Hume's evidently paradoxical conclusions are mere consequences of his definitions of reason and passion. As Laird contended, "Hume's opponents affirmed that the apprehension of duty and the fitness of things pertained to reason and *did* affect conduct."[96] However, when we re-examine a number of Hume's arguments we shall see that Hume's case is really much stronger. First of all Hume's hypothesis is empirical in character. Moreover, he is adopting an analysis of reason given by some rationalists, of both the Platonic and the Aristotelian persuasions, and he is showing that on the very conception they vindicate it is impossible for reason to move us. For those who follow out all the implications of the rationalist model, scepticism is the only consistent position. Hence, despite what they may say, it would be internally inconsistent to argue that reason does guide us. Secondly, when we examine the actual words of Hume's critics we find that they qualify their assertion in a manner which explicitly weakens their position. Reid, for example, argues that our behaviours are influenced by reason which makes us see our long-range interests. This is wholly compatible with Hume's assertions about reason's maximizing our interest or our most important passions. Moreover, Reid admits "men's passions and appetites, too often draw them to act contrary to their cool judgment and opinion of what is best for them."[97] So long as the passions divert us, reason cannot act automatically. Either the passions really lead, or there is a third faculty which adjusts passion and reason. This remains unexplained if Reid wants to keep his consistent position with the view that reason is supreme. When we elaborate this same doctrine with regard to morality, it will be seen that Hume's position is even stronger. We find anyone morally faulty only in

[96] Laird, *Hume's Philosophy of Human Nature,* p. 204
[97] Reid, *Essay on the Active Powers,* p. 209

cases of doing wrong things on purpose or ignoring what is moral. If that person is unable to see what is moral, then he cannot be called an immoral person. From the moralists' point of view this ignoring of what we know to be right forms the main subject-matter of morality. That is why, in part, the concept of the moral "ought" was invented. According to Hume morality is useless if reason at most can do is to tell us what we "ought" do, and if "ought" is not hypothetical and tied somehow to the passions. Since moral principles can and do influence us, common sense tells us that we go to a great deal of trouble to introduce such principles. Thus morality must be closely tied to the passions. Concerning the determinism, Hume argues that no matter to what we respect, in practice we assume that determinism in some sense is the case. For the agency aspect of the self, the same is true: in practice we assume that there is some way to move people. As a result, with respect to the relationship between reason and passion, Hume's conclusions are not the plain consequences of definitions but derive from his critique of the rationalist model of reason and his earlier arguments on what determines our will.

CONCLUSION

The formation of the self and the stages of the process of this formation in David Hume's philosophy have been searched in this thesis. Firstly, his two distinct ideas of the self (viz. mental aspect of the self and agency aspect of the self) in relation to the formation of the self were examined. Hume's basic aim at his philosophical system is to provide an idea of the self only by using the method of observation and experiment. But he proclaims in 'Appendix' of *Treatise* that he was not successful, because he could not give sufficient and consistent reply within the limits of experiment and observation to the question of how these two distinct ideas of the self are found together in an individual self. In the present study, I criticised Hume's conclusion and I argued that the mental aspect and the agency aspect of the self which, according to Hume give rise to two distinct ideas of the self, are not in contradiction and the unity of these aspects in a self is explicable without applying to any mystical substance.

Hume thinks that we do not have any individual and simple impression of the self, but we have still an idea of the personal identity, though there are interruptions in our perceptions. But how is this possible? A common abuse of the notion of personal identity occurs when the idea of a soul or unchanging substance is added in order to give us a stronger or more unified concept of the self. Hume argues that the idea of the self should be explained without applying to any kinds of such substantial self idea, but only by using a method based on experiment and observation. For this reason first of all he attempts to establish a new science, namely the science of human nature, which aims to understand human nature itself, by identifying the basic principles that regulate human thought, feeling and action. In accordance with this project he examines how our concepts, beliefs, passions, and even standards of judgment in different areas of enquiry are formed by our experience, both in our personal histories and through

our participation in a community life. As a result of this examination, Hume argues that an idea is derived not from any single impression but, rather, from the "succession of our perceptions", which he called latter as the bundle of perceptions. Then he deduces that an unchanging object cannot give us the idea of time. For this reason, to apply the idea of time to an unchanging object by thinking of it in conjunction with a succession of perceptions is possible only through a kind of fiction. It is through this fiction of the imagination, according to Hume, that an object which is observed at a period of time without apparently undergoing any interruption or variation is able to give us the idea of identity. As a result of this account of the way in which the idea of identity is formed, Hume presents the following formulation of the principle of identity: namely, the *invariableness* and *uninterruptedness* of any object, through a supposed variation of time. This principle is central to his explanation of how we attain to the idea of an external existence and the idea of the self that our ascriptions of identity do not necessarily depend on the experience of invariableness and uninterruptedness. But in 'Appendix' of *Treatise*, Hume apparently proclaims that he is dissatisfied with his failure to provide a more specific account of "the principles, that unite our successive perceptions in our thought or consciousness". He is thus left with two allegedly inconsistent propositions, "that all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences, and that the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences" [T: 636]. As pointed in this study, the problem for us is to find what he means here by a "real connexion," and why he now regards his initial failure to give an account of this connection as a difficulty for his analysis. In his original discussion, Hume did not appeal to a strict connection between our perceptions to account for personal identity, instead he presented the relations of resemblance and causation as the "uniting principles" which lead the imagination to formulate the idea of personal identity. He even reminds us that all our judgments of causation, even those that contribute to our idea of personal identity, rest on a "customary association of ideas" rather than any "real connexion" [T: 259-60]. In the present study, it was argued that Hume's view was founded on the mistaken supposition that there is

no “real connection or relation” uniting our perceptions in a single mind. Hume argues that all our perceptions are distinct and separable existences, and they require nothing to support their existence [T: 239]. But how then can they belong to a self, how can they be connected with it? Hume’s argument seems to say that our particular perceptions are different, distinguishable, and separable from each other, capable of being considered separately, and have no need of anything to support their existence; they cannot belong to a self or be connected with it.

In Hume’s argument it is very difficult to realize just what follows from the premises suggested to us. The first of these premises tells us that any perception is logically independent of all other perception. This means that it involves no contradiction to suppose any given perception that is preceded, accompanied and followed by the other perceptions. This approach also includes a basis for the central thesis of Hume’s rejection of objective necessary connexion. The second premise tells that every perception is logically independent of the existence of any other entity. The occurrence of a perception does not logically require the existence of any other thing, for example, a mind to which it belongs, or an external substance that causes it. In this point it is very clear that the non-existence of the self does not follow from both of these premises or only one of them.

Hume claims that we never find logically necessary connexion between distinct existences. But this connexion is evidently not the kind of connexion which is required to explain the unity of self or mind. For, we cannot suppose that all the perceptions of a person’s mind are logically connected like the axioms and theorems of a geometrical system. For example, there is no logical connexion between being in pain yesterday and hearing a bird yesterday. In fact the only problem is what relation unites these perceptions in one self or mind. According to Hume, this relation is not similarity, causation, or local or temporal conjunction. These kinds of relations (except local conjunction) can be

comprehended between the perceptions of different minds as much as between the perceptions of a single mind. Hume thinks that these relations are not evaluated as the only alternatives.

In the thesis, I suggested an empirically given relation as an alternative. According to Hume's bundle theory of perceptions, the occurrence of a person's particular perceptions is necessary and sufficient for her/his existence. As long as they occur, s/he is; but when they stop, s/he is not. Therefore s/he is the multiplicity of her/his particular perceptions. This means that, firstly, a mind or self without a perception does not, as a matter of observable fact, ever occur. Secondly, a mind or self without a perception as a matter of logic is inconceivable. The interruption of all her/his perceptions would be as complete an annihilation of her/himself as s/he can imagine. But if it should be taken into consideration Hume's distinction between logical connexions and factual conjunctions, it can be concluded that it is not a perception, but the existence of perceptions is logically necessary to its existence. From this point of view I can say that if the self is something distinct from its perceptions, then the perceptions cannot be logically necessary to the existence of the self. On the other hand, if perceptions are logically necessary to the existence of the self, then the self is not an entity distinct from its perceptions. This is rather a form of relational pattern in which they are combined.

The conclusion to which we are driven is that the self is not an entity distinct from its perceptions, but consists of perceptions suitably related. The relations required to unite them are not only similarity, causation and spatial and temporal conjunction, but also *co-existence* and *co-presentation*. In the dissertation I argued that Hume failed to recognise the existence of this relation as an empirical fact, and therefore found himself in the difficulty described in 'Appendix' to *Treatise*. All these mean that the self is not a mere bundle of perceptions; it is at least a very peculiar form of relational unity of perceptions.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY

HUME'UN FELSEFESİNDE ZİHİNSEL BİRLİK VE AHLAKSAL ARACI OLARAK BEN'İN OLUŞUMU

Bu tez, modern felsefede önemli bir konuma sahip David Hume'un felsefesinde ben'in oluşumunu ve bu süreç boyunca ortaya çıkan aşamaları incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ben'in oluşumuyla ilgili olarak, Hume'un iki ben idesinden sözettiği görülür. Temel amacı deney ve gözlem yöntemiyle ben idesine ulaşmak olan Hume, bu iki ayrı idenin bir ben'de nasıl birarada olduğunu sadece deney ve gözlem sınırları içerisinde kalarak açıklayamadığı sonucuna varır ve bu noktada kendini bir labirentte gibi hissettiğinden sözeder. Bu tezde, ben'in oluşumuna ilişkin Hume'un ulaştığı sonuç eleştirilmekte ve bu biraradalığın, birliğin açıklanabilir olduğu savunulmaktadır.

Hume'a göre, "ben" − bir kişinin bilincinde olduğu yaşamının bütünü − olarak tanımlayabileceğimiz yalın, tikel bir izlenime sahip değiliz. Buna rağmen, dikkate alınması gereken bir kişisel özdeşlik idesine sahibiz. Hume bu ideyi algılarımızın geçiciliğine dikkat çekerek açıklamaya girişir ve bundan hepimizin birer farklı algılar demeti olduğumuz sonucunu çıkarır. Hume'a göre, bize daha güçlü ya da çok daha bütüncül bir "ben" kavramını vermek için, bir ruh ya da değişmeyen bir töz idesi eklemlendiğinde, yaygın ve haksız bir kişisel özdeşlik düşüncesi ortaya çıkar. Bu saptama aynı zamanda Aristotelesçi ve Skolastik geleneklerin ve bunların özünü oluşturan töz kuramının da reddini içerir. Hume'un felsefesini biçimlendiren dört temel unsurdan birini bu eleştiri ve

reddediş oluşturur. Sözkonusu bu dört unsur; dogmatik metafizikçilerin akıldışı savları, Kuşkucuların savlarının mantıksal dayanakları, Newtoncu bilimin başarısı ve yetkin bir ahlak kuramı oluşturmanın önemidir. Hume'un felsefesinin özünü oluşturan bu unsurlar, en önemli ve öncelikli projesi sayılabilecek olan "insan doğasının bilimi"ni kurma girişiminde de yönlendirici bir rol oynamıştır. Bu türden bir insan bilimini kurmaya çalışırken izlediği yöntem ve kullandığı araçlar, Hume'un metinlerini kendinden sonraki ikiyüz yılda ortaya çıkan iki karşıt görüşün beslendiği önemli birer kaynak haline getirmiştir. Bunlardan biri ondokuzuncu yüzyılda Almanya'da gelişen idealist görüş, diğeri ise yirminci yüzyılda İngiltere'de gelişen deneyci görüştür. Böyle bir sonuç doğurması bile başlıbaşına Hume felsefesinin felsefe tarihi içerisinde farklı bir konuma sahip olmasını açıklayabilecek niteliktedir. Ancak bu tezin de amacı dikkate alındığında burada asıl önemli nokta, Hume'un sözkonusu karşıt iki görüşe yol açan felsefeye genel anlamdaki yaklaşımının ve bilgi kuramının, ben'in oluşumuna ilişkin sunduğu çözümlerle benzer iki yanlılıkta biçimlenmiş olmasıdır. Bu çalışmada, ben'in oluşumunda sözkonusu bu iki yan, "zihinsel birlik" ve "ahlaksal aracılık" olarak adlandırılmakta ve *İnsanın Doğası Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (*A Treatise of Human Nature*) başlıklı çalışmasındaki iki ben görüşüne dayandırılmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada temel kaynak olarak ele alınan *İnsanın Doğası Üzerine Bir İnceleme*'de Hume, bütün diğer bilimler için bir temel oluşturacak insan doğasını araştıran bir bilim kurmaya çalışır. Bunu yaparken, "ben" bilgisinin/algısının nasıl oluştuğu, Hume'un projesinin odağında yer alır. *İnceleme* temel olarak üç ana bölümden/kitaptan oluşur. Bunlardan *İnceleme*'yi oluşturan ilk iki kitap bir 'Duyuru' metni ile birlikte ve daha sonra da üçüncü kitap yayınlanır. *İnceleme*'nin 'Giriş' bölümünde projesinin, deneyci bir insan bilimi kurmak olduğunu bildirir. Hume, deneysel akılyürütme yöntemine dayalı böyle bir bilimin, diğer araştırma alanlarına ve bilimlere göre öncelikli bir öneme ve işleve sahip olması gerektiğini, çünkü diğer türden tüm bilgiler için bir temel görevi görebileceğini savunur. Böyle bir temel, Mantık, Ahlak, Eleştiri

ve Siyaset gibi uygulamaya dayalı bilimler kadar Matematik, Doğa Felsefesi (fizik) ve Doğal Din bilimleri gibi kuramsal bilimlerin de biricik temeli olacaktır. Hume bu temelin ancak, felsefenin doğasının araştırılması ve aksaklıkların ortaya çıkarılmasıyla kurulabileceğini öne sürer. Bu türden aksaklıkların giderilmesi ise, insanın doğasını araştıran bir bilimin geliştirilmesiyle olanaklıdır. Böyle bir bilimin ise, deney ve gözleme dayalı olması gerektiğini özellikle *İnceleme*'nin 'Giriş' bölümünde vurgular. Bu amaç doğrultusunda temel ilkelerin saptandığı *İnceleme*'nin ilk ana bölümünde idelerin kökenleri ve insanın karakteri, zihinsel gücünün sınırlarıyla birlikte ele alınır; ikinci bölümde, insan doğasının tutku yönü incelenir; üçüncü bölümde ise, ahlak olarak tanımladığımız olguyu nasıl olup da aklın değil ama insan duyarlılığının açıklayabildiği gösterilmektedir.

Hume *İnceleme*'de ben idesini ve aynı zamanda kişisel özdeşlik idesini, "düşünce ya da imgelem" ve "tutku ya da ilgi" bakımından olmak üzere iki farklı açıdan inceler. *İnceleme*'nin ilk bölümünde bunlardan ilkini, yani tezde "zihinsel birlik" olarak ele alınan ben idesini, "düşünce ya da imgelem" boyutuyla ele alır. İkinci bölümde ise ben idesi ve kişisel özdeşlik idesi, tutkular, duygudaşlık ve istenç kavramlarıyla birlikte araştırılır. Ben'in bu şekliyle ele alınışı ise, bu tezde, ben'in bir eyleyen ve dolayısıyla ahlaksal bir aracı oluşuyla açıklanmaktadır. Hume'un, ben'i "düşünce ve imgelemimizin nesnesi", diğer taraftan da "tutku ve istencin öznesi" olarak açıklamasına dayanarak, tezde bu iki ayrı yan sırasıyla "ben'in zihinsel yanı" ve "ben'in eyleyen yanı" olarak adlandırılmıştır.

Hume insan doğasının bilimini kurmaya çalışırken, bazı kavramsal ve ilkesel yenilikler getirmiştir. Bunlardan en önemlisi ve felsefi sisteminin de temel unsurlarından biri olan *algı* kavramıdır. Algıyı, zihinsel bir etkinliğe dönüşmeden önce zihinde varolanlar olarak tanımlar. Öncelikle, *izlenimler* (duyguya ilişkin ya da deneysel olanlar) ve *ideler* (düşünceye ilişkin olanlar) olarak algıyı ikiye ayırır. Algıyı ayrıca *yalın* algılar ve *bileşik* algılar olarak da

ayırır. Hume'a göre sıradan insan, ben'ini ya da kendisiyle özdeşliğini yalın bir algıymış gibi algılar. Oysa Hume'a göre, biz dış dünyaya ait herhangi bir nesne gibi bir 'ben' izlenimine sahip değiliz. Dolayısıyla ben'in algısı yalın değil, bileşik bir algı olmalıdır. Sıradan insanın aksine filozof, tek bir izlenimden ya da bir grup izlenimden ben idesine ulaşılamayacağının bilincindedir, bu yüzden de ben'in nasıl oluştuğu doğal olarak sadece filozof için bir sorun niteliğindedir.

Hume, ben'in bu türden bir bileşik algısını "algılar demeti" (*the bundle of perceptions*) olarak tanımlar. Ben idesinin ve kişisel özdeşlik idesinin kökenini açıklayan bu kuram, "algılar demeti kuramı" olarak adlandırılır. Bu kurama göre, zihinsel etkinlik, farklı algıların birbirleriyle kısmen benzeşim ve kısmen de neden-sonuç ilişkisi sonucu oluşumunda ortaya çıkar. Başka bir deyişle, bir kişiye "ben" idesini ya da kendisiyle özdeş olduğu sanısını veren, benzeşim ve neden-sonuç ilişkisiyle oluşturulan bir algılar demetidir. Hume'a göre bu durumda "ben", algılarından ayrı bir varlık olamaz, ancak kendisini meydana getiren algılarla ilişkili bir varoluşa sahiptir. Ben'i sözkonusu türden algıların zihinsel bir birlikteliği olarak tanımlamamızın dayanağı, sadece benzerlik, nedensellik, zamansal ve uzamsal biraradalık gibi ilişkiler değil, bu algıların birlikte-varoluşu ya da birlikte-kavranışıdır. Bu durum, çeşitli düşünce ve deneyimlere sahip bir kişinin belli bir anda kendi ben'inin farkında olmasını ve hatta o kişinin ya da ben'in zamanın bir ânından başka bir ânına aynı kişi ya da ben olarak kalmasını sağlayan şeyin ne olduğu sorusunu getirir. Hume ilk açıklamasında, algıların bu türden bir birlikte-varoluşundan imgelemi sorumlu tutar. Ben'in gerçekte yalın ve bölünemez bir şeymiş gibi davranıp, sözkonusu algıları biraraya getiren bir ilke rolü oynamasını imgelemin sağladığını iddia eder. İkinci açıklamasında ise, özdeş bir zihnin ya da özdeş ben'in imgesel yaratımının sonucu olan algılar arasındaki ilişkilerin, farklı zamanlardaki algıları birbirine bağladığını öne sürer. Hume'un kendi ifadesiyle; "Zihin bir tür tiyatrodur ki, orada çeşitli algılar ardışık olarak kendilerini gösterirler; geçerler, yeniden geçerler, uzaklara süzülürler ve sonsuz bir duruşlar ve durumlar çeşitliliği içinde karışırlar. [Zihinde] sözcüğün tam anlamıyla ne tek bir zamanda

bir *yalınlık* ne de ayrı bir zamanda *özdeşlik* vardır; üstelik o yalınlık ve özdeşliği imgelemek için ne türden bir doğal yatkınlığımız olursa olsun." [T: 253]. Hume, tüm bu saptamalarıyla aslında, herhangi bir zamandaki deneyimleri, belli bir ben'e özgü deneyimler yapan gerçek bir "öz" olmadığını belirtir. Benzer şekilde, farklı zamanlarda meydana gelen deneyimlerin merkezinde, bu deneyimleri aynı ben'in deneyimleri olarak birleştiren bir şey de yoktur. Tüm bu saptamalar, ben'in varlığını reddetmek ya da kişinin ben sezgisinin bir yanılsamadan öte bir şey olmadığını iddia etmekle eş anlamda olduğu düşünülebilir. Oysa Hume sadece, yalın ve özdeş bir ben anlayışını reddeder. Ona göre, bir kişinin zihnini ya da ben'ini değişik zamanlarda oluşturan algılar arasında, sistematik nedensel ilişkiler olmalıdır. Hatta bu kişi, eyleyen olma açısından bakıldığında aynı kişi ya da aynı nitelikte olmayabilir de; tüm kurumları, yasaları, organları ve hatta yurttaşlarının bile değişmesine rağmen bir devletin aynı devlet olarak görülmesi gibi. Buna göre, bir kişinin izlenimleri ve ideleri gibi karakteri ve yatkınlıkları da o kişi özdeşliğini yitirmeden değişebilir.

Hume, ben'in oluşumunu zihinsel bir birlik olmasının yanı sıra, özellikle *İnceleme*'nin son bölümünde ele aldığı gibi, yetkin bir ahlak biliminin konusu olma işleviyle, "eyleyen" olarak da ele alır. Hume, insanın bilişine ait unsurları ve ilkeleri açıklarken, aslında sadece bunların neler olduğuna ilişkin bir açıklama sunmayı değil, aynı zamanda doğa ve insani bilimlerdeki akılyürütmelerimizi gerekçelendirmeyi ve ilerletmeyi de hedefler. Bu amaca paralel olarak, insan aklının sınırlarını belirlemeye ve insanın eylemlerindeki tutkularla aklın bağlantısını yöneten ilkeleri saptamaya girişir. Başka bir deyişle, günümüzde insan bilincinin sosyal ve tarihsel boyutları olarak tanımladığımız insanın özelliklerini araştırır. Hume'un bu türden yaklaşımı, farklı araştırma alanlarındaki kavramlarımızın, inançlarımızın, tutkularımızın ve hatta yargı standartlarımızın hem kişisel tarihçemizdeki hem de bir topluluk yaşamına katılımımızdaki deneyimlerimizle nasıl oluştuğunu incelemesinde gözlemlemek olanaklıdır. Kısaca, Hume'un felsefesi, insanın düşünce, duygu ve eylemlerini yönlendiren temel ilkeleri belirleyerek insan doğasını anlamayı amaçlar. Bu

yüzden Hume, iyinin ve kötünün ne olduğunu belirlemekle değil, böyle bir ayrımın neden yapıldığını açıklamanın yollarını araştırmakla ilgilenir. Dolayısıyla tutkular üzerine sunduğu görüşler, tutkuların sadece felsefi olarak tartışılmasına bir katkı olmaktan öte, aynı zamanda insan bilimi ya da insan doğasının ilkelerinin bir araştırması olarak tanımlayabileceğimiz Hume felsefesinin bütünleyici birer parçalarıdır da.

Hume tutkulara *İnceleme*'nin ikinci ana bölümünde 'Tutkular Üzerine' alt başlığında geniş yer verir ve burada insanı duygusal, eyleyen ve sosyal bir varlık olarak tanımlayarak insanın varoluşunun sosyal ve tarihsel boyutlarına dikkat çeker. Hume'un bu yaklaşımı, ben'i sosyal yaşam içerisinde tanımlamayı gerektirir. Kişinin kamusal yanı olarak da adlandırabileceğimiz bu yan, Hume felsefesinde *karakter* kavramıyla açıklanır. Yani bu, bir kişinin ben'inin, başkaları tarafından görülebilir olduğu ve onların ahlak ve erdemle ilgili yargılarına konu olabileceği anlamına gelir. Çünkü Hume'a göre, genel olarak kişinin sosyal varlık olma durumunu yansıtan karakteri ve karakter özellikleri bedenden daha çok zihin ile ilgilidir. Bir kişinin karakterini kuran ya da ben'ini oluşturan bu özelliklerden çok azı, o kişinin toplumdaki konumundan ve diğerleri üzerindeki etkisinden bağımsız olarak düşünülebilir. Tüm bunlar, eyleyen olarak ben'in kamusal boyutuyla, ben'in zihinsel yanı biçiminde temsil edilen bireysel özellikteki boyutu arasında bir karşıtlığa ve karakterin sadece bu kamusal ben ile ilgili olduğuna işaret eder. Ancak Hume, karakter özelliklerinin aslında insan eylemlerinin zihinsel nedenleri olduğunu ve bu tür nedenlerin de zihinde/ben'de bulunan algılar demetine ait tekrarlanan algılar biçiminde varolduğunu iddia eder. Türlü değişmelere rağmen, süreklilik ve özdeşlik atfettiğimiz ben'in bu şekilde oluşumunda ve böyle bir oluşumun gerçekleşmesine katkıda bulunan algılar arasında bir sürekliliğin sağlanmasında, Hume'un zihinsel nedenler olarak sunduğu karakter özelliklerinin önemli bir rolü vardır. Dolayısıyla ben ile ilişkili bu türden bir karakter kavramı, ben'in hem zihinsel bir birlik hem de ahlaksal aracı olarak oluşumunun önemli bir gerekçesini sunar. Böylece, "Hume'un Felsefesinde Zihinsel Birlik ve Ahlaksal

Aracı Olarak Ben'in Oluşumu" başlıklı bu tez, ben'in bu iki yanlılığının ve ben'in oluşumundaki biraradalıklarının, Hume'un da kaçındığı töz gibi başkaca bir unsura başvurmaksızın ve aralarındaki ilişkiyi mantıksal bir ilişkiye indirgemeden, ben'in oluşumunun doğal bir süreç olarak incelenmesiyle anlaşılabilir ve açıklanabilir olduğu savındadır.

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