IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

Contemporary Debates on the Self

Edited by

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Reconsidering Identity and Difference in the Debate on the Self

The intellectual landscape of the humanities has since the 1960s been overshadowed by the question of identity and difference—political and national identity, ethnic and racial identity, gender identity and, in philosophy, the question of the identity of the self and of the knowing, acting and desiring subject. This is partly due to the social, cultural and political upheavals experienced in different parts of the globe at the time, for example, the movement of decolonization in sub-Saharan Africa, the Civil Rights Movement in the USA or second-wave feminism. It is also due to the emergence of a new intellectual orientation in French philosophy in the 1960s. Suspicious, on the one hand, of the claim made by the philosophies of the subject (particularly by existentialism and phenomenology) that the identity of the subject, although not given or natural, is self-constituted, and of the claim made by structuralism in linguistics, anthropology and psychoanalysis that there are invariable structures that govern human life, on the other, a certain unity of perspective or commonality of outlook emerged among various French thinkers such as Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault, to name but a few, which overturned one of the most long-standing beliefs in Western thought. This is that difference (or variation) is not to be derived from or understood on the basis of a prior identity (or structure) but, rather, that identity—whether the identity of a singular or collective subject, of the self or of a people—is a product of differential relations.

This shift of perspective has had significant implications in the discourse on the self, agency and subjectivity in narrative theory, phenomenology, personal identity theory, politics, anthropology, feminism, cultural, race and postcolonial studies. This book explores the contemporary effect of this shift of perspective in the debate on the self in four parts: Narrative Theory and Phenomenology; Politics, Authenticity and Agency; Feminism; and Race and the Postcolonial.

Part I of the book, Narrative Theory and Phenomenology, focuses on the contemporary discourse on the self in narrative theory and phenomenology. A brief glance at the discourse on the self in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will quickly show that the 'self' is said and thought in many ways. For some, such as logical positivists, behaviourists and, more recently, eliminative materialists, the notion of the 'self' or 'person' (using these terms interchangeably for now) does not pick out a real category in the world and plays no role in the explanation of human nature. For more recent analytic philosophy, by contrast, personhood is recognized as being crucial for our social, moral and cultural life, and the person is regarded as having intrinsic worth. In addition, recent work in cognitive science has adopted the idea of the embodied, extended, embedded and enactive self, whereas phenomenology since Edmund Husserl, Max Scheler and Edith Stein has focused not only on the personal nature of the self but also on its historical and transcendental character. These multiple ways in which the concept of the self is used calls for an account of its historical origin and of the variation of its senses in the history of Western thought. This is the task that Dermot Moran undertakes in Chapter 1, 'The Personal Self in the Phenomenological Tradition'. Moran traces the development of the concept of the self and person from ancient Greek thought to Kant and beyond with a particular focus on the phenomenological tradition and narrative theory.

Narrative theories of personal identity standardly rely on the belief that there are good reasons for drawing comparisons between literary characters and persons. They draw such comparisons to illustrate their thesis that we constitute our personal identity through the narrative by which we understand ourselves. However, there has been a surge of criticisms in the past decade against making such comparisons. In his contribution to this volume, 'Persons, Characters, and the meaning of

"Narrative"', Alfonso Muñoz-Corcuera considers these criticisms and proposes a new defence of narrative theories of personal identity. David Mitchell tackles the problem of self-deception in 'What Does Self-Deception Tell Us About the Self? A Sartrean perspective'. This is a particularly vexing problem in psychology and phenomenology inasmuch as both disciplines sometimes rely on a common Cartesian heritage concerning the transparency of the mind or self-consciousness. Is it not the case that the self must know that it is deceiving itself about something? Must it not know that the lie it tells itself *is* a lie? How, then, is self-deception possible? Mitchell critically examines the Freudian and deflationary accounts of self-deception and shows them to be wanting. He turns to Sartre to account for the possibility of self-deception and argues that it reveals the self to be stranger than we tend to think.

The question concerning the nature of authenticity and agency in the context of political and ethical action and behaviour is currently a fiercely debated topic in the discourse on the self in both popular and academic literature. This is the theme of Part II. Such phrases as 'I wasn't myself' or the call 'Be yourself!' suggest that there is a difference between the 'I' and the 'self' and that in order to have an authentic relationship to oneself this internal difference must be eliminated. Indeed, is not authenticity in this sense at the heart of the political, moral and social doctrine of individualism? It is also apparent in Cartesian rationalism, particularly in the First Meditation of the *Meditations on First Philosophy* in which the reader is asked to withdraw from the authority of tradition and that of the senses in order to return to its true inner self, which is reason. In 'Being My-*Self*? Montaigne on Difference and Identity', Vincent Caudron turns to Michel de Montaigne and Pierre Charron to examine their account of authentic selfhood. Caudron argues that Montaigne's *Essays* and Charron's *On Wisdom* offer a particularly stringent critique of individualism (and of Cartesianism) in that the internal difference between the 'I' and the 'self' is not an obstacle to but a necessary condition for authenticity.

The question of authenticity is, in the conceptuality of Western thought, closely associated with the question of agency. What conditions must someone satisfy in order to count as an agent? Within the Kantian tradition, self-consciousness is typically understood as a capacity to be reflectively responsive to reasons and to have an objective self-conception, that is,

a self-narrative or practical identity in the world to which we commit ourselves. Working within this Kantian tradition, David Velleman and Christine Korsgaard both maintain that self-consciousness in this sense is a necessary and sufficient condition for agency. They distinguish this model of self-consciousness, which is specifically human, from first-personal awareness, which they believe can be ascribed to some non-human animals too. In 'Specifically Human? The Limited Conception of Self-Consciousness in Theories of Reflective Endorsement', Irene Bucelli questions this distinction between self-consciousness and first-personal awareness. Bucelli argues that first-personal awareness is already specifically human inasmuch as it involves a relation of self-reference (or a sense of ownership) that does not entail the objective notion of a person and that can also not be attributed to animals, and, moreover, that an objective self-conception is not simply added on to this specifically human first-personal awareness but, rather, that it thoroughly modifies it.

Authenticity and agency, which are two particular ways of thinking about the identity of the self—whether as something given or achieved, as something natural or self-posited—are in turn connected with the question of the identity of the human being. Is there an 'essence' to the human being? In other words, does philosophical anthropology have a stable, identifiable, invariably fixed object of study? In 'Making the Case for Political Anthropology: Understanding and Resolving the Backlash Against Liberalism', Rockwell F. Clancy analyses the contemporary backlash against multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and, more generally, inclusive liberal values—visible, for instance, in forms of political conservatism and religious fundamentalism. This backlash, Clancy argues, can be understood as resulting from the abandonment of a philosophico-political anthropology by liberalism, that is, of a determinate conception of human nature and, correlatively, of the human good or the good life for man. Yet is it possible, indeed, is it even desirable to operate without a conception of human nature and of the human good in political theory? Clancy demonstrates that it is neither possible nor desirable. He proposes a conception of a philosophico-political anthropology that develops an account of the relations between the individual and the community that are characterized not by the exclusive particularism of fundamentalism and conservatism but, rather, by the inclusive particularism characteristic of the

materialist doctrines of Spinoza, Deleuze and Latour among others. A materialist and non-essentialist conception of human nature, in other words, might help resolve the backlash against liberalism and serve as a critical foundation and instrument for progressive political theories.

Part III turns to feminism, the field that without doubt has been the most responsive to the shift of outlook experienced in the late 1960s in the humanities, notably, the prioritization of difference over identity in the discourse on the (gendered) subject. Post-structuralist authors such as Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault, Lyotard and others have each in their own unique way demonstrated the limited, conditioned if not fictitious nature of the modern (Kantian) notion of the subject conceived as a sovereign, self-unifying subject that legislates to itself norms of truth and action. This notion of the subject has proven to be inadequate in the face of the experience of our subjectivity that has come to mark our 'postmodernity'. This is an experience of being decentred rather than unified, of hetero- nomy rather than of autonomy, an experience of our subjectivity as being in flux. In 'The Decentred Autonomous Subject', Kathy Butterworth considers the effects of this critical appraisal of the modern subject by post-structuralism for feminism. Butterworth contends that it has given rise, on the one hand, to an anti-essentialist thinking in feminist theory, something that ought to be preserved, yet, on the other, this critique has also given rise to a celebration of the fragmented self, which raises serious psychological and political concerns for feminism. In the first place, some post-structuralist authors for whom the fragmented self constitutes a positive and normative model generally tend to underestimate the real psychological costs on people who suffer from psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia, people who suffer from a fragmentation of self. It is also, in the second place, not always clear how such a model can be used to challenge the oppressive structures of patriarchy and capitalism. To this end, Butterworth considers Ricoeur's model of the subject, which, she argues, retains the central insights of the post-structuralist critique of the modern subject whilst being responsive to the psychological costs on people who suffer from a fragmentation of selfhood. She argues that this model can best serve as a critical tool for feminist theory.

Another key concern in feminist theory is the differential power of the erotic, understood as the necessary condition of possibility of the body's

ambiguous nature, its being at once an object for others and a subject for itself. In 'Exploring Rape as an Attack on Erotic Goods', Louise du Toit argues that patriarchy appropriates the healing, constructive, and liberating power of the erotic through perversions and distortions, through mystifications and phantasies such as the idea that it is necessary to 'overcome' one's flesh in order to be an authentic subject. Du Toit considers this in the context of the question of what is sexual about sexual violence, how a sexual attack differs from non-sexual forms of physical attacks. She argues that the patriarchal framing of sexual attacks not only reduces the human erotic to sexuality; it also robs the victims of sexual attacks of the subjectivity of their body.

In the wake of Luce Irigaray's work on sexuate difference and inter-subjectivity, a key issue in feminist theory has been whether an ethics of sexual difference in the current global context is possible. Can a universal, and not simply a local or context-dependent, ethics of sexual difference be articulated? In 'Making Mischief: Thinking Through Women's Solidarity and Sexuate Difference with Luce Irigaray and Gayatri Spivak', Laura Roberts considers these questions. She analyses how Spivak has mobilized Irigaray's work on sexuate difference to address women's solidarity and teases out what this might suggest about the possibility of cross-cultural communication between and among women.

Part IV turns to the question of identity and difference in the discourse on the self in the context of race and postcolonial studies. In 'The "Africanness" of white South Africans?', Sharli Paphitis and Lindsay-Ann Kelland explore the way South African philosophers have started to pay attention to whiteness, 'whiteliness' and the role of white South Africans in political processes and transformation in South Africa. In particular, they examine the questioning of Africanness on the part of white South Africans, and hence with the way white South Africans have been dealing with the question of belonging to and of being at home in their South African environment. In 'Alterity, Identity, and Racial Difference in Levinas', Louis Blond critically assesses the charges that have been brought against Levinas' philosophy and ethics of alterity by some of the scholarship in postcolonial theory and identity politics. Postcolonial theory claims that Levinas' deployment of alterity

suppresses the materiality and historicity of social and political others and in so doing denies the ethnic and racial makeup—the embodiment—of other identities. Louis examines Levinas' understanding of alterity and identity and considers the claim that Levinas' philosophical position licenses the subdual of racial and ethnic difference.

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Part I

Narrative Theory and Phenomenology

1

The Personal Self in the Phenomenological Tradition

Dermot Moran

1.1 Introduction: Self and Person in Contemporary Philosophical Discussion

The interrelated concepts of 'self' and 'person' have long traditions within Western philosophy, and both have re-emerged, after a period of neglect, as central topics in contemporary cognitive sciences and philosophy of mind and action.[1] The concepts of 'self' and 'person' are intimately related, overlap on several levels and are often used interchangeably. While some philosophers (in the past and at present) seek

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[1] Earlier versions of this chapter were given as an invited lecture in Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST), Wuhan, People's Republic of China (12 December 2015); as an Invited Lecture to the Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of the Sciences, Moscow (21 November 2014) and as the Plenary Address to the Irish Philosophical Society 'Futures of Phenomenology' Annual Conference, University College Galway (7 March 2010).

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to separate them quite sharply,[2] here I will treat being a self (with some degree of self-awareness) as at least a necessary element of being a person in the full sense. The phenomenological tradition, which is the specific focus of this chapter, tends to treat the person as the full, concrete, embodied and historically and socially embedded subject, engaged in social relations with other subjects, and does not treat the person as a primarily 'forensic' conception (as a legal or moral appellation), as in the tradition of John Locke. For this reason, I will speak primarily of the 'personal self' in the phenomenological tradition and will not attempt to distinguish between selfhood and personhood (much of the debate about the distinction, which is outside the limits of this chapter, turns on the limits of personhood—when one becomes a person or if one can, while still living, no longer be a person).

Earlier twentieth-century movements, such as behaviourism (e.g. operant conditioning with its denial of free will; Skinner 1974), logical atomism (Russell 1956), logical positivism (Ayer 1952), linguistic behaviourism (Ryle 1949) or, more recently, eliminative materialism (Churchland 2011), or even forms of cognitive science that focus on *sub-personal* systems only (the very term 'sub-personal' is indicative of an explanatory gap), have all been reluctant to acknowledge the reality and importance of selves and persons (see Metzinger 2009, 'the myth of self'). The Churchlands, for instance, with their eliminative materialism, have proclaimed that 'person' does not identify a real category in the world and plays no role in final explanation of human behaviour. Similarly, Richard Dawkins has written:

> Each of us humans knows that the illusion of a single agent sitting somewhere in the middle of the brain is a powerful one. (Dawkins 1998: 283–284)

Recent analytic philosophy (Williams 1973; Sturma 1997; Wilkes 1988; Baker 2013) has recovered some ground and displays a growing

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[2] Eric Olson, in the entry on 'Personal Identity' in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, claims he will speak only of personal identity as self 'often means something different: some sort of immaterial subject of consciousness, for instance'.

recognition that personhood is crucial for human social, moral and cultural life and that persons must be regarded as intrinsically valuable and worthy of respect and protection of their dignity. Lynne Rudder Baker (2000; 2007; 2013), with her 'constitution' view, is perhaps the leading analytic exponent of the reality of persons. She argues that persons come into existence gradually and are constituted in social interaction but these facts do not mean that one cannot draw an ontological distinction between persons and other kinds of material entity. Persons, for her, have ontological distinctness (based in part on their capacity for saying 'I'). Baker writes:

> What distinguishes person from other primary kinds (like planet or human organism) is that persons have first-person perspectives necessarily. (Baker 2007: 68)

She continues:

> The first-person perspective is a very peculiar ability that all and only persons have. It is the ability to conceive of oneself as oneself, from the inside, as it were. (Baker 2007: 69)

Discussions of personhood have also recently emerged in the cognitive sciences (Gallagher 2000; Ikäheimo & Laitinen 2007; Farah & Heberlein 2007), with the adoption of the *embodied, extended, embedded* and *enactive* ('the four Es') self in a social world (a conception that has already been in discussion, as we shall see, in phenomenology since the first decades of the twentieth century). Cognitive scientists talk of the 'extended mind' (Menary 2010; Clark & Chalmers 1998) or 'leaky mind' (Clark 1998), whereby mind must be understood with reference both to body and world ('embodied and embedded'; Haugeland 1998). Certainly, recent philosophy of mind and cognitive science recognizes the importance of *embodiment* as a necessary condition for conscious subjectivity, expressive emotion and personhood (Clark 1998; Thompson &Varela 2000; Shapiro 2004; Gallagher 2005). More generally, there is an emphasis on links between cognition and its embodied engagement with its environment (including other subjects—social cognition). These ideas of

embodied and situated cognition, now popular in cognitive science, have a longer history in the phenomenological tradition (Thompson and Varela 2000; Gallagher 2005). These analytic re-appropriations of phenomenology's discoveries, however, still neglect the intrinsic subjective and intersubjective points of view and more generally the manner in which human beings weave the narrative history of their lives. Some argue that selfhood is deeper than personhood, that there is a 'core' or 'minimal self' (Zahavi 2005 and 2007; Strawson 2009), a consciousness of oneself as an immediate subject of experience. This minimal self involves little more than a pre-reflective self-awareness and the more fully fledged 'narrative self' or 'extended self' is founded on this minimal self (Damasio 1999).

Having some kind of conscious self that persists through time is often seen as being a necessary condition of personhood. Contemporary analytic philosophy, especially in the work of David Wiggins (2001), has revived a number of Lockean arguments regarding personal identity. This Lockean tradition has been challenged by hermeneutic thinkers such as Charles Taylor (1989), who, following Hans-Georg Gadamer, describes persons as requiring 'answerability' and who can give some kind of narrative shape to their lives.

Another important contemporary approach, alongside the Neo-Lockean persistence notion, reformulates the traditional criterion of rationality by describing human persons as possessing the power for second-order representations or *metarepresentation*, that is, the capacity to *represent* their representations, for example, to consider certain states as *having been* theirs ('I was in pain yesterday'). The latter example involves adopting a complex temporal stance towards one's cognitive states, something perhaps unavailable to creatures lacking language abilities. This view, often understood more generally as the capacity for *metarepresentation* (Sperber 2000), has been the subject of much critical discussion. Most notably, the American philosopher Harry Frankfurt (1988) has proffered the influential claim that human persons are capable not just of wants and desires but also of higher-order or *second-order* desires about their desires (I can desire to curb my desire for cigarettes). Frankfurt claims the capacity to form higher-order desires is adequate to distinguish persons from non-persons (Frankfurt 1988).

In light of these many and quite diverse contemporary approaches, and in order to situate the phenomenological approach to the person and the self, it is necessary to begin with a brief review of self and person in the history of philosophy.

1.2   Self and Person in the History of Western Philosophy

Debates about the existence and nature of the self are as old as philosophy itself, with the denial of the existence of the self, a recurrent theme, for instance, in ancient Indian Buddhist thought (*anatta*, or the 'no-self' doctrine; Perrett 2016: 184–87). Similarly, in ancient Greek philosophy, there was a long tradition of discussion over the meaning of the Delphic injunction to 'know yourself' (*gnōthi seauton*), which, according to Plato, governed Socrates' life mission (Annas 1985). Among the Stoics, for instance, self-knowledge took the form of knowing that human beings are part of the material cosmos but are unique in having a rational nature (Gill 2006; Brouwer 2013). It is not always clear, however, that ancient philosophers thought of self-knowledge as knowledge of a *self* (understood as something like a stable Cartesian ego) and there have been lively debates about when the concept of self emerged (Sorabji 2006), with some pointing to St. Augustine's discussions of inner life (Taylor 1989) and especially his *Confessions*, which is sometimes regarded as the first autobiography. Certainly, the *Confessions* is a meditation that offers *both* self-examination and self-renewal (Taylor 1989; Marion 2012).

The concept of the person, like that of the self, is an ancient concept, although its provenance cannot be straightforwardly traced back to classical Greek philosophy; rather, it has its origins at the turn of the first millennium. The concept of 'person' (Latin: *persona* from the Greek πρόσωπον meaning 'face' 'visage' and referring to masks worn by theatre actors) first emerged in the context of Roman Law (distinguishing persons in their own right from slaves who were under the right of another), Alexandrine grammar (number, e.g. first, second, third person) and early Latin Christian theology (defining the three 'persons' to be found in the one God; see Kobusch 1997; de Vogel 1963; Carruthers et al. 1985).

Ancient accounts of personhood as found, for instance, in the Stoic Panaitios of Rhodes (as reported in Cicero's *De Officiis* I §§30–32) tend to emphasize the rational character of the human person, free will, the unique individuality of persons and also their historical contingency (Haardt & Plotnikov 2008: 30). The standard definition of the person is to be found in Boethius' *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium* (Boethius 1918), where it occurs in a theological (Christological) context: a person is 'an individual substance of a rational nature' (*naturæ rationalis individua substantia*; Koterski 2004). Boethius' concept of the person, with its concepts of *substantiality*, *rationality* and *individuality,* had a huge influence on Thomas Aquinas and the Middle Ages generally.

In European philosophy in the modern period, discussions of the self and its self-identity are usually traced back to Descartes's rediscovery (but see Dupré 1993) of the *cogito ergo sum* (a reworking of St. Augustine's *si fallor sum*). Descartes characterized the 'soul' or 'mind' (*mens*) as an *ego cogito* that is able to achieve self-conscious recognition not only of its own existence but also of its nature or essence. Through a direct non-sensible, rational intuition of ourselves, we are able to deduce many truths, including that the essential nature of the ego is *res cogitans*, thinking substance, that it is essentially thinking, finite, fallible, contains representations, has sensation and memory, and so on. Descartes claims, on the basis of direct, introspective self-evidence, that he can know with certainty that he is a being who cannot know everything, who is finite, and hence fallible, who is essentially independent of extended reality, and so on. This mind is not a body but is connected with a body which can influence it. Descartes concentrated largely on the self's sensory, rational and volitional nature, but he later discussed, in his *Les passions de l'âme* (*Passions of the Soul* 1649, Descartes 1985), the affective and emotional layers of the self ('the passions') as it is influenced by bodily disturbances. Descartes, however, does not discuss the concept of the 'person' as such, which is primarily introduced by Locke.

John Locke, especially in 'Of identity and diversity', Chapter 27 of Book 2 of his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (added to the second edition of that work in 1694 on the recommendation of his friend and fellow philosopher William Molyneux, Locke 1975: 328–348), combines his discussion of the self and self-identity ('the sameness of a

rational Being') with his discussion of the value of the person, which he regards as a legal or 'Forensick Term' (Locke 1975: 346).

Reacting to Locke and Berkeley, David Hume famously denied that there was any encounter with the self in experience. In the section entitled 'Of personal identity' in his *A Treatise on Human Nature* (Hume 1978), he wrote:

> For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. (Hume 1978: 252)

For Hume, there was no 'impression' of self that 'continued invariably the same, thro' the whole course of our lives' (Hume 1978: 251) that could give rise to a real idea of self as an identical and simple entity that perdured beneath our experiences. For Hume, for instance, when one is asleep, there is clearly no self. Thus he concludes, in this section, that 'the rest of mankind' (excluding metaphysicians who think they can perceive an enduring self) 'are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions'. He goes on to invoke his familiar image of the mind as a theatre where impressions make their appearance and disappear again. There are only perceptions; there is not even a theatre as a place where those perceptions take place (Hume 1978: 253). To be fair, Hume then goes on to distinguish between personal identity as experienced in thought and personal identity as regards our 'passions or the concern we take in ourselves' (Hume 1978: 253). In this section, however, he goes on to dismiss worries about personal identity 'as grammatical rather than as metaphysical difficulties' (Hume 1978: 262). Identity comes at best from the manner ideas cohere with one another and form at least the appearance of a continuous stream.

Alfred Jules Ayer endorsed this Humean conception of the self in Chapter 7, 'The self and the common world', of his *Language, Truth and Logic* (Ayer 1952: 120–133). He writes:

> For it is still fashionable to regard the self as a substance. But when one comes to enquire into the nature of this substance, one finds that it is an

altogether unobservable entity. . . . The existence of such an entity is completely unverifiable. (Ayer 1952: 126)

Ayer himself professes able to solve Hume's worries about identity by saying that the identity of the self is simply bodily identity, here to be understood in terms of 'the resemblance and continuity of sense contents'. One remains the same (even with memory loss) if one continues to have sense contents. How these sense contents are to be identified as belonging to the *same* subject experiencing them is of course left unexamined in Ayer's account.

Despite the scepticism of Hume, the European Enlightenment (especially Kant) established a new universal vision of persons as free, *rational* agents. Persons are understood as individuals, as wholes, as free agents, as rational and as worthy of infinite respect. In his *Critique of Practical Reason,* Kant claims the origin of duty lies in the 'person' defined as 'nothing else than . . . the freedom and independence from the mechanism of nature regarded as a capacity of a being subject to special laws (pure practical laws given by its own reason), so that the person belonging to the world of sense is subject to his own personality as far as he belongs to the intelligible world' (Kant 1997: 74). For Kant, persons belong to two worlds. They must be treated as ends in themselves because we must respect them as free and rational and not constrained by their embodiment in the world of nature. Kant writes in the *Groundwork*: 'rational beings . . . are called persons because their nature already marks them out as ends in themselves, i.e., as something that may not be used merely as means, hence to that extent limits all arbitrary choice (and is an object of respect)' (Kant 2002a: 46). To be a person is to be a moral agent and to be answerable to standards or norms one has set oneself. For Kant, the person is that subject who is accountable for his or her actions. Contemporary analytic philosophers tend to continue this tradition of seeing 'person' as a moral or legal notion. One is a person insofar as one is a moral agent or deserving of dignity and respect. Galen Strawson, similarly, claims that Locke's concept of person has to be understood more or less as the moral actions we lay claim to (Strawson 2011).

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant 1998), Kant primarily treats the 'I' as a condition of experience that cannot itself be experienced. He writes in

the B-edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that the 'I think must be able to accompany all my representations' (B131/132, Kant 1998: 246). This I think is a matter not of sensibility but of spontaneity and Kant calls it 'pure apperception' or the 'transcendental unity of self-consciousness'. It is, for Kant, an objective condition of all cognition (B138, Kant 1998: 249–250). Kant distinguishes sharply between the empirical manner in which I appear to myself and this transcendental source of unity of apperception:

> . . . in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor **as** I am in myself, but only **that** I am. This representation is a **thinking** not an **intuiting**. (B157, Kant 1998: 259)

There is, in agreement with Hume, no *experience* of the pure I; the 'I think' is rather as Kant says 'the form of apperception on which every experience depends' (A354, Kant 1998: 419)

For Kant, contra Hume, the subject, then, is a logical substratum; a '(merely logical) unity' (Kant 1998: A 355–356), and Kant refers to it as a 'logical ego' or 'logical I' (Kant 1998: A 355, B 428). Thinking does not, for Kant, represent this logical subject as an appearance (Kant 1998: B428). Max Scheler takes issue with Kant concerning his conception of the flow of consciousness and its relation to the person. Against Kant, who thought of an ego as merely 'interconnection of experience in time' attached to the idea of a 'merely logical subject', Scheler maintains that experiences are always belonging to someone and it is only by abstraction that we can talk of experiences as such (Scheler 1973: 377). In his 1927 lectures, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (Heidegger 1982), Heidegger comments on this in an interesting manner:

> 'The ego is a logical ego' does not mean for Kant, as it does for Rickert, an ego that is logically conceived. It means instead that the ego is subject of the *logos*, hence of thinking; the ego is the ego as the 'I combine' which lies at the basis of all thinking. (Heidegger 1982: 130)

Kant writes in his 1793/1804 essay *What Real Progress Has Metaphysics Made in Germany since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff?*:

> That I am conscious of myself is a thought that already contains a twofold self, the I as subject and the I as object. . . . But a double personality is not

meant by this double I. Only the I that I think and intuit is a person; the I that belongs to the object that is intuited by me is, similarly to other objects outside me, a thing. (Kant 2002: 362)

These potent remarks in fact closely resemble the position that Husserl will adopt, as we shall see later. He too will see the person as having a natural and a transcendental dimension and recognize the crucial capacity of the self to engage in 'self-splitting' (*Ichspaltung*) so that it can come to view itself as agent of its own deeds, author of its own judgements and is formed by its own 'position-takings'. For both Kant and Husserl, the capacity of a human being to have a self-representation is central to being a person. Right at the start of his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant declares:

The fact that man can have the representation 'I,' elevates him infinitely above all the other beings living on earth. By virtue of this he is a *person*; and by virtue of his unity of consciousness through all the changes he may undergo, he is one and the same person, i.e., a being completely different in rank and dignity from *things*. . . . (Kant 2006: 15)

An ego by its capacity to represent itself to itself is thereby a person. It is because an ego can represent itself that it is capable of holding itself up to a norm; it is capable of acting according to laws it applies to itself. Kant writes in his *The Metaphysics of Morals* (*Die Metaphysik der Sitten*):

But man regarded as a *person*—that is, as the subject of morally practical reason—is exalted above any price, for as such (*homo noumenon*) he is not to be valued as a mere means to the ends of others or even to his own ends, but as an end in himself. (Kant 1996: 189).

Persons in the Kantian tradition are complex entities, both beings in nature causally connected with the natural world, but also beings of freedom and reason, ends in themselves, of infinite value, and deserving of respect. For Kant, the person is both a sensible and a rational being.

Let us now turn to the phenomenological tradition, which will develop many of these Kantian insights in a new register and greatly fleshes out the notions of person and self.

1.3 The Phenomenological Tradition

The phenomenological tradition has much to say about both selfhood and personhood, but, despite this rich tradition, its contribution has been relatively neglected until recently, partly because its accounts are complex and often cast in a deeply technical language. In what follows, I shall base my phenomenological account of personhood primarily on the writings of Edmund Husserl, but also include insights drawn from some of the more neglected figures of the phenomenological movement, especially Max Scheler (1973) and Edith Stein (1989; 2000). I will conclude with a brief discussion of narrative conceptions of the self as found in the tradition of Paul Ricoeur, Charles Taylor, Hans-Georg Gadamer and others (and versions of which can be found also in Daniel C. Dennett's 'multiple-drafts' conception of consciousness; Dennett 1990) in comparison with the phenomenological approach.

Broadly speaking, the phenomenological approach challenges narrowly objectivist, naturalistic, reductionist or eliminative accounts of selfhood and personhood currently predominant in contemporary philosophy and in the cognitive sciences. The phenomenological approach begins from the understanding of concrete human experiences and how subjects grasp themselves as meaningful intentional agents. In contrast, objectivist and naturalistic approaches (an exception is Lynne Rudder Baker's 'constitutionalism'; Baker 2013) tend not to appreciate the subject as a first-person meaning-intender who is living a life that has significance for him/her, interwoven with the lives of others who are co-intending collective and public meanings and establishing an intersubjective community of persons. Persons have at least some minimal sense of their life trajectory in *history*, a sense of the past and, at some level, a capacity also for a meaningful future, which matters to them.

For phenomenology, moreover, the essential embodiment of the self (in contrast to immaterialist conceptions) emphasizes human situatedness (in space and time), limitation and finitude, and restriction of perspective (occupying a particular standpoint). To be a self is to occupy a point of view that is necessarily limited and partial but which is also, necessarily, thereby aware of other possible perspectives and points of

view. According to the phenomenological perspective, the living, embodied being is, at the very least, sentient, feels, enjoys and suffers, and acts in such a way that he or she is constantly *making sense* of his or her life *from a first-person perspective* (Moran 2000). Living a conscious life as a person cannot be thought of as an impersonal process that can be studied in an entirely objective, 'third person' manner. Human conscious life involves an ineliminable first-person perspective.

One must begin from the primary datum of the first-person experience of living through a meaningful life which aims at wholeness or integrity, while being temporal, finite, suffering, emotional and so on (see Heidegger 1962). Furthermore, while persons ideally *aim* at rationality, they are not *explicitly* rational. There is a deep affective core to the person; persons are primarily feeling, emotional, acting and suffering beings, who share this felt world with other persons and whose environment supports and reflects this felt condition. The phenomenological tradition maintains that emotions can be framed and coloured by *moods* that are not just pervasive in the whole person but affect and filter the manner in which the person interacts with his or her surrounding world. It is not easy to articulate the phenomenological sense of the self as intentional, purposive and as meaning-constituting or disclosing but one useful description has been supplied by Robert Sokolowski (2008), who characterizes persons as 'agents of truth' and of disclosure. The self is a meaning-weaving agent whose comportment in an already meaningful world gives it the sense of being a discloser or manifester of that world.

1.4   The Mature Husserl's Concept of the Personal Self

One of the problems reading Husserl, Scheler and Stein on the phenomenology of personhood is that they employ a range of familiar terms (soul, the psychic, personhood, the spiritual ego), but in unfamiliar ways. Stein and Husserl, for instance, distinguish between what is 'psychic' and what is 'personal' in the strict sense. Certain personal attributes (e.g. readiness to make sacrifices), although perceivable in action by others, belong

to the spiritual core of the person and are sharply different from psychic feelings and emotions. For Scheler, all mind is personal and the idea of an impersonal mind is absurd (Scheler 1973: 389).

There is another complication in talking about a phenomenological account of the self, even in Husserl, leaving aside the extra complexity introduced by Heidegger's new terminology of Dasein with its Self-being (*Selbstsein*). Husserl initially rejected the Kantian transcendental conception of the self. In his *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 2001), he more or less took over from the Brentano of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874) a somewhat Humean conception of the self as merely a bundle or 'collection' of lived experiences and even reports that he cannot find anything like the kind of 'pure ego' or 'the ego of pure apperception' found in the Neo-Kantians. All he can find is 'the empirical ego and its empirical relations to its own experiences, or to such external objects as are receiving special attention at the moment, while much remains, whether "without" or "within", which has no such relation to an ego' (Husserl 2001 vol. 1: 92). Husserl rejected Paul Natorp's Neo-Kantian account of the ego as always subject and never object. For Natorp, the ego as such cannot be further described since all forms of description are objectifications of the ego. Husserl ends up claiming that we perceive the ego in our daily experience 'just as we perceive the external thing' (Husserl 2001, vol. 1: 93) but denies something like a pure ego. However, by 1913, Husserl famously reported that he had now found this elusive pure ego. In the 1913 revised second edition of the *Logical Investigations,* he is more appreciative of 'the pure ego' (*das reine Ich*) of the Neo-Kantians (adverting particularly to Natorp), which he had originally dismissed as an unnecessary postulate for the unification of consciousness (see 'The Pure Ego and Awareness' [*Das reine Ich und die Bewussheit*], Husserl 2001, vol. 1: 91n.). From 1913 onwards, Husserl comes to embrace the Neo-Kantian conception of the transcendental ego which he will characterize as the source of all 'meaning and being' (*Sinn und Sein*) in his *Cartesian Meditations* (Husserl 1967). Husserl is interested in the manner in which human subjects are not just isolated transcendental egos but also intersect with one another to create the cultural and historical lifeworld. Husserl is particularly interested in the manner in which being a self means *having a history*, which is a much richer concept than merely having continued extension over a period of time.

A very rich phenomenological concept of personhood is developed in Husserl's *Ideas* II (Husserl 1989), unpublished during his life, but edited by his then assistant Edith Stein. It is also taken up in Edith Stein's doctoral thesis *On the Problem of Empathy* (Stein 1989) and in her subsequent important and neglected study, *Contributions to the Philosophical Foundation of Psychology and the Human Sciences*, published in Husserl's own *Jahrbuch* in 1922, and recently translated as *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* (Stein 2000). Husserl, in particular, in his *Ideas* II (which was heavily edited by his then assistant Edith Stein), recognizes that humans are first and foremost engaged in a 'personalistic attitude' (*die personalistische Einstellung*) towards themselves and others. Husserl writes:

> [The personalistic attitude is] the attitude we are always in when we live with one another, talk to one another, shake hands with another in greeting, or are related to another in love and aversion, in disposition and action, in discourse and discussion. (Husserl 1989: 192)

The personalistic attitude is, for Husserl, actually prior to the more familiar 'natural attitude' (*die natürliche Einstellung*).

Phenomenology recognizes that one starts from a certain assumption of normality or optimality, conditions set by the 'lifeworld' (Husserl 1970). It is only by beginning with the optimal or 'normal' situations that we can move to understand situations that depart from the norm (see Merleau-Ponty 1962). Self-aware rational agency, the traditional paradigm, sets a very high standard achievable by some but not all persons, for instance, very young children, persons with dementia and so on. Personhood must also be accorded to selves that reach some *minimal* level of capacity for selfhood and functioning as investing their lives with significance for themselves.

Phenomenology recognizes that persons are in part *constituted through their emotions* and feelings and the manner in which they express themselves by acting meaningfully. The person is primarily a loving heart, as Scheler characterizes it. One's whole experiential world is presented and filtered through emotions and moods (Heidegger 1962). Indeed, human emotions (anxiety, shame, love) have been long explored