

A princely impostor ? : the Kumar of Bhawal and the secret history of Indian nationalism / Partha Chatterjee; New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2002 (115-137, 395-396 p.)

Chapter Eight

THE IDENTITY PUZZLE

WHAT constitutes the identity of a person? This is the sort of question that philosophers ponder. Indeed, this specific question has produced a large philosophical literature in the Western world at least since the seventeenth century, following the landmark effort by René Descartes to posit a duality between mind and body and to locate the self in consciousness, that is, in the faculty of knowing that is independent of the knower's bodily organs, including the brain. Western philosophers have since puzzled over numerous intricacies concerning the precise role of physical and mental properties in the constitution of the identity of a person. Most of these debates, especially the ones in recent Anglo-American academic philosophy, completely bewilder us ordinary mortals. But for our present purposes, it is necessary to get a sense of what the theoretical issues are in determining the identity of a person. The matter is not merely academic. During the entire course of the Bhawal sannyasi case through the lawcourts of Dhaka, Calcutta, and London, references would often be made by lawyers, judges, and witnesses to philosophers and philosophical treatises that address the question of personal identity. We need not struggle to keep up with the endless hairsplitting that is the philosopher's normal professional practice; we will be concerned with what philosophers might have to tell us, not with what they say to one another.

The recent locus classicus on the subject is Derek Parfit's *Reasons and Persons*. A renewed debate has been carried out by Anglo-American academic philosophers in the last fifteen years over the issues raised by Parfit concerning personal identity.¹ We will look at some of these recent debates in order to emphasize what is at stake today in our retelling of the story of the Bhawal sannyasi. But of course these were not philosophical discussions that Pannalal Basu, subjudge of the Dacca district court, could have known about in 1933. He would have known, from his academic training, the tradition of British philosophy from John Locke and David Hume to early twentieth-century philosophers such as J.M.E. McTaggart. We should, therefore, also take a look at this tradition.

WHAT IS IDENTITY?

What are the issues involved in determining the identity of a person? Let us begin with some preliminary distinctions.

When two things are identical, they must obey what is called Leibniz's law. This law says that if x is identical to y , then whatever is true of x must be true of y , and vice versa. Referring to our case, if the second kumar and the Bhawal sannyasi are identical, that is, if they are the same person, then if the second kumar was five feet five inches tall, the Bhawal sannyasi must also be five feet five inches tall.

This sort of identity is called numerical identity, where the identity of x and y means that they are one and the same thing. There can, however, be another kind of identity, where two things may be exactly similar without being one and the same thing. If I pick out two new tennis balls from a box, one ball could have exactly the same properties as the other, but they would still be different balls. This sort of identity is called qualitative identity, where x and y are exactly similar because they belong to the same type but they are not numerically identical. If the second kumar had an identical twin, for instance, who disappeared for a few years and returned as the Bhawal sannyasi, then despite having exactly the same features, the second kumar and the Bhawal sannyasi would still not be the same person. In the matter of the social and legal identity of a person what we usually look for is numerical identity and not mere qualitative identity.

In our examples above, we have, however, skirted around the crucial question of change over time. To introduce this dimension into the problem, we must make the further distinction between synchronic identity and diachronic identity. If x and y are synchronically identical, then they are numerically identical, that is, they are one and the same thing at a given time t . Thus, James Hamilton Lindsay and the collector of Dacca are synchronically identical in the year 1921. If x and y are diachronically identical, then the relation of numerical identity must hold between them over time. That is to say, they would be the same temporally enduring thing observed at different points of time. Thus, the boy Ramendra who played pranks with his teacher Wharton and the young man Ramendra who accompanied Lord Kitchener on his hunt were one and the same person at different stages of life.

We can now see where the difficulties would crop up in deciding on numerical identity over time. In a world where things change with time, how can we decide that in spite of observable qualitative changes, a thing is still the same? The problem has been posed for Western philosophers from the time of the Greeks. There is the famous example of the ship of Theseus, whereby different parts of a ship—made of wood in those days—are gradually repaired and replaced over time until one day every part has been replaced; nevertheless, it still remains the same ship. If we think of the human body, every cell in it is replaced over time, so that it may be true to say that no human adult has the same physical body with which he or she was born. But it does not follow that I-as-a-child and I-as-an-adult are not the same person. How can we find the proper criteria for determining the diachronic

identity of persons? Clearly, a lot will depend on how we choose to define the "person-ness" of persons.

Derek Parfit has listed the questions that have to be asked about the nature of persons and of personal identity over time.² These are: First, what is the nature of a person? Second, what is it that makes a person at two different times one and the same person? Third, what is necessarily involved in the continued existence of each person over time? Parfit also introduces a moral or value aspect to the discussion by adding a fourth question: What is in fact involved in the continued existence of each person over time? The answer to the third question would be only part of the answer to the fourth, since what is *necessarily* involved in the continued existence of a person need not exhaust what is *in fact* involved in it. Thus being happy, for instance, is not necessarily involved in our survival, but it may well be part of what is in fact involved. The introduction of the moral or value dimension also opens up the distinction between the objective aspects of identity, those that a person may possess because of his or her biological and social location, and the subjective aspects, those that he or she may value or identify with. This dimension is important for our discussion, since we will be deeply concerned with the social and legal issues of identity.

PHYSICAL CRITERIA OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

There are two sorts of criteria that are talked of in deciding questions about the diachronic identity of persons: physical criteria and psychological criteria.

The simplest physical criterion is drawn from static objects that continue to exist over time. Thus, the Jaidebpur Rajbari is the same house where the second kumar once lived, even though today it accommodates a variety of government offices of the Gazipur district of Bangladesh. The criterion here is the physical continuity of an object in space and time. In the case of some objects, there can be physical continuity despite considerable physical changes. A butterfly, for instance, can be said to have a continued physical existence from an egg to a caterpillar to a chrysalis to a butterfly: in this case, the distinct physical forms are seen as stages in the continuous life of a single organism.

It is important to clarify what is involved in applying Leibniz's law to physical criteria of diachronic identity. While researching the story of the Bhawal sannyasi, I recently read old issues of the weekly *Dhākā prakāś* preserved in the library of the University of Dhaka. The journal now exists in bound annual volumes, the newsprint is yellow, many pages are torn, and the margins are frayed. I had to turn the pages with great caution because the paper almost crumbled to dust under my fingers. Six or seven decades ago, the same issues of the journal must have had crisp white pages, and they were not bound in annual volumes. How can I say that what I was reading

was an issue of *Dhākā prakāś* from 1934? Surely, applying Leibniz's law, it is not correct to say that everything that was true of the issue of the journal in 1934 is true of it in 1999. If we think it through, however, we will realize that this would be a misapplication of Leibniz's law. If x has the property of being white and crisp at time t_1 and y is yellow and crumbling at time t_2 , then it could still be the case that x is identical to y . This is because Leibniz's law only requires that for x and y to be identical, if x is white and crisp at t_1 , then y must also be white and crisp at t_1 , not at t_2 . In other words, the requirement here is that of synchronic identity. To apply it to diachronic identity, we must decide whether it is possible for the crisp white pages of x in 1934 to become yellow and crumbling in 1999, that is, at a later stage in the life of the same x . If I am satisfied that there is physical continuity of the copy of *Dhākā prakāś* over space and time from the hands of an avid reader of the hearings of the Bhawal sannyasi case in 1934 to the almirah of the old periodicals collection of the University of Dhaka library in 1999, then I accept that what I have read in 1999 is diachronically identical to the journal that was published in 1934.

Can the same thing be said of the copy I have of a pamphlet propagating the sannyasi's story? The pamphlet was printed at Gendaria Press in Dhaka in 1921. I first read it in 1995 in a bound volume of "vernacular tracts" in the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library in London. The copy now lying in front of me is a print taken from a microfilm of the original pamphlet. I am reasonably certain that the copy that I saw in London in 1995 was physically continuous with what was printed in Dhaka in 1921. In any case, the copy was in much better shape than the volumes of *Dhākā prakāś* at the university library in Dhaka, undoubtedly because the number of people who have handled such material in London in the past six or seven decades is only a small fraction of the number in Dhaka. But the print taken from the microfilm is clearly not physically continuous with the original pamphlet. No question of numerical identity can arise here, even though we might be able to argue for some measure of qualitative identity.

Can there be diachronic identity if there are gaps in the physical continuity of an object? I still possess a radio that works on tubes, not transistors. We have had it in the house for about fifty years. It has had to be repaired a few times, and I distinctly remember having seen it once at the mechanic's shop completely taken apart; it must have been in that state for at least a week. Does the radio have a history of continued physical existence over the last fifty years? Some philosophers would say, no, since it was not a radio at every point in its spatio-temporal path. Others would say, yes, since even during the week when the radio was taken apart, each of its separate parts continued to have uninterrupted physical existence. Still others would say, it doesn't matter if the radio was taken apart and put back to-

gether, because even when it was disassembled, it continued to exist as a radio.

Applied to persons, the physical criterion of identity is physical continuity over time of the same body and brain (brain here being taken as a physical entity). "Same" body and brain cannot, of course, mean exact similarity at two points of time, for that would be to ignore normal and natural processes of change. What is necessary is not the continued existence of the whole body, or even of the whole brain. It is possible to think of a person continuing to exist even after losing several parts of his or her body. What is minimally required is the survival of enough of the brain to be the brain of a living person. This is what physical survival *necessarily* involves; the continued existence of other parts of the body is strictly not necessary. The physical criterion lays down, then, that x at t_1 is the same person as y at t_2 if and only if enough of x 's brain survives at t_2 , and has the capacity to support a full human consciousness, and is now y 's brain; and if no other person z exists at t_2 who also has enough of x 's brain to support a full human consciousness.³

We should emphasize that philosophers who accept the physical criterion of personal identity actually mean by it the continued existence of the brain as a physical entity. They do not regard other parts of the human body as equally significant, because those could change or even cease to exist without necessarily disturbing the continued existence of the person. In the physical sense, then, the essential attribute of personhood lies in the brain.

It is also necessary for us to note that the way in which the physical criterion has been defined in the philosophical discussion makes it very difficult to think of external checks to verify whether or not the criterion is being met in a particular case. This is because the entire debate over personal identity has taken place around the question of "the self." As we will see below, the typical form of posing the problem has been: "If my brain is transported or transformed in such and such a way, then what would be the implication for me as a person?" This does not, however, give us a practical criterion for deciding a problem such as that of the Bhawal sannyasi. How could anyone verify if a substantial part of the second kumar's brain survived in the sannyasi? It is not difficult to see why, when the question of physical resemblance between the kumar and the sannyasi came up in court, it was not the physical brain but various physical features and marks on the body that were offered as criteria. Each of these was hotly debated, because the question could always be asked as to whether a particular physical feature might not change over time without destroying the continued physical existence of the person. In a fundamental sense, then, the philosophers are right: apart from the survival of enough of the brain, the continuity or otherwise of other parts of the body does not give us a necessary physical criterion of personal identity. Nevertheless, it is not hard to see why the

common sense of ordinary people would seek such resemblances in order to decide whether or not the sannyasi was really the second kumar.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CRITERIA OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

We have observed before that a key question that comes up in the application of Leibniz's law to the diachronic identity of persons, that is, their identity over time, is what we take to be the essential nature of persons. In other words, we have to provide some answer to the question, "What constitutes the person-ness of persons?" A large number of answers that have been suggested by philosophers concerns the mental or psychological properties of human beings. Clearly, there is a strong tendency here to seek the essence of the human person in his or her rational, moral, and affective faculties, which are seen as being integral parts of his or her mental or psychological attributes.

The classic formulation of the mental or psychological criterion of personal identity in modern Western philosophy was made by John Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690).

[T]o find wherein personal identity consists, we must consider what person stands for; which, I think, is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and, as it seems to me, essential to it. . . . For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things; in this alone consists personal identity, i.e. the sameness of a rational being; and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now it was then; and it is by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done.⁴

Locke's criterion of personal identity is, therefore, the possession of an uninterrupted flow of self-conscious awareness, that is to say, memory. But Locke makes a distinction here between "person," which refers to the bearer of a rational and reflective consciousness, and "man," which is a biological entity. The criterion for determining the identity of a person is not necessarily the same as that for determining the identity of a man. He illustrates this with one of his most-quoted examples, which is in some ways a precursor to the "thought experiments" of later philosophers writing on the subject.

[S]hould the soul of a prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the prince's past life, enter and inform the body of a cobbler, as soon as deserted by his own soul, every one sees he would be the same person with the prince, accountable

only for the prince's actions; but who would say it was the same man? . . . I know that, in the ordinary way of speaking, the same person, and the same man, stand for one and the same thing. . . . But yet when we will inquire what makes the same spirit, man, or person, we must fix the ideas of spirit, man, or person in our minds; and having resolved with ourselves what we mean by them, it will not be hard to determine in either of them, or the like, when it is the same, and when not.⁵

It should be clarified that in locating the essence of personal identity in the uninterrupted existence of self-conscious awareness, Locke is not endorsing the Cartesian idea that persons are essentially disembodied souls. In fact, Locke specifically contradicts the Cartesian formulation, without explicitly denying—perhaps to ensure the safety of his own bodily life—the immortality of souls. Using another oft-quoted example, he says that if the mayor of Queensborough happens to have what was once the soul of Socrates, but has no memory of being Socrates and of having his experiences, then, soul or no soul, the mayor is not the same person as Socrates. This is because we have no way of attaining any knowledge of the soul; it is beyond our consciousness and cannot constitute the essence of rational and thinking persons. Unlike Descartes, therefore, Locke is not claiming that human consciousness or memory resides in some indestructible thinking substance that makes up the soul. Whereas Descartes would say that memory could only discover the identity of a person that is constituted by the soul, Locke is saying that consciousness or memory is constitutive of personal identity. If there is no memory, there is no identity.

Locke's theory gives us a simple and verifiable criterion to decide questions of identity. It is easy to show that, in this simple form, it is not a very reliable criterion, however. What does it mean to say that for x at t_1 to be the same person as y at t_2 , y must have the memory of having the experiences of x at t_1 ? Surely, if I am asked to remember my experiences on a certain date some twenty-five years ago, it is very likely that I will not remember a single thing. Even if I were asked about something more recent, such as which time of the day I wrote a particular paragraph a few pages earlier in this book, I might still be unable to remember. By Locke's criterion, I would have to concede that I am no longer the same person that I was twenty-five years ago, or even last week!

When we say, following Locke, that to be the same person one must have the memory of one's past experiences, we cannot mean all of one's past experiences. That would be to insist that one cannot forget anything. The difficulty is to decide how much can be forgotten without losing one's identity. If the Bhawal sannyasi claimed that because of the passage of years he had forgotten everything of the experiences of his life as the second kumar, would that be credible? Supposing we were to relax the requirement and say that he ought to remember at least some of those experiences, how

much would be enough to establish identity? If his memory of the particular events that he did remember were to be probed by cross-examination, and if he claimed that his memory was confused or uncertain, would that destroy the case for identity?

The trouble is that Locke's criterion is not supple enough to tackle the complexity of the psychological processes of memory. Recent philosophers have attempted to improve on Locke's effort. Parfit has proposed a concept of psychological connectedness that is more complex than the simple notion of the memory of past experience. I may be able to remember today some of the experiences that I had twenty-five years ago. These would be direct memory connections that would meet Locke's criterion. But even if I did not have any such direct memories, there could still be continuity of memory over these twenty-five years. This would be the case if there was an overlapping chain of direct memory connections. Thus, from one day to the next, most people remember some of their experiences on the previous day. Between a time-point t_1 and, let us say, a time-point t_{100} , a person at t_{100} may forget everything that he experienced at t_1 . But he would have remembered many of those experiences of t_1 at t_2 (let us say, the following day); many of his experiences of t_2 , he would have remembered at t_3 ; and so on to t_{100} . So there could be an overlapping chain of memories from t_1 to t_{100} . Between one time-point and the next, say one day and the next, there could be many direct connections or very few. Parfit suggests that if at least half the number of direct connections that hold over every day in the lives of most actual persons are preserved until at least the next day, there is strong connectedness. He then defines psychological continuity as the holding of overlapping chains of strong connectedness. The psychological criterion of personal identity can then be stated as follows: x at t_1 is the same person as y at t_2 if and only if x is psychologically continuous with y , and with no other person z at t_2 .

It is interesting to note that in Parfit's scheme, strong connectedness itself cannot be the criterion of identity. The person y today may be strongly connected to herself yesterday, when she was strongly connected to herself the day before, and so on. But this does not mean that she is strongly connected to herself twenty-five years ago. Does this mean that y today is a different person from y twenty-five years ago? To draw that conclusion would be to repeat the error involved in Locke's simple criterion. Parfit avoids the error by making psychological continuity rather than connectedness the criterion of personal identity.

How is psychological continuity maintained? Taken in the narrow sense, psychological continuity can only have a normal cause. Thus, if I seem to remember having an experience only after it was suggested to me that I had that experience, then I did not actually remember it in the normal way. That is to say, my apparent memory is not causally dependent on my past experience but rather on the suggestion that I had that experience. In the nar-

row interpretation, there is no psychological continuity here. The same goes for changes in character. If the Bhawal sannyasi displays a radically different character from the second kumar, then it would have to be shown that this was the normal consequence of having led a radically different life for twelve years; otherwise, there would be no psychological continuity. Even if someone were to display extraordinary lapses of memory about one's past experiences, this could be because of the normal consequences of a condition such as amnesia. In that case, even the absence of memory may be regarded as not threatening psychological continuity, and hence personal identity, as maintained by normal causes. As we will see later, amnesia was a major point at issue in the Bhawal sannyasi case.

If we accept the narrow interpretation of psychological continuity, the psychological criterion coincides in most cases with the physical criterion. The normal causes of psychological continuity essentially imply the continued physical existence of the brain. Even when a person is suffering from amnesia, it is a consequence of the malfunctioning, caused by injury or disease (neurosis) or decay, of his brain. We could say then that a test of psychological continuity might serve just as well as an indicator of physical continuity. Questions of memory and character would figure very prominently in the hearings and arguments of the Bhawal case.

In the wider interpretations of psychological continuity, not only normal causes but any reliable cause, or indeed any cause, is considered acceptable for maintaining psychological continuity, and hence for establishing personal identity. The examples philosophers use to pose the choice between the narrow and the wide interpretations usually involve "thought experiments" where drastic confusions arise in matching brains with bodies. We will look at some of these cases presently. But the implication of the choice is that in the wider interpretation, even if psychological continuity lacks a normal cause, any other cause, so long as it can be established as a cause, would be considered just as good. Thus, if the Bhawal sannyasi's loss of memory of large parts of his alleged life as the second kumar does not appear to have a normal cause, then any other cause, such as a shock with unknown consequences or the mysterious medicines given to him by the Naga sadhus who rescued him, would be considered acceptable for establishing psychological continuity. Clearly, it would make a lot of difference which interpretation of the psychological criterion is accepted. The choice, as we will now see, hinges on certain ethical or value considerations surrounding the issue of personal identity.

DOES IDENTITY MATTER?

To get a flavor of how the moral-philosophical problems of identity are posed and analyzed, let us consider a famous "thought experiment" described by

Bernard Williams.⁶ Suppose two persons *A* and *B* undergo an experiment in which their entire memories, character traits, and other mental characteristics are recorded and then switched. All of the mental properties of *A*'s brain are now realized in *B*'s brain, and vice versa. What was once *A*'s body now has a brain with *B*'s memories and characteristics; what was once *B*'s body now has a brain with *A*'s memories and characteristics. Let us call the first the *A*-body person and the second the *B*-body person. The question is: who should we consider the same temporally continuous person with *A*—the *A*-body person or the *B*-body person?

To analyze the question, Williams adds a twist to the experiment. Let us also suppose, he says, that before the operation, *A* and *B* are told that one of the postoperation persons would be paid a large sum of money and the other tortured, and that *A* and *B* could choose which person they would like to be rewarded and which tortured. It is plausible to argue that since *A* and *B* know that their minds and bodies will be swapped, *A* would choose that the *B*-body person be rewarded and the *A*-body person tortured, and *B* would choose the opposite. Now suppose the experimenter goes ahead with the operations and then rewards the *A*-body person and tortures the *B*-body person. The *B*-body person, now having the memories of *A*, will then justifiably complain that his choice was not respected, while the *A*-body person, having the memories of *B*, will thank the experimenter for having acted according to his wishes. We can then conclude that the *B*-body person is the same person as *A* and the *A*-body person the same person as *B*.

Now consider another thought experiment: I am captured by a mad neuroscientist and told that my body would be subjected to torture, but before that my mind would be erased of all my memories and character traits and replaced by the memories and traits of another person. How would I feel? Would I not be afraid of being tortured? But why should I, since the person who will be tortured would have somebody else's mind? That would probably actually increase my anxiety, because not only would I be afraid of being tortured but would also worry about the strange things that will be done to my mind. Most crucially, during all of these traumatic moments before the operation, I would remain convinced that everything that would happen both during and after the operation would happen to *me*.

This produces an antinomy. The second experiment is actually only an alternative description of the first experiment, the difference being that instead of a neutral third-person account, it is narrated in the first person. But whereas the first experiment convinced us that the preoperation *A* and the postoperation *A*-body person were different persons, the second experiment seems to persuade us that, operation or no operation, it is still *me* that will undergo the trauma of torture.

A great deal has been written about the dilemma posed by Williams, and many suggestions have been made to resolve it.⁷ We need not spend time

here going into the mind-boggling complexities of this literature, which seems to reserve a special place for the mad neuroscientist and his endless attempts to duplicate, split, or otherwise manipulate brains and swap their locations in different bodies. For our purposes, it will be sufficient to note, first, that on the moral implications of the question of personal identity, there are two broad approaches called the reductionist and the nonreductionist; and second, that cutting through that debate, there is Derek Parfit's radical suggestion that what really matters is *not* personal identity but psychological continuity with *any* kind of cause.

The reductionists basically uphold some version of the physical and/or psychological criteria we have described before. They maintain, in other words, that personal identity involves the continued physical existence of enough of the brain and/or psychological continuity with the right kind of cause. Parfit, as we have already noted, prefers to modify this position by holding that any cause is sufficient. In contrast, nonreductionists do not accept that personal identity can be reduced to certain facts about physical or psychological continuity. They insist that the identity of a person must involve a further fact. This could be a separate entity from his or her brain and body, such as a Cartesian spiritual substance, for instance, or a separate physical entity not yet recognized by science, or at the very least, something beyond the sum total of elements comprising the body and brain of the person.

Parfit attempts to show that no matter how carefully we define physical and psychological continuity, it is always possible to imagine situations in which personal identity will be indeterminate and undecidable according to the reductionist criteria. He concludes from this that what matters is not personal identity but continuity of a person in some form, that is, the person's survival. Thus, if there was some technology that could record the exact state of all of the cells of my body and brain and reproduce those cells in an exact duplicate of me, that duplicate would be exactly like me both physically and psychologically, with an exactly similar body and with the same memories and personality traits. Now, if it was suggested to me that the original "I" be destroyed and the duplicate survive, would I mind? Parfit argues that nothing would be lost if that was to happen. Whether or not *I* survive in my original body, my physical and psychological continuity would be maintained just as well in my duplicate.

Though avidly discussed, Parfit's suggestion has not been widely approved. To many, it has seemed too radical a proposal that goes against the grain of conventional assumptions. Once again, if we shift the perspective from a first-person account to a third-person account, the moral choices appear to become very different. Peter Unger asks us to imagine how he would feel if it was suggested to him that his wife Susan be replaced by an exact duplicate. Unger says that like most other people, he would refuse to

accept any such proposal. "Evidently, I do not just care about the very many highly specific qualities my wife has. . . . Quite beyond any of that, I care about the one particular person who is my wife; I care about Susan and, as well, I care about the continuance of my particular relationship with her."⁸ Unger, therefore, is insisting that what matters in survival is not just physical and psychological continuity in some manner or form but the identity of the particular individual that we value and identify with. It is not true that in our actual and ordinary preferences, we are indifferent between having a relationship with a particular person and his or her exact duplicate.

We have now come to a crucial point in our discussion of the moral and philosophical issues surrounding the Bhawal sannyasi case. The dominant tendency in the legal approach to the question of identity, as we have already noted, is the narrow one that insists on physical and psychological continuity based on normal causes that can be demonstrated and verified by scientific methods. Could there also be a Parfit-like view that places less emphasis on the demonstration of identity and treats more seriously the question of survival? Recall that the question was actually posed after the decision of the Calcutta High Court on the appeal in the defamation suit. Suren Mukherjee, a prominent lawyer in the sannyasi's camp, had declared that it did not matter if the court decided that the sannyasi's story had not been borne out by sufficient scientific evidence. Most of the kumar's relatives and all of the prominent people as well as the peasants of Bhawal had accepted the sannyasi as the second kumar. If we put this in the philosophical terminology we have introduced in this chapter, we could say that the sannyasi had succeeded to most of the social relationships of the second kumar, and that the physical and psychological continuity of the kumar had been accomplished, whatever the cause. In other words, the kumar had survived in the sannyasi.

There could, of course, also be an Unger-type objection to this claim, an objection that would come quite close to a nonreductionist argument. With a slight twist of the philosophical imagination, we could think of Bibhabati, the second rani, as putting forward exactly this objection. What did it matter to her if all of Bhawal thought that the second kumar had survived in the sannyasi? She only valued the particular relationship that she had accepted with the particular person who was her husband. An exact duplicate, to continue with our philosophical usage, was simply not good enough.

What about the government? This question demands a more complicated answer. The British officials, both in the administration and in the judiciary, would certainly have insisted on a clear demonstration of physical and psychological continuity under normal causes verified by scientific methods. They would have been appalled by the suggestion that the survival of the person by "any" cause was sufficient. That, to them, would have meant granting a token of approval to the native fondness for miracles. But

an important change was taking place in the very composition of the administration and the judiciary because of the rapid induction of Indian officers and judges in the 1920s and 1930s. These were men who were not only well trained in British administrative and legal doctrines and practices but also deeply imbued with the ideas of Western modernity that they had encountered in their school and university education. But they had also grown up with the rising tide of nationalism. Would that have any effect on what they would regard as the right criteria and the acceptable evidence of identity? Let us make a note of this question; we will answer it later.

Before we move on, we should also note that in the Anglo-American philosophical literature on personal identity, Parfit is regarded as a radical. This is because by undermining the importance given to the issue of identity, he launches into a trenchant critique of the utilitarian assumptions of individual self-interest on which most of English-language moral philosophy rests. To the charge that his claim is counterintuitive and contrary to conventional usage, Parfit would reply that that is because conventional usage is based on false and irrational beliefs. "The truth is very different from what we are inclined to believe," he declares.⁹ The attempt to assert a nonreductionist position against Parfit, such as that by Unger, thus becomes an avowedly conservative project, namely, to describe and defend the actual values and beliefs of ordinary people regarding identity and survival.

These "actual" values and beliefs of "ordinary" people are, of course, deeply bound to particular cultural conditions. This is something that is entirely unrecognized in the Anglo-American philosophical literature, tied as it is to a universalist style of argumentation, even when it seeks to do a phenomenology of everyday life. When it is asserted that ordinary intuition places an irreducible value on personal identity and on particular relationships with particular persons (in the overwhelming number of cases, the examples given are those of relations within the immediate nuclear family), it is easily forgotten that in other cultures, everyday common sense might well attribute very different values to those identities and relationships. It is not a coincidence that Parfit's radically antiutilitarian ideas are explicitly influenced by Buddhist doctrines of selfhood, from which, however, he draws entirely universalist conclusions.

I believe that my claims apply to all people, at all times. It would be disturbing to discover that they are merely part of one line of thought, in the culture of Modern Europe and America.

Fortunately, this is not true. I claim that, when we ask what persons are, and how they continue to exist, the fundamental question is a choice between two views. On one view, we are separately existing entities, distinct from our brain and bodies and our experiences, and entities whose existence must be all-or-nothing. The other view is the Reductionist View. And I claim that, of these,

the second view is true. . . . *Buddha would have agreed.* The Reductionist View is not merely part of one cultural tradition. It may be, as I have claimed, the true view about all people at all times.¹⁰

It is clear that even radicals within the Anglo-American tradition of philosophy would steadfastly resist the idea of a cultural history of truth.

NARRATIVE IDENTITY: SAMENESS AND SELFHOOD

The French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, who comes from the European phenomenological and hermeneutic tradition, has recently attempted to transcend the impasse posed by the reductionist and nonreductionist approaches to the question of identity by introducing the concept of narrative identity.¹¹ Ricoeur focuses on two very different senses of the term identity. The first is identity as sameness, which is derived from the Latin *idem*. Both numerical and qualitative identity refer to this sense of the term. In fact, the entire reductionist approach in all its variants may be seen as a way to determine personal identity in the sense of sameness. But there is another sense in which the word identity is used in the European languages. This is the sense of selfhood, deriving from the Latin *ipse*. The puzzles and paradoxes posed in the Anglo-American analytical literature from the time of Locke and Hume are, says Ricoeur, the result of conflating one sense of identity with the other. When nonreductionists talk of identity that cannot be reduced to the body and brain, they mean selfhood in a sense that is not just sameness. The two senses must be distinguished if one wishes to avoid the confusing antinomies that come up so frequently in the literature. Yet, although sameness and selfhood must be distinguished, they clearly occur in tandem, closely connected to each other. How are we to distinguish them and still hold on to the idea that they are two senses of the notion of personal identity?

Ricoeur suggests that sameness and selfhood come together in narrative. The criteria of sameness over time have to be flexible enough, as we have seen, to accommodate changes that do not destroy the essential physical or psychological continuity of a person. This means that there is operating here an idea of structure, something that endures over time, while changes are registered and explained in terms of events. This is precisely what narratives do—describe the continuity of structures through a sequence of events. In the case of personal identity, the relevant narrative forms are life history and fiction, in both of which the two senses of identity—sameness and selfhood—come together in the idea of character. Character consists of “the set of distinctive marks which permit the reidentification of a human individual as being the same.”¹² As is clear from narrative strategies, this

reidentification depends not only on numerical and qualitative identity but also on an understanding of uninterrupted continuity and permanence in time. When a character is established, “the sameness of the person is designated emblematically.” That is to say, it “designates the set of lasting dispositions by which a person is recognized. In this way character is able to constitute the limit point where the problematic of *ipse* becomes indiscernible from that of *idem*, and where one is inclined not to distinguish them from one another.”¹³

The concept of character embedded in narrative gives stability to personal identity. A character inevitably has a history in which it acquires new traits and dispositions, often brought about through a sequence of events that induces the character to innovate. These innovations accumulate and leave a sediment in the character, which thus acquires a permanence by which it can be reidentified despite changes brought about by events. It is here that sameness and selfhood overlap. When one thinks one knows the set of permanent traits that belong to a character, one can reidentify it as the *same* person and, from the same evidence, also argue that those traits constitute a further fact, designating the *self*, not reducible to the body and brain of the person.

To locate the problem of identity in narrative is a crucial move, because it shifts the focus from experience and memory to accounts of events. The issues of physical and psychological continuity would of course remain, but now the narrative of events in the history of our real or fictional character would seek to *explain* changes in character as caused by the impact of those events. Not only that, Ricoeur also points out that no narrative is morally neutral. Even as it describes the actions of its characters, a story invites the reader or listener to *judge* those actions. The functions of description, persuasion, and prescription are fused together in narrative.

It is not difficult to see why the move to narrative identity becomes relevant for us in dealing with the material of the Bhawal sannyasi case. We have pointed out the difficulty in applying the physical or psychological criteria of identity to the case of the sannyasi. How on earth could anyone verify if enough of the second kumar’s brain survived in the sannyasi for him to have remembered over every day between 1909 and 1933 at least half the number of things that most people normally remember over each day? Inevitably, then, the procedure would end up in comparing physical features, identifying bodily marks, matching character traits, and setting tests of memory to serve as indices of physical and psychological continuity. Apparent discrepancies would be explained precisely by describing a narrative of events that would causally link the changes in physical or psychological character to those events. Those proclaiming the truth of the sannyasi’s story would narrate the events in such a way as to preserve the integrity of the character of the second kumar, asserting its continued existence into his

life as a sannyasi and then as the plaintiff, despite all the changes brought about by his eventful life. Those denying the truth of that story would attempt to show that the changes were too drastic to be accommodated within the life history of the same character, that the proffered explanations stretched the narrative beyond the limits of the credible.

What we can expect then are rival narratives. They will differ not because they will be different descriptions of the same events. Rather, by offering different causal connections between events and physical or psychological change, and by asserting different constructions of the selfhood of the character, these rival narratives would present very different emplotments of events over time. Not only that, they could also appeal to different criteria of what is plausible or credible in a narrative. None of these can be assumed.

Despite Ricoeur's attempt to bring together the reductionist and nonreductionist claims within a dialectical conception of the narrative, the puzzles posed by the philosophical literature on identity are not by any means removed. Ricoeur is able to attribute a certain stability to the concept of the character, evolving through time by a cumulation of sedimented change that qualifies and enriches it without destroying its permanent structure, largely because he assumes the stability of the position of the narrator who "knows" the story. To a certain extent, this results from Ricoeur's concern with fictional narrative, both literary fiction and science fiction, as providing an important corpus of "thought experiment" accounts that throw light on the problems of determining personal identity. But what about situations in which the narrator does not have control over his narrative? Think of our situation with the story of the Bhawal sannyasi. Who is our character? Do we even have a name for him? Ever since his return to Jaidebpur in 1921 and his subsequent claim to the personhood of the second kumar, we have had to narrate his story under the sign of a question mark. This is because we have chosen to respect the conventions of historical narrative and not arrogate to ourselves a control over the destiny of our characters that is not warranted by the evidence before us. How can we speak persuasively of the continuity of the kumar-sannyasi character when we, as historians of his life, cannot avoid confronting the undecidability of his identity?

We can also see that despite the facility afforded by the narrative conception of identity, the challenge posed by Parfit's radical suggestion—personal identity is not what matters—cannot be easily answered. Even after Ricoeur's valiant attempt to integrate a nonreductionist view of the self with the reductionist emphasis on sameness, he concedes that in some of the limiting cases described in literary accounts, identity does become undecidable. Should we not say then that Parfit is right? Ricoeur resists this move. But he does accept that the moral foundation of selfhood in the "ownership" by a person over his or her memories, actions, and feelings is flawed. "In a philosophy of selfhood like my own, one must be able to say that own-

ership is not what matters. What is suggested by the limiting cases produced by the narrative imagination is a dialectic of ownership and dispossession, of care and carefreeness, a self-affirmation and self-effacement. Thus the imagined nothingness of the self becomes the existential 'crisis' of the self."¹⁴

Does this help us in our narrative predicament? Can we speak about the problems of determining the identity of the sannyasi as an existential crisis of the self? To begin with, direct accounts of the sannyasi explicating the inner workings of his self are miniscule. The overwhelming bulk of the sannyasi's story is in the form of narratives constructed by others—relatives, friends, associates, supporters, witnesses, and lawyers. Given what is available to us as evidence, we have to admit that a speculative exercise on the existential crisis of the self of the kumar-sannyasi is not the most interesting historical task before us. We must not, however, forget that the question of self-regarding and other-regarding criteria of identity has been already introduced into our case. One plank of the sannyasi's story was the claim that he had been recognized and accepted as the second kumar by his relatives, his friends and acquaintances, and by the tenants of his estate. The second kumar, as he was regarded by others, had survived in the sannyasi. So why bother any more about identity? Of course, it was objected that his wife, the second rani, had not recognized him and had refused to accept his story. But this, the sannyasi's supporters said, was because of her narrow self-interest. She was refusing to accept what everyone else had recognized because it was in her interest to maintain the legal status quo.

Can we accept this? Is it fair to say that whereas the sannyasi's story put forward a plausible case for going beyond the limits of individual interest to recognize the collective wisdom of a larger community of people who, so to say, constituted the site for locating the social persona of the kumar, the rani was bent on obstructing this course because of her narrow self-interest? Did she not constitute a crucial part of the "others" of the kumar? Should we not recognize that it is possible for a collective consensus to be oppressive and unjust for some? What are we to do when the collective body of "others" is marked by radical conflict? It is not a situation that integrative theories such as Ricoeur's can handle very well. As for us, preparing to unfold the story of the trial and its sensational conclusion, we have to accept for the time being the fact that the problems posed by the case of the Bhawal sannyasi remain deeply puzzling.

IDENTITY AND RECOGNITION: INDIGENOUS NOTIONS?

There is one more aspect of this philosophical matter that we should consider, because it will have a bearing on some of the legal debates that arise

later in our story. We have so far spoken only of the modern Western philosophical discussion on identity. This was justified, since that is the ground on which the principles and procedures of British Indian law were founded. But is there a different philosophical tradition in India that treats these questions differently? Could these ideas have molded, through language and cultural practices, the actions and testimonies of people involved in the Bhawal sannyasi affair? We should say immediately that unlike many European philosophers and jurists, Indian philosophical authority was almost never cited in the trial we are about to describe. Nevertheless, the question of culturally embedded assumptions, transmitted through language, ritual, and social practices, does remain relevant. They did become subjects of controversy in the legal battles over the sannyasi.

It will be useful to make two general points about Indian philosophical discussions on identity and recognition. First, although a great deal of Indological scholarship since the nineteenth century, both in the West and in India, has focussed on the *ātman* of the Upanishads as “the Indian notion of the self,” this is by no means the whole story. The Upanishadic *ātman* is spirit or consciousness for which the world is object. It is universal, disinterested; its knowledge is objective, valid for everyone. To say “my *ātman*” or “your *ātman*” in the same way that one says “my self” or “your self” would, in fact, be meaningless. This is not a notion of selfhood that would yield, for instance, the narrative identity of a character as described by Ricoeur. But although the concept of *ātman* as subject is certainly a very prominent idea in Indian philosophical thought, it is not true to say that the concept of person as a concrete, bodily entity that calls itself “I” does not exist. The person, as distinct from the *ātman*, is a *kartā* (agent) and a *bhoktā* (enjoyer). He or she relates to objects in the world not as objects of knowledge but as objects of affect or desire. Objects are attractive or repulsive, to be acquired or avoided. The person lives in a mundane world of interests; his or her knowledge of this world both determines and is determined by the life of interest. Such knowledge produces desire (*icchā*), which in turn leads to appropriate action (*pravṛtti*), which, if successful, gives pleasure, and if not, pain. This mundane, empirical person is what branches of knowledge such as law, medicine, or social ethics have to deal with.

This concept of the person, when it appears as a philosophical idea, is, as J. N. Mohanty notes, a “weak concept.”¹⁵ That is to say, it does not give us, like the nonreductionist view of identity, an irreducible and unanalysable unity that we call *the* person. On the contrary, the person as a legal or social agent is reducible to the psychophysical body that acts and enjoys. This is a complex of bodily senses, ego, and intellect that, obviously, is not quite the same as Parfit’s physical continuity of the brain (not even in the case of the Buddhist philosophers) but nevertheless implies a kind of reductionist view of the person. But the Indian philosopher would also say that this per-

son—the legal or social agent—who is nothing other than the psychophysical body, is not self-conscious, for this empirical person could act without knowing it, unselfconsciously. Self-consciousness comes only when the psychophysical body is united with the objective consciousness called *ātman*.

Thus, although there is definitely a concept of the concrete person that acts in the empirical world and is reducible to a physical-psychological entity, it occupies an inferior position in the hierarchy of Indian ideas of selfhood. Ideas of the knowing subject with objective and universal consciousness have much greater philosophical, and one might say, cultural, value. Contemporary social historians of India might argue that this hierarchy of ideas of selfhood probably reflects the cultural dominance of Brahminical values in Indian intellectual life.¹⁶

Second, coming to the problem of recognition, it is necessary to note that no school of Indian philosophy recognizes memory (*smṛti*) as a source of true cognition (*pramāṇa*).¹⁷ There are many reasons given for this. For instance, it is said that whereas perception makes its object known without reducing it to other causes, memory can only reveal its object by awakening traces (*samskāra*) of past experience. This always leaves room for doubt (*samśaya*). Other philosophers say that memory cannot yield knowledge of any kind, because the past experience that is its object is no longer there—it does not exist. If we leave aside these extreme views, it remains a fact that even those schools that grant some role to memory consider it an imperfect and inferior mode of knowledge.

To consider a problem that is directly relevant for us, let us look at the logical treatment by the Nyāya philosophers of *pratyabhijñā* or recognition. Recognition, they say, is different from memory. Memory is a revival of a past experience and takes the form of a representation of ideas and images in the same form and order in which they were experienced in the past. Recognition, on the other hand, is a qualified perception that is brought about by the direct cognition (*anubhava*) of an object but also involves an element of representation in the form of traces of past experience (*samskāra*). Recognition, therefore, unlike memory itself, could yield some sort of qualified true cognition.

Let us first examine memory. The reason why memory awakens a past experience is because latent impressions or traces of that experience are retained in the soul (*ātmā*). (It is significant that the place where impressions are retained is the soul, which most schools of philosophy accept as indestructible; this means that impressions may be transmitted from one biological life to another, which allows some people to remember some experiences from a past life.) There are many specific causes that might revive the impression of an original past cognition (*pūrbānubhava*), such as, for instance, association, repetition, similarity, *lakṣaṇa* or characteristic mark, and so on. But memory can be valid (*yathārtha*) as well as invalid (*ayathārtha*).

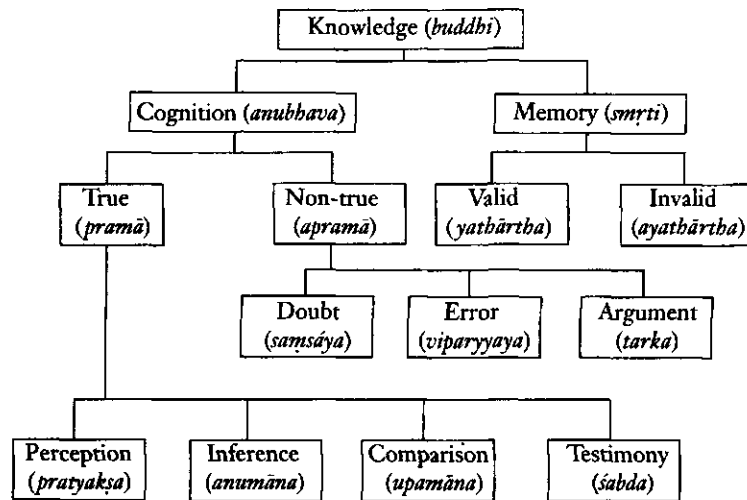


FIGURE 6. The Nyāya classification of knowledge

The validity depends on whether the original cognitions were true. If so, the memory is in accord with the real nature of the objects remembered and so is valid; if not, it is not in accord with the objects remembered and so is invalid. (The question here is not whether we have remembered correctly but whether the memory is that of an original true cognition.) Thus, I may remember having met someone in my childhood who spoke to me in Chinese, but in actual fact she was only speaking gibberish, which I took to be Chinese. My memory is invalid because it did not revive a true original cognition. The Nyāya philosophers speak of dreams, for instance, as necessarily invalid memory. But even when a memory is valid and awakens a true past cognition (for instance, my memory of being caned at school), it is not in itself *pramā* or true cognition, since the object of cognition is not present and the cognition does not arise out of the object itself. (It might be a cause of relief to me that the headmaster is not standing behind me with his cane, but I would still have to deny myself a true cognition.)

Recognition or *pratyabhijñā* means knowing a thing as that which was known before. It is not only knowing that a thing is such-and-such (as in perception) but also that it is the same thing that we saw before. To repeat the most frequently quoted example here (which is exactly relevant to our problem), I meet a man called Devadatta in Benaras. "This is Devadatta," I say to myself. Seeing him, I remember meeting someone called Devadatta in Mathura many years ago; "this is Devadatta," I had said to myself then.

There is a true cognition now, there was a true cognition in the past, there is an awakening of the trace of a past experience. But this is still not *pratyabhijñā* or recognition. That happens when I now say to myself: "This is the same Devadatta that I saw in Mathura."¹⁸

What sort of cognition is this? The Buddhist philosophers say it is a combination of perception and memory. It is not perception, because it relates to a past object with which there cannot be a sense-contact. I have no perception (*pratyakṣa*) of the Devadatta I saw in Mathura. But it is not pure memory, which can only refer to the past, whereas recognition refers to a present object: "This Devadatta is the same as that Devadatta." It is also not a fusing of perception and memory, since the former arises out of sensation and the latter out of imagination and the two could not be fused into a single product. *Pratyabhijñā*, say the Buddhists, is a dual cognition, including both perception and memory and referring respectively to the two aspects of an object as "this" and "that," that is, as present and past.

The Nyāya philosophers claim, however, that *pratyabhijñā* is a single psychic act because it refers to one and the same object. There is a unique cause (*karana*) of the phenomenon of recognition that is constituted by the senses and by the traces of past experience. Recognition gives us knowledge of an object as existing in the present and as qualified by its relation to the past. A thing's relation to past time or a past experience is a character that qualifies its present existence. To know this is to know that we have perceived it before, that is, to recognize it. Thus, there is an element of representation that takes the form of a definite recollection of some past experience of an object and that modifies its present perception. But it is nonetheless perception, albeit qualified, because it is brought about by a sense-object contact.¹⁹

It is not necessary for us to recount the abstruse, though often quite fascinating, arguments and counterarguments made by Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā philosophers on this point. One important feature of this debate is the persistent concern with the possibility of doubt (*saṃśaya*) about the knowledge produced by recognition. When I say "This Devadatta is the same as that Devadatta," what is the "that-ness" (*tattā*) here? If it is said, for instance, that it is the combination of past qualities known to me from past experience, the contemporary Nyāya philosopher will reply: "Suppose I have seen five black pens in the past of which one is mine, and I see one black pen before me now. Is this *that* pen that belongs to me? I am certain about the past qualities, but cannot eliminate doubt about that-ness."²⁰ When I ask, "Is this Devadatta that Devadatta?" there can be many reasons for doubt about whether my perception of "this-ness" (*idantā*) qualified by the knowledge of "that-ness" (*tattā*) has yielded a true cognition. This Devadatta, I see, is fat, whereas that Devadatta was not; but then, the "fatness" may be a consequence of the passage of time. Then again, that Devadatta

had long black hair, this Devadatta is bald; that too may be a change brought about by time. We are back, once more, to the problem of diachronic identity; the Nyāya philosophers are ever watchful for the presence of doubt, and the possibility of error, in the knowledge produced by recognition. The qualified perception of *pratyabhijñā* cannot have the same certainty as *pratyakṣa*.

Indeed, it is a general characteristic of the Nyāya theory that for noninferential knowledge, especially of a kind that does not fall into the class of the familiar, truth is never apprehended from the beginning. There is always the scope, and indeed the need, for further validation or correction.²¹ One might say that whereas the primacy of perception in the Nyāya philosophy gives it a realist bent, its questioning of the other modes of knowledge makes room within it for a large measure of scepticism.²²

Another relevant feature of these debates is that even when knowledge is proved to be invalid, it is not necessarily wholly false. Thus, walking on the beach, I see a piece of silver. Picking it up, I realize it is a seashell. My earlier perception is proved to be erroneous. But, the Nyāya philosopher will say, it was not entirely false, because the seashell does have some of the qualities of "silverness." Of course, although false knowledge is not always wholly false, true knowledge must be true in all respects.²³

Two final points about memory and its role in recognition. The Vaiśeṣika philosophers argue that when one remembers, the trace or impression (*saṃskāra*) of past experience that is awakened is immediately destroyed, but a new impression is then created. If I remember something frequently, the *saṃskāra* is also frequently renewed. Second, the passage of time can destroy a *saṃskāra* if there is no memory that revives it. Some diseases, such as those of the mind, can destroy *saṃskāra*. Death destroys *saṃskāra*; even the most learned man will not remember his learning in his next life. But neither time nor disease nor death will destroy all *saṃskāra*. Sadly, it is impossible to tell which impressions disappear and which survive; "only the Supreme Lord knows that," the philosophers will say.²⁴

One more form of knowledge is relevant to the next part of our story of the Bhawal sannyasi, and that is testimony or *śabda*. True verbal testimony is accepted by the Nyāya philosophers as true cognition (*pramāṇa*). In fact, it is pointed out that a very great part of the knowledge we have (the philosophers obviously mean learned people like themselves) is not from our own perception of objects but from our perception of the words and sentences we hear from our teachers or read in books. True cognition produced by *śabda* consists of our understanding of the statements of trustworthy persons. *Śabda* or verbal testimony is of two kinds: the *vaidika* or Vedic is divine testimony and therefore infallible; the *laukika* or human testimony is true only when it comes from a trustworthy person.

Not all philosophers accept that verbal testimony is a distinct source of

true cognition. The Cārvāka philosophers say that if a testimony is accepted as true because it comes from a trustworthy person, it is only an inference (*anumāna*) from his character to the truth of his statement. There is no independent source of knowledge here. The Buddhists add that if from a testimony we seek to prove that there are actual facts corresponding to the statement, we reduce it to perception (*pratyakṣa*). Here too there is no independent source of knowledge. The Nyāya philosophers, however, insist that *śabda* is neither inference nor perception, because the validity of the knowledge produced by testimony depends not on the validity of the statement or of the facts corresponding to the statement but on the trustworthiness of the utterer. Being realists, the Nyāya philosophers were, we can guess, only attempting to theorize the fact that we accept on trust by far the greater part of what we hold to be true. It is only a question of trusting the right authorities. But they were also emphasizing the specific mode of knowledge involved in deciphering the meanings of words and sentences required for an understanding of verbal testimony. *Śabda* cannot be reduced to inference, they say, because we do not have to know the meanings of words to infer fire from the sight of smoke. But we cannot gain any knowledge from a lecture on physics if we do not understand the meaning of the words and sentences being spoken by the lecturer.²⁵

Several of these knotty philosophical issues will crop up in the legal debates over the trial of the Bhawal sannyasi. Let us go there without further delay.

CHAPTER EIGHT
THE IDENTITY PUZZLE

1. For a useful survey, see James Baillie, *Problems in Personal Identity*.
2. Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, p. 202.
3. I have adapted this definition of the physical criterion from Baillie, *Problems in Personal Identity*, pp. 10–11.
4. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), book 2, chap. 27, sec. 9.
5. *Ibid.*, book 2, chap. 27, sec. 15.
6. Bernard Williams, *Problems of the Self*, pp. 46–63.
7. Some of the landmark works in this field, besides the ones already cited, are Sidney Shoemaker, “Persons and Their Pasts”; David Wiggins, *Sameness and Substance*; Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*; Richard Swinburne, *Personal Identity*; and Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*.
8. Peter Unger, *Identity, Consciousness and Value*, p. 276.
9. Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, p. 281.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 273; emphasis in the original. Also see, pp. 502–3. For a medley of examples showing the complexities involved in determining the “truth” of identity even within modern Western culture, see Hillel Schwartz, *The Culture of the Copy: Striking Likenesses, Unreasonable Facsimiles*.
11. See especially Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, pp. 113–68.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
15. Jitendra Nath Mohanty, *Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought: An Essay on the Nature of Indian Philosophical Thinking*, p. 198.
16. Figure 4 is adapted from Satischandra Chatterjee, *The Nyāya Theory of Knowledge: A Critical Study of Some Problems of Logic and Metaphysics*, p. 22. I have changed some of the English terms to suit our usage here.
17. Mohanty, *Reason and Tradition*, p. 241. Mohanty himself makes an argument in this book for including within the domain of Indian thought memory as a form of true cognition and, by extension, history as a mode of true knowledge.
18. Narayan Chandra Goswami, ed., *Śrīmadannambhaṭṭa viracitab Tarkasamgrahab (satīkah) adhyāpanāsahitab*, p. 213.
19. For a brief overview of the treatment of pratyabhijñā by different philosophical schools, see Chatterjee, *Nyāya Theory*, pp. 205–8.
20. Jyoti Prasad Bhattacharya, “Pratyakṣa: Nyāyamat samikṣā,” pp. 261–2.
21. Jitendranath Mohanty, *Gaṅgeśa’s Theory of Truth*, p. 54.
22. Wendy Doniger in her selection of stories of sexual masquerade, imposture, and doubling discusses several ways in which one might mistake one’s lover for someone else, but includes only one reference to a story from India—a Telugu story in which a trickster notices a mole on a woman’s leg when she is crossing a river and later cites the mole as proof that he was her husband. Wendy Doniger, *The Bedtrick: Tales of Sex and Masquerade*, p. 443 n86.
23. Mohanty, *Gaṅgeśa’s Theory*, pp. 44–45.
24. Goswami, ed., *Tarkasamgrahab*, pp. 216–18.
25. For a summary discussion on the Nyāya theory of *śabda*, see Chatterjee, *Nyāya Theory*, pp. 318–57.