The First-person Perspective on Personal Identity: Where Will I Wake Up?

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Abstract

Personal Identity is one of the hot topics in Modern Philosophy. Among them, the explanation given by Reductionist Derek Parfit has had a profound impact.But his depersonalization of experience is counterintuitive,and fails to r esolve the considerable controversy about the continued existence of 'I' in th e case of Fission and Mind-Transformation--where will I wake up? This is the predicament of Reductionism.To get out of the predicament, we first need to clarify the nature of personal identity. This paper will begin from this questio n, describe the specific meaning of 'I am X' --it means ' I'm perceiving things from X's first-person perspective'. Then, from the inside first-person perspecti ve, we reanalyze the cases offered by Parfit, Williams and others and their re ductionist approach to resolve the major controversies in the philosophical lite rature and finally provide a complete explanation of the persistence of 'I' ove r the course of the diachronic process.

Key words: Parfit; Reductionism; Impersonal; Fission; First--person

Introduction

Since the middle of the twentieth century, the Western Philosophy has d one a lot of research on Personal Identity and many theoretical schools have emerged. Among them, the explanation given by Derek Parfit, a representati ve of Reductionism, has a profound impact. He rejects the Dualistic View of personal ontology and develops Lichtenberg's 'a complete description could be

impersonal’ explanation, thereby eliminating all problems of identity. For example, the problem of the Ship of Theseus (the planks of Theseus's ship are replaced one by one. After many years, there were no longer any previous old plank on the ship. In addition, people used the old planks to build a ship as a souvenir. Question: Which of the two ships is the same ship as the previous one?)The Reductionist Parfit argues that if we knew the process by which each new plank is added to replace the old one and each old plank is made into a souvenir (after ‘complete description’), we would knew everything there was to knew. The remaining discussion is merely a choice between several different descriptions of the very same course of events.[1]

But Parfit's explanation doesn't solve all questions. The philosopher Chisholm, who holds the Simple View, asks:If the Ship of Theseus just like us, was conscious and had its own first-person perspective, then it would ask , many years later, whether I would continue to float on the sea and be busy transporting tributes, or stand quietly somewhere and watch people come to visit? In the Fission Case, Chisholm asks again: Shall I wake up on the left side or on the right side after the split surgery? These questions have entirely definite answers. The answers will be simply ‘Left’ or ‘Right’/ ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.[2]Parfit's ‘impersonal description’ explanation seems unable to answer these questions.

This paper aims to answer these questions. We state with the personal ontology and explain why people assign identity to a future person who is not exactly similar with me at the present time--in the future I will perceive things from this person's first-person perspective, thereby clarifying the conceptual problem of Diachronic Identity. After that, from an inside first-person perspective, we reconsider the cases of personal identity (Fission, Mind-Transformation, Spectrum, and others) and the Reductionist Approaches in Parfit's theory, try to resolve the questions and controversies that are presented by these cases in the philosophical literature and finally provide a complete explanation of the continued existence of ‘I’ over the course of the diachronic process.

1.Problem of Personal Ontology

Before exploring the problem of personal identity, We need first of all to clarify the problem of personal ontology, that is, what is a person. This paper plans to answer Chisholm's questions, therefore follows Chisholm's view that a person or 'I', is the subject of conscious activity. 'I' is the originator of the activity of consciousness--the subject of consciousness.[3]However, unlike Chisholm, we reject the Dualistic Explanation of 'I' in Simple View (either entity dualism or emergent dualism), but rather adopt parfit's Reductionist View that a person ('I') is not a particular brain and body but its existence must consist in the existence of a brain and body.[4]The concept of 'the subject of consciousness' is like 'the center of gravity' in Physics, which is just a useful abstract concept. Its relationship with brain is similar to that of a smile and a face.[5]In short, the concept of 'the subject of consciousness' does not need to be understood under Dualistic assumptions.

2.What is the "identity" we are discussing?

The reason why there are so many different views on personal identity and it is difficult to reach a consensus is mainly because personal identity is not a single, definite problem, but a problem domain containing many sub-problems. Many theories and ideas seem to be discussed at different levels, and there is often confusion between them. For example, some theories focus on the continued existence of 'I', which is a metaphysical problem. Others focus on evidence and judgment, which is an epistemological problem. Some people also focus their interest on the practical aspects of personal identity, such as the meaning of life, the subject of commitment and trust, the question of moral compensation and punishment, and so on. In order to clear up the confusion and resolve the controversy, we need to clarify what kind of personal identity we are discussing. In other words, what is the specific problem o

f identity we are talking about?

This paper discusses the metaphysical problem of personal identity: what does it mean for the continued existence of 'I' over time? What is it for somebody tomorrow to be the same person as me here now today?

Let's think about this: If I knew that tomorrow I was going to be tortured, I would be deeply worried. However, if I knew that tomorrow another person (Linda,for example) was going to be tortured, I would be less worried. Even if Linda was very similar to me, my reaction would be significantly different from the first situation. The reason for this difference seems obvious: Linda is not me. It means, in the first situation, I can expect that tomorrow I shall actually experience the torture from the first-person perspective of myself. While in the second situation, I am at most a spectator.

It follows that whether somebody is me depends on whether I am perceiving things from this person's perspective. I am A, which means I am perceiving things from A's first-person perspective. (This would also include other meanings such as 'I have free will in A', 'I have the ontological sense of A'.) A natural extension over time: Whether somebody (A_0) at a certain time in the past (t_0) was me depends on whether at that time (t_0) I perceived things from A's first-person perspective; Whether somebody (A_2) at a certain time in the future (t_2) would be me depends on whether at that time (t_2) I would perceive things from A's first-person perspective. Borrowing the mathematical limit model of thinking, infinitely subdividing t_0, t_1, t_2 ... to get the trajectory of this first-person perspective point across time and space. This trajectory is the very nature of metaphysical Self-identity. Given that 'I' can only perceive things from one particular perspective point at one time, this trajectory must be a single trajectory. This is why metaphysical self-identity must satisfy the one-one relation requirement.

With the concept of the trajectory of the first-person perspective point, the goal becomes very clear when we think about the problems of personal identity in the cases which offered by the philosophical literature and the real

life. When we ask ‘Will somebody in the future be me?’, we are not asking ‘Is this person qualitatively identical with me? ’, ‘Is this person numerically i dentical with me?’, ‘Are this person and I exactly alike?’, ‘Are this person and I one and the same person?’, ‘What is the relationship between this person and I?’, ‘Should this person bear my responsibilities and obligations?’ Not all of these. In fact ,what we are asking is actually ‘Will I perceive things from this person's first-person perspective in the future?’ Thus, the arguments and claims of the five typical approaches to personal identity in modern philosop hy--the Psychological Criterion (or Psychological Approach), the Physical Criterio n (or Biological Approach, including Somatic Approach and Animalism), the Si mple View , the Narrative Approach and the Reductionism--will be clearly de monstrated in particular cases. Let's take a brief look below.

3.Mind-Transformation and Teletransportation

The case of Mind-Transformation offered by Bernard Williams[6]is one of t he focuses of the debate between psychological and physical principles. This c ase can be briefly summarized as follows:

Mind-Transformation*:I (suppose my name is Carroll) lie on the left and a nother person (Linda) lie on the right. After we were hypnotized into unconsci ousness, the surgeon exchanged our psychological features. If Reductionism is true--the brain is the carrier of psychological features -- then exchanging ment al features is like exchanging programs and documents between two computer s. After the transformation, the person on the left will have my (Carroll's) bo dy and Linda's psychological features (Call this person ‘Carroll's body•Linda's mind’). The person on the right will have Linda's body and Carroll's psycholog ical features (Call this person ‘Linda's body•Carroll's mind’). Williams asks, afte r the transformation, which person will be me?*

The general view of Psychological Criterion holds that the person on the right (‘Linda's body•Carroll's mind’) would be me,as there is psychological continuity between this person and me, and this person is the only person who has psychological continuity with previous me, satisfying Nozick's ‘the Closest Continuer Schema’[7];The strict version of Psychological Criterion (the Narrow Psychological Criterion) holds that neither of these two people is me--the left one does not have my psychological features, and the right one's psychological features are artificial and do not have the normal cause.[8]Moreover, the memories of the right one do not satisfy the M Relation proposed by John Perry;[9]The Physical Criterion (including Animalism) claims that the person on the left would be me, as this person possesses my animalistic physical body (brain and body), and there are no other branches;[10]The Simple View argues that the answer depends on a further fact--maybe it is the location of my soul (or some separately existing entity) after Mind-Transformation;[11]The Narrative Approach tends to believe that the person on the right is me (but this ‘I’ is created posteriori by the narrative process), because this person has my original memories, characters, desires, beliefs and so forth, this person will do what I want to do. My life story can be unified by this left-to-right narrative experience. Although there is here no physical continuity and physiological features are changed -- creating a distinct sense of self-fragmentation, internal psychological factors such as memories and personalities are more important, and they can repair this fragmentation;[12]Derek Parfit,the reductionist, argues that if we knew the facts about both physical and psychological continuity of Mind-Transformation, we would know everything there was to know. There is no need to answer the question ‘Which of the two resulting people will be me?’ That is to say, these facts can be described in an impersonal way.[13]In Parfit's view, the Williams's question is empty.

But the Reductionist View is now untenable--when Williams's question is modified from ‘Which person will be me?’ to ‘On which side will I wake up the after Mind-Transformation’, we find that the question requires entirely def

inite answers. The answer will be simply ‘Left’, ‘Right’ or ‘Not waking up’. As a result, the differences between these five theoretical approaches will beco me irreconcilable.

The same is true in the case of Teletransportation (see *Reasons and Pers ons*).For easy understanding, this case can be briefly described as follows:

When I fall asleep in bed and lose consciousness, the Scanner destroy my brain and body, while recording the exact states of all of my cells. Afterwar ds, the Replicator will then create a brain and body exactly like mine(based o n the information recorded by the Scanner). Question: Is the Replica me?

What is the question asked by ‘Is this Replica me’? It is the conceptual problem of diachronic identity, and we can have many different confused und erstanding. Now we focus the question on ‘Shall I wake up in this Replica on the next day (just like I wake up in my own body on a normal morning)?’T his question also requires entirely definite answers. These will be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

4.Duplication and Fission

Williams's Case of Duplication challenges the Psychological Criterion beca use personal identity is logically a one-one relation. It is logically impossible f or one person to be identical to more than one person. I cannot be one an d the same person as two different people. Williams then claims that, to be acceptable, a criterion of identity must itself be logically a one-one relation. I t must be a relation which could not possibly hold between one person and two future people. Given that psychological continuity is not logically a one-o ne relation. Two different future people could both be psychologically continu ous with me (Duplication), the criterion of identity cannot be psychological co

ntinuity.[14]In contrast,the Physical Criterion should be a better one.

However, the Case of Fission offered by David Wiggins[15]poses the same challenge to the Physical Criterion. The case is briefly summarized as follows:

***Fission**: I am the eldest of three identical triplets. In an accident, my bod y is fatally injured, as are the brains of my two brothers. The surgeons divide my brain into two, transplanting the left hemisphere into the body of the se cond brother to produce a person whom is called 'Lefty', and transplanting th e right hemisphere into the body of the third brother to produce a person ca lled 'Righty'. The surgery is successful, and soon after, both 'Lefty' and 'Right y' wake up. Wiggins asks: Did I survive the surgery? If I survived, which one is me?*

In this case we assumes that my left and right hemispheres are very sim ilar, so each of the resulting people seems to remember living my life, has m y character, and is in every other way psychologically continuous with me. An d he has a body that is very like mine. It can be seen that in this case, bo th my psychological continuity and physical continuity of the brain have diver ged. According to the same reason as the opponents of the Psychological Crit erion--one-one relation requirement, both Psychological Criterion and Physical Criterion fail.

How to get out of the predicament? The method of this paper is to giv e up these confusing and man-made words and definitions, and stop thinking about questions such as 'Will the resulting person be me?', 'Is this person q ualitatively or numerically identical to me?', 'Are this person and I the same or just exactly alike?' Instead, we should focus on more essential question. W e should be thinking, in Duplication and Fission, would I wake up? If so, whi ch side would I wake up, the left or the right?

In the case of Duplication, there is a physical disconnect between me and my Replica, which makes it difficult to analyze for the time being. Let's start with the Wiggins's Fission Case.

The idea of Fission came from Roger Wolcott Sperry's split-brain operations. In the 1960s, Sperry's team used surgery to cut the nerve bundles (the corpus callosum) between the left and right hemispheres of the patient to treat epilepsy. The treatment goal was achieved. However, later, Sperry's team discovered an unintended consequence--these operations created two separate centers of consciousness. Philosopher Thomas Nagel argues that these two consciousness centers are independent of each other and cannot be understood as a single mind.[16] Physiologist Gazzaniga and others believe this is a well-established fundamental finding--if you split the brain, you split the mind.[17] What exactly happens when the brain divide? In Sperry's own words:'Instead of the normally unified single stream of consciousness, these patients behave in many ways as if they have two independent streams of conscious awareness, one in each hemisphere, each of which is cut off from and out of contact with the mental experiences of the other. In other words, each hemisphere seems to have its own separate and private sensations; its own perceptions; its own concepts; and its own impulses to act, with related volitional, cognitive, and learning experiences. Following the surgery, each hemisphere also has thereafter its own separate claim of memories that are rendered inaccessible to the recall process of the others.'[18]

It is not difficult to understand that, according to Sperry's explanation, if I had a brain bisection, then after the surgery, both 'I perceive things from my left hemisphere as a first-person perspective' and 'I perceive things from my right hemisphere as a first-person perspective' would happen. They would happen independently and in parallel to each other.

The Wiggins's Fission Case is a combination of Sperry's brain bisection and brain transplant. If my left hemisphere is successfully transplanted into my second brother's body to produce the person called 'Lefty' and my right hemisphere is destroyed, I shall wake up in Lefty's body. If my right hemisphere is successfully

transplanted into my third brother's body to produce the person called 'Righty' and my left hemisphere is destroyed, I shall wake up in Righty's body. Now in Wiggins's Fission Case, both my left and right hemispheres are undamaged, and they are successfully transplanted into my second and third brothers' bodies respectively. What happens? As Parfit argues,the existence of the Lefty will not be changed by what happens in the other wing of the hospital -- such as the right hemisphere is also successfully transplanted or it is accidentally dropped onto a concrete floor and break down, and so is Righty.[19]Therefore, we can apply Sperry's explanation to Wiggins's Fission Case--after the surgery, the two events 'I wake up in Lefty's body and perceive things from Lefty's first-person perspective' and 'I wake up in Righty's body and perceive things from Righty's first-person perspective' will both happen, independently and in parallel to each other.

5.Spectrum

The Spectrum is a range of possible cases described by Parfit to argue the indetermination of personal identity. These cases in the Spectrum involve all of the possible degrees of physical or psychological connectedness and each of which is very similar to its neighbors.

The first is the Physical Spectrum. In the case at the leftmost end of this spectrum, nothing would be done. In the first case immediately adjacent to the leftmost end, after I fall asleep and lose consciousness, the surgeon flipped only the first switch, and one in a million cells in my body were replaced with exact duplicates; In the second case, the surgeon flipped the first two switches, two in a million cells in my body were replaced with exact duplicates; In the case in the middle of the spectrum, 50％of my cells were replaced with exact duplicates;...in the case at the rightmost end, all switches were flipped and my body was destroyed and an exact Replica of me was created.

In the case at the leftmost end, there would later be a person who wo

uld be fully continuous with me as I am now, both physically and psychologic ally (and physiologically). In the case at the rightmost end, there would later be a person who would be psychologically (and physiologically) but not physic ally continuous with me as I am now. The rightmost end is like the case of Teletransportation. The leftmost end is the normal case of continued existence. The question is, in which cases would the resulting person still be me,and w hich cases would the resulting person not be me?

The reductionist Parfit lists three possible alternatives: (1).the Indetermina tion of personal identity--in the few cases near the left end the resulting per son would be me. In the right cases he would not be me. In many of the i ntervening cases, neither answer would be true; (2).there is a sharp borderlin e between two cases. On the left side of the borderline, he would still be m e, while on the right side, he would not be me; (3).In all of these cases, the resulting person would be me.

It is hard to believe (2) that the difference between life and death could just consist in any of the very small differences -- if the surgeons replace slightly fewer than these cells, it will be me who wakes up. If they replace the few extra cells, I shall cease to exist. While (1) is counterintuitive and difficult to understand, (3) therefore seems to most people the least implausible. Thus, the Physical Spectrum seems to provide support for the Psychological Criterion -- my Replica will be me.[20]

The Psychological Spectrum is a range of cases which involve all of the different possible degrees of psychological continuity. When the surgeon flipped one switch, this would cause me to lose a few memories, cause a small change in my character, and to have a few apparent memories that fit the life of Linda. There are still three corresponding alternatives, and for the same reason, (3) is the least implausible. Therefore,the Psychological Spectrum seems to provide support for the Physical Criterion--my continued existence is only dependent on the continued existence of my brain as a living brain, regardless of how specific my psychological features are.

PS: (1).What changes in the Physical Spectrum is just the material of the indi

vidual -- the molecules that compose the individual are replaced one by one, but the features of the individual (whether psychological or physiological) rem ain the same. In contrast, what changes in the Psychological Spectrum is the form of the individual -- the psychological features of the individual changed gradually, but the materials that compose the individual--the molecules--are m ainly remained.

(2).In some cases, the psychological features can be expanded into genera l features that include both psychological and physiological features. For exam ple, in the General-Feature Spectrum, my psychological and physiological featur es are gradually changing, but the materials that compose me are mainly re mained. (Just like building different buildings from the same box of building bl ocks.)

(3).Physical continuity is not the same as physical or physiological feature s--in the case of Teletransportation, the physical continuity of an individual is completely broken, but the physical, physiological and psychological features (t he General-Features) of the individual are not changed.

In Parfit's Combined Spectrum, both my physical continuity and psycholog ical (and physiological) continuity would change. At the leftmost end of this s pectrum is the normal case in which a future person would be fully continuo us with me as I am now, both physically and psychologically. This person wo uld be me in just the way that, in my actual life, it will be me who wakes up tomorrow. From the left to the right in this spectrum, by flipping each s witch, one in a million cells of mine are replaced by exact replicas of Linda's corresponding cells, until at the rightmost end of this spectrum, the surgeon s would destroy my body, and then create a perfect Replica of Linda. It is cl ear that at the rightmost end case the resulting person would not be me. (3) would be hard to believe. And (2) still has the conundrum of how to draw the borderline, leaving only (1).

Therefore, Parfit defends his ‘indetermination of personal indentity’ -- in

many of the intervening cases, the question ‘Would the resulting person be me?’ has no answer. But if we know to what degree I would be physically and psychologically connected with the resulting person, we would know every thing there was to know. Parfit goes on to argue that the same is true of the relation between me now and myself in thirty years--if I know all the facts of the physical and psychological continuity between me now and myself in the future, I know everything. In Parfit's explanation, personal identity is no longer a definite relationship between ‘yes’ and ‘no’, but rather a matter of degree.

However, according to the discussion in Section 2 of this paper, personal identity is clearly definite--whether the resulting person is me depends on whether I perceive things from this person's first-person perspective. Since thirty years from now (no accident happened), I would naturally and certainly perceive things from the first-person perspective of my older self, me now and myself in thirty years are the same person. (My memory can provide evidence, but memory is just evidence.) That's why I care about my future self. However, it doesn't seem to have nothing to do with physical and psychological features as attributes.[21] As Swinburne,a proponent of the Simple View, argues that in the concern for the future, surely such continuity has no value.[22]

Applying the view in Section 2 into the Combined Spectrum, our question is no longer ‘Will the resulting person be me?’ but ‘Shall I wake up in the resulting person's body?’ The answer to this question is either, and quite simply, *Yes* or *No*. Thus, Parfit's ‘indetermination of personal identity’ would fail. (2) still has problems of how to draw the borderline and what could make it true that in one case I would wake up and in the next I would not wake up. Therefore (2) could also be ruled out. Now only (3) is left as the logical alternative. It must be admitted that, if we look at it from the outside observer's perspective, at the rightmost end case of the Combined Spectrum, the previous me (Carroll) and the resulting person (the Replica of Linda) are of course two different people--the two are totally different in attributes. To say that the former Carroll and the resulting Replica of Linda are the same person is as absurd as

saying that a cow and a horse are the same thing. However, from the perspective of the inside self, the situation and questions would be completely different. (3) simply describes my first-person experience in each case of this spectrum. And that's what the experience is: **in every case I shall wake up.** It's just that, as we gradually shifts to the right in the spectrum, when I wake up, I'm less and less sure that I'm Carroll. Some where in the intervening cases, I barely able to answer whether I am Carroll or Linda when I wake up, those mixed memories leave me at a loss. In the cases near the right end of the spectrum, I wake up thinking I am Linda, though I still have some memories of Carroll in my trance. Until in the case of the rightmost end, I am sure that I am Linda when I wake up. As for who Carroll is, I don't even know. It's easy to understand that every right shift is just a small physical and psychological change. These changes in content (attribute) are important -- they would affect my life and what I could do. But more importantly, these changes could not stop me from waking up, these changes could not make me cease to exist.

6.The combination of the Spectrum and Fission -- Duplication, the Branch-Line Case, the Mind-transformation and the Real World.

Now, let's analyze the experiences in various cases from Carroll's (the ma in character of the cases) first-person perspective. Based on previous discussio ns, we focus on our questions on ‘Shall I wake up in the resulting person's body after the surgery/the next day/after the green button is pressed?’‘On w hich side shall I wake up?’ ‘From which person's perspective shall I perceive things?’

6.1 Duplication -- the combination of the Physical Spectrum and Fission

Logically,Duplication is the product of Fission combined with the Physical Spectrum.Imagine that there are 1,000 parallel universes.In parallel universe N

o.0, my brain is divided into two parts and transplanted into my second and third brother's bodies respectively to produce two people Lefty and Righty. This is exactly the Wiggins's Fission Case. It has been concluded previously that after surgery, the two events 'I wake up in Lefty's body' and 'I wake up in Righty's body' would occur independently and in parallel to each other (Sperry's description); in parallel universe No.1, one thousandth of the cells in Lefty's and Righty's brains are replaced with exact replicas; in parallel universe No.2, two thousandth of the cells in Lefty's and Righty's brains are replaced with exact replicas; ... Like the Physical Spectrum, until in the last universe, my brain was destroyed and surgeons create exact replicas of my left and right hemispheres, then transplanted them into my second and third brother's bodies respectively. The question is, in which universe would I no longer wake up?

According to the reductionist analysis of the Physical Spectrum, we can conclude that even in the last universe, there is no physical continuity between Lefty, Righty and the original me, Sperry's description still applies. And the situation in this last universe is not essentially different from the Duplication. Therefore, we can conclude that if the surgeons destroy my brain and body after I fall asleep while creating two exact Replicas who are called A and B, then the next day, both 'I wake up in A's body and perceive things from A's first-person perspective' and 'I wake up in B's body and perceive things from B's first-person perspective' would occur -- they would occur independently and in parallel.

6.2 Parfit's Branch-Line Case -- the Asymmetric Fission

Parfit described the Branch-Line Case in his book *Reasons and Persons*, which can be summarized as follow:

The Branch-Line Case: *Previously, I have went to Mars by the method of teletransport -- I merely have to get into the Scanning Cubicle and press the*

green button. The Scanner here on Earth will destroy my body while recordin g the exact state of mine. It will then transmit this information to the Replic ator on Mars. This will then create a body exactly like mine. It will be in thi s body that I shall wake up. But this time, the Scanner doesn't destroy my b ody, it merely damages my heart. I will die of cardiac failure within the next few days.

Parfit calls the end of this story the Branch-Line Case. In this case, my li fe and that of my Replica overlap. According to Parfit's description, it seems that I cannot hope to travel on the Main Line, waking up on Mars with fort y years of life ahead. I shall stay on the Branch-Line, here on Earth, which e nds a few days later.[23] If so, how can Parfit explain what happened before? B efore the branching occurred, I can wake up on Mars, but after the branchin g occurred, I can only stay on earth. It is obviously illogical that my existenc e on Mars could be directly affected by what happens millions of miles away on Earth.

In fact, the Branch-Line Case is an asymmetric combination of the Fission Case and the Physical Spectrum. Imagine that there are 1,000 parallel univer ses. In universe No.0, my brain is divided into two parts and transplanted int o my second and third brother's bodies to produce Lefty and Righty. This is exactly the Fission Case. After the surgery, the two events 'I wake up in Left y's body' and 'I wake up in Righty's body' will occur independently and in pa rallel to each other; in universe No.1, one thousandth of the cells in Righty's brain are replaced with exact replicas and the Lefty's condition is unchanged; in universe No.2, two thousandth of the cells in Righty's brain are replaced and the Lefty's condition is unchanged; ... until in the last universe, only my left hemisphere is transplanted into my second brother's body to produce Lef ty and the right hemisphere of Righty was just an exact replica of my right hemisphere. The question is, in which universe would I not wake up in Right y's body?

Similar to the argument of the Physical Spectrum, we can conclude that even in the last universe, there is no physical continuity between Righty and me, the two events ‘I wake up in Lefty's body’ and ‘I wake up in Righty's b ody’ will both occur. And this situation in the last universe is essentially no d ifferent from the Branch-Line Case. (Except that in the Branch-Line Case, the l eft side becomes here on Earth, the right side becomes somewhere on Mars, and Lefty has my complete brain and body. But these differences are irrelev ant.)

From this analyse, we can conclude that in the Branch-Line Case, after pressing the green button, the two events ‘(a).I wake up in my original body (Earth-Carroll's body) and perceive things from Earth-Carroll's first-person perspective’ and ‘(b).I wake up in my Replica's body (Mars-Carroll's body) and perceive things from Mars-Carroll's first-person perspective’ will both occur. However, the occurrence of (a) is very easy to make people mistakenly believe that (b) did not occur. This is a preconceived mistake.

6.3 Williams's Mind-Transformation Case--the combination of the Psychological Spectrum and the Branch-Line Case

Williams's Mind-Transformation is a combination of the Branch-Line Case and the Psychological Spectrum (the General-Features Spectrum, to be precise). Imagine that there are 1,000 parallel universes. In universe 0, after I lose con sciousness in the Left room of the hospital, the surgeons then create an exac t Replica of me in the right room without destroying my body. This is exactly the situation in the Branch-Line Case. According to our discussion in Sectio n 6.2, the next day, ‘I wake up in the left room’ and ‘I wake up in the right room’ will both occur;in universe 1, the surgeons made the person on the l eft have one thousandth of Linda's psychological features and the person on the right have one thousandth of Linda's physiological features; in universe 2,...just like the gradual shift in the Psychological Spectrum (the General-Featu

res Spectrum), until in the last universe, after the surgery, the person on the left has Carroll's physiological features and Linda's psychological features, the person on the right has Linda's physiological features and Carroll's psychologi cal features. The question is, in which universe does Sperry's description no l onger apply?

As with the Psychological Spectrum (the General-Features Spectrum) argument, we can conclude that Sperry's description applies to all of these universes, and that the situation in the last universe is just like Williams's Mind-Transformation Case. From this, we can see that in the Mind-Transformation Case, after surgery, (a).I wake up in the left room, perceiving things from the perspective of Carroll's body•Linda's mind, and (b).I wake up in the right room, perceiving things from the perspective of Linda's body•Carroll's mind. Both (a) and (b) will occur independently and in parallel to each other.

6.4 the Real World -- the combination of the General-Features Spectrum and the Duplication

In his book *Problems of the Self*, Williams considers a case in which a person would have many co-existing Replicas.[24]For ease of understanding, we summarize the case as follows:

I (Carroll) am in Durham and want to go to New York quickly. Normally, I merely have to get into the Scanning Cubicle in Durham and press the gre en button. The machine destroys my body and then creates a Replica of me i n the Replica Cubicle in New York. I shall wake up in this Replica and quickly go to New York. But this time, the machine make a mistake. After pressing the button, my body is destroyed, and the machine creates four exact Replica s of me in four Replica Cubicles in New York, Detroit, Boston, and Memphis. The question is, where would I go? In which body would I wake up?

If we accept the explanation in Duplication--Sperry's description, this question would not be difficult to answer. After pressing the green button, the four events ‘I wake up in New York, perceiving things from New York-Carroll's perspective’,‘I wake up in Detroit, perceiving things from Detroit-Carroll's perspective’‘I wake up in Boston, perceiving things from Boston-Carroll's perspective’‘I wake up in Memphis, perceiving things from Memphis-Carroll's perspective’ would all occur. They would occur independently and in parallel to each other.

The situation in the real would is the combination of the above case and the General-Features Spectrum. Imagine there are 1,000 parallel universes. In Universe 0, I (Carroll) press the button and my body is destroyed. The machine then creates four exact Replicas of me in four Replica Cubicles in New York, Detroit, Boston, and Memphis. This is the above case; In Universe 1, after destroying my body, the machine creates four approximate Replicas of me in four Cubicles in New York, Detroit, Boston, and Memphis. Among them, the Replica in New York has one thousandth of Linda's features, the Replica in Detroit has one thousandth of James's features, the Replica in Boston has one thousandth of Paul's features, and the Replica in Memphis has one thousandth of Anna's features; in Universe 2, ... Until in the last universe, the machine creates Linda, James, Paul, and Anna while destroying my body. The question is, in which universe would Sperry's description no longer apply?

Like the argument of the General-Features Spectrum, we can finally conclude that even in the last universe, I would still wake up. After pressing the button, the four events ‘I am perceiving things from Linda's perspective’, ‘I am perceiving things from James's perspective’, ‘I am perceiving things from Paul's perspective’, and ‘I am perceiving things from Anna's perspective’ would occur independently and in parallel. And this last universe can be understood as the real world in which each of us is different from each other.

This is the argument reached in this paper, which explains the existence

of ‘I’ in the real world. It can be expressed as:

‘(a).I am perceiving things from A's first-person perspective’, ‘(b).I am perc eiving things from B's first-person perspective’, ‘(c).I am perceiving things from C's first-person perspective’, ‘(d).I am perceiving things from D's first-person p erspective’, ... These events are occurring, independently and in parallel to eac h other.

A, B, C, D,...refer to the existing subjects of consciousness at this time.

PS: The occurrence of any of the above events will naturally lead me to mist akenly believe that the rest events have not occurred (for example, the occurr ence of (a) will lead me to believe that (b), (c), (d), ... have not occurred), ‘t hat is why I have the question of ‘why am I this particular and specific perso n rather than someone else?’[25]

7.Death

Next we turn to death. Modern physiology considers death to be the irr eversible destruction of the brain. What does the destruction of my brain me an for me? To answer this question, consider the following two cases.

Case 1: I get into the Scanning Cubicle located in Durham and fall aslee p. When I lose consciousness, the Scanner destroys my body while recording i ts exact state. Afterwards, my blueprint is transmitted to New York, Detroit, a nd Boston. The Replicators in these three places will then create three exact Replicas of me. The question is, where shall I wake up?

According to the argument in Duplication, we already know that on the second day, all three of these events: ‘I wake up in New York-Carroll's body’, ‘I wake up in Detroit-Carroll's body’, and ‘I wake up in Boston-Carroll's body’ will occur.

Case 2: It is exactly like Case 1 but with this modification: in this case, t he Scanner dose not destroy my original body. It does nothing except scans a nd sends my holographic blueprint. Afterwards, my blueprint is transmitted to New York, Detroit, and Boston. The Replicators in these three places then cr eate three exact Replicas of me. Where shall I wake up?

Based on our analysis of the experience of 'I' in Parfit's Branch-Line Case and the conclusion of the Physical Spectrum (physical continuity is not impor tant for the continued existence of 'I'), this slightly modified case is just like setting up a fourth Replication Cubicle--the one in Durham. It follows that wh at would happen in this case would be: on the second day, 'I wake up in D urham-Carroll's body (my original body)', 'I wake up in New York-Carroll's bod y', 'I wake up in Detroit-Carroll's body', and 'I wake up in Boston-Carroll's bo dy'. These four events would occur independently and in parallel to each oth er.

What is the difference? In case 1, my body is destroyed. In Case 2, my body continues to function as it shall in normal life. This difference is the ex act difference between death (the destruction of my body) and my temporary loss of consciousness. For me--from my own first-person perspective experien ce, in Case 1, when my body is destroyed, the event of 'I wake up in Durha m-Carroll's body, perceiving things form Durham-Carroll's first-person perspectiv e' will no longer occur, and other events will still continue.

Return to the real world. When we combine the above Cases with the General-Features Spectrum, replacing New York-Carroll, Detroit-Carroll, Boston-C arroll in the cases with Specific people with different physical and psychologic al features, we can see the significance of my death (the destruction of my body) in the real world, which is:

Before my death (the destruction of Carroll's body), '(a).I am perceiving t hings from Carroll's perspective', '(b).I am perceiving things from Linda's persp

ective', '(c).I am perceiving things from Paul's perspective' ... These events are all occurring. After my death, (a) will no longer occur, and the other events will still continue.

This view seems psychologically impossible to believe since my real life e xperience shows me that I have always been Carroll--I've always woken up in Carroll's body, always perceiving things from Carroll's first-person perspective. Other people have nothing to do with me--I cannot perceive things from Lin da's perspective, I cannot perceive things from Paul's perspective, I cannot pe rceive things from any other person's perspective. However, this is a very eas y mistake to make -- mistake comes from the most direct and authentic expe rience: as with the Branch-Line Case, as long as Carroll is alive and exists as a subject of consciousness, it is inevitable that 'I am perceiving things from C arroll's perspective' is occurring. This event will naturally lead me to believe 'I am perceiving things from Linda's perspective', 'I am perceiving things from Paul's perspective' ... none of this occurs. But after reviewing Wiggins's Fissio n Case and my arguments in this paper, at the reflective or intellectual level, we can believe that the other events are also occurring.

This is the truth about death.The destruction of my body does not mean the end to my continued existence, nor does it mean that I shall be uncons cious forever.

8.Conclusion

Firstly, on the problem of personal ontology, we adopted both the claim of the Simple View that a person is an original and simple concept,[26] and the interpretation of the Reductionism that a person is not, but its existence must consists in the existence of a brain and body, and the occurrence of a series of interrelated physical and mental events.[27] In this way, we avoided both the reliance on Dualism in the

Simple View and the counterintuitive depersonalization of experience in the Reductionism. Next, on the conceptual problem of personal identity, we concentrated the question of ‘Will somebody P in the future be me?’ which have multiple confusing meanings on ‘Will I perceive things from P's perspective in the future?’ Thus clarifying the question we are exploring. Then, using Reductionist methods, we analyzed the Physical Spectrum, the Psychological Spectrum, and the Combined Spectrum, and concluded that my existence does not depend on what specific brain or psychological features I have, but that I exist as long as I am conscious -- I'm perceiving things. We conceived the Fission Case (offered by Wiggins) on the basis of the actual case of ‘split-brain’ operations. Considering the firs-person experience of ‘I’ in it, and supported by the fact that a half-brain person can still persist, we logically stated that the occurrence of the Branch should not make a difference between life and death to my continued existence, which forced us to adopt Sperry's description to explain my existence in the Fission Case. Given that physical and psychological continuity could not determine which side I shall wake up on, we combined the Fission Case with the Spectrum to derive it into the Duplication Case, Parfit's Branch-Line Case, Williams's Mind-Transformation Case, and further derive it into the real world in which every person has different and specific physiological and psychological features. Just like the Fission Case, we argued that Sperry's description is the only logical and complete explanation for the continued existence of ‘I’ in these cases. Finally, based on this understanding, we compared ‘the Divergent Teletransportation in which my body was destroyed’ and ‘the Divergent Teletransportation in which my body was not destroyed’, thus clarified the meaning of death (the destruction of my body) for myself. These descriptions and explanations could be summarized into three conclusions about the continued existence of ‘I’, which are as follows:

1.About ‘Who I am’

I am who I perceive things from this person's first-person perspective. A natural extension over time: whether somebody P_0 *at a certain time* t_0 *in the*

past was me depends on whether I perceived things from P_0's perspective at t_0; whether somebody P_2 at a certain time t_2 in the future will be me depe nds on whether I will perceive things from P_2's perspective at t_2. The trajecto ry of this first-person perspective point over space and time is the nature of my continued existence over the course of the diachronic process.

2.About 'Why am I this particular and specific person (why am I perceiving th ings from this person's perspective)'

Sperry's Explanation: 'I am perceiving things from A's perspective', 'I am perceiving things from B's perspective', 'I am perceiving things from C's perspe ctive', 'I am perceiving things from D's perspective' ... These events are all oc curring, and they are occurring independently and in parallel to each other.

PS:(1).The occurrence of any one of these events naturally misleads me t o believe that the others are not occurring.

(2).A, B, C, D,...refers to the subject of consciousness that exists at this time.

3.About 'Death'

My death as A (the destruction of A's brain) means that the event 'I am perceiving things from A's perspective' will no longer occur, but other events still continue.

It is not difficult to understand that 'I am going to suffer tomorrow' and 'another person (Linda, for example) is going to suffer tomorrow' are almost as bad for me at this time. From a rational point of view, there is no differ ence between the two--whether it is the former or the latter, I am going to experience this suffering from my own first-person perspective. Everyone is m e, and I should treat everyone like I treat myself. (These conclusions can serv e as a rational basis for morality.)

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