

# Correspondence

Dear Editors:

I think Matt Nugent's view of personal identity ["Personal Identity: Functionalism and the M-Relation," *Arché*, I:1, 2007], reflecting as it does on the relations of personal experience to the ongoing change of identity, would be profitably expanded by a fuller incorporation of Locke's theory of memory experience. David Owens, at the University of Sheffield, brings up some interesting points on Locke's theory in his article "A Lockean Theory of Memory Experience," published in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (June 1996), that clearly pertain.

By reflecting (reflexively) on our memories, we are able to acquire knowledge (though it is only of a perceptual kind) that we did not otherwise possess. However, these new-found elaborations on our own experience are possibly inaccurate. Through the progressive changes to our memories of experience, some details are reinforced, while others are lost; the parent material of personal identity is always changing, and the ground of self is constantly shifting. I wonder on what scale of analysis, or in what time-frame, these changes would have to occur in order for the change to an individual's personal identity to be perceptible. What is needed in this kind of discussion, I think, is quantification of the scales and rate of change. Since the self is constructed by the integration of present sensory data and reflexive self-consideration with memories of past experience (which, as I mention above and Nugent overlooks, is fluid and unstable) and anticipation of future events (which is entirely modal and contingent), an exterior basis for comparing the self-before-change and the self-after-change is highly desirable.

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Dear Editors:

Robert Kubala's distinction [(Re)thinking Plato's Line: The Objects of Dianoia," *Arché*, I:1, 2007] between two types of knowledge, "that attainable through dialectic and that attainable only through introspection" (17), is possibly erroneous. The definition of dialectic which Kubala employs seems too narrow, as when he implies that by "dialectic" one must only be referring to a method of interpersonal reasoning. Is it not

also possible for dialectic to be intrapersonal, that is, to have dialectic within the confines of a single mind? Kubala doesn't make clear by what means we could distinguish between dialectic and that which according to him is the step beyond dialectic, introspection. It might be better to consider these two concepts as symbiotic—"our own instantaneous realization" of truth may be, as Kubala puts it, "the end of the road for dialectic in favor of introspection." But the dialectic that dies after insight is of the interpersonal variety; the end of one road is the beginning of another, one of intrapersonal dialectic concluding at episteme.

Interestingly, modern neuroscience would seem to vindicate what Kubala indicates is Plato's conception of truth: that its attainment is a task both solitary and social. The part of the brain that is activated in any "Aha!" moment is involved also in the mediation of language and social interaction; cf. Jung-Beeman et al., "Neural Activity When People Solve Verbal Problems with Insight," *PLOS Biology*, Vol. 2. I hope the editors of *Arché* will actively seek papers which address the shrinking disciplinary gap between neuroscience and philosophy.

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