

Locke, *On personal identity*
(Essay on Human Understanding, II, XXVII, 19-20)

§ 19.

This may shew us wherein personal Identity consists, not in the Identity of Substance, but, as I have said, in the **Identity of consciousness**, wherein, if Socrates and the present Mayor of Quinborough agree, they are the same Person: If the same Socrates waking and sleeping do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same Person. And to punish Socrates waking, for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more of Right, than to punish one Twin for what his Brother-Twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like, that they could not be distinguished; for such Twins have been seen.

§ 20.

But yet possibly it will still be objected, suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my Life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same Person, that did those Actions, had those Thoughts, that I was once conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, that **we must here take notice what the word I is applied to, which in this case is the Man only**. And the same Man being presumed to be the same Person, I is easily here supposed to stand also for the same Person. But **if it be possible for the same Man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times, it is past doubt the same Man would at different times make different Persons**; which, we see, is the Sense of Mankind in the solemnest Declaration of their Opinions, Human Laws not punishing the Mad Man for the Sober Man's Actions, nor the Sober Man for what the Mad Man did, thereby making them two Persons; which is somewhat explained by our way of speaking in English, when we say such an one *is not himself*, or *is besides himself*; in which Phrases it is insinuated, as if those who now, or, at least, first used them, thought, that self was changed, the self same Person was no longer in that Man.