ERROR THROUGH MISIDENTIFICATION: SOME VARIETIES*

Memory provides normal human subjects with an ability of effortless, unreflective, mostly reliable judgment about the past. Judgments made in this way, like “I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago,” are not infallible, to be sure. Memory can play tricks. But it is plausible to suppose that memories are at least not liable to error through misidentification—I can be wrong about being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago, but not in the way I can be wrong about “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat today,” when I mistakenly take an approaching red-hatted woman to be my Aunt Miriam.

Suppose, however, that “quasi-memories” are accepted as a coherent category, embracing genuine memories as a potentially proper subset, and that subjects could in principle be caused to have memory impressions deriving from someone else’s bodily past. Such impressions might be subjectively indistinguishable from memories proper.

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2 The notion of quasi-memory is characterized by Gareth Evans as follows: “A subject q-remembers an event e if and only if (i) he has an apparent memory of such an event, and (ii) that apparent memory in fact embodies information deriving from the perception of that event by a person who is not necessarily himself”—The Varieties of Reference (New York: Oxford, 1982), pp. 247–48. It is assumed that one could have memory impressions deriving from someone else’s past if one had the relevant brain cells transplanted into one’s brain. Since quasi-memories and ordinary ones are phenomenologically indistinguishable, their phenomenological content is best expressed by locutions like “I seem to remember being in Scotland five years ago,” or as “I have an (apparent) memory as of being in Scotland five years ago.” It is then a further issue—an issue which I will not discuss in this paper—whether quasi-memories and ordinary ones should be taken to be intrinsically the same kind of mental state whose difference resides merely in their different causal origins, or whether—in a “disjunctivist” spirit—they should be taken, because of their different causal origin, as distinct and mutually exclusive mental states. For the purposes of this paper, we can be neutral on this issue.

For once it is allowed that memories and quasi-memories are subjectively indistinguishable, it should also be allowed that the judgments based on either of them will have the same structure of rational grounds. There will be more about the notion of grounds in the sequel. But to help fix ideas, I take it that both in cases of memory-based self-ascriptions and in cases of quasi-memory-based ones, subjects requested to justify them would offer the following: “I seem to remember being F. Therefore, I was F.”
And according to Sydney Shoemaker, their mere possibility suffices to show that ordinary memory-based self-ascriptions are in principle liable to error through misidentification. It is merely a contingency that they are not affected by it.

In contrast, according to Gareth Evans, the possibility of quasi-memories, even if granted, shows nothing about ordinary memory, and judgments of the kind indicated remain immune to error through misidentification not merely in fact but tout court. I shall enlarge on Evans’s grounds for this view shortly—here it will suffice to say that Evans takes it that misidentification, correctly so termed, should involve a false identity belief—in the example above, that that woman is Aunt Miriam. But in cases of judgment based on apparent memory, the identity of the subject seems to be built in from the start: perhaps I was not in that remote part of Scotland five years ago, but the false memory impression already identifies me as its subject. By contrast, in the Aunt Miriam case, there is a correct visual impression—that the woman in question is wearing a red hat—and it is her that I misidentify.

The immunity to error through misidentification of (some) self-ascriptions has been held to have very far-reaching metaphysical or semantic implication. Surely the self would have to be a very special kind of object to be unmistakeable in this way! Famously, Wittgenstein reacted in the opposite direction, taking the phenomenon to show that, in relevant cases, “I” is not used as a device of reference at all but is better assimilated to the merely grammatical subject of reports of the weather. G.E.M. Anscombe radicalized this view to apply to all self-ascriptions. In a similar vein, Shoemaker’s and Evans’s respective positions have been taken as the starting point of defenses of radically contrasting conceptions of persons and personal identity: to wit, the neo-Lockean view espoused by Derek Parfit and the “animalist” conception defended by John McDowell. 5

5 See Parfit, Reasons and Persons (New York: Oxford, 1984), pp. 220, 222; and McDowell, “Reductionism and the First Person,” in Jonathan Dancy, ed., Reading Parfit (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 230–50. According to Parfit, memories, as such, have an identity-neutral content and can give one information about the life of a specific human being only through the identification of oneself with the person whose life is responsible for the memories one is having. Such an identification might be wrong but, more importantly, it could be made by different future selves. This would be the case if, with an appropriate brain transplant, one’s memories could survive in two (or more) different brains, belonging to two (or more) different human beings. Psychological continuity would then be preserved at the expense of personal identity.
What we face in this area is a vivid example of what Christopher Peacocke has recently called the “Integration Challenge,” that is, the challenge of integrating metaphysics with epistemology. And surely both the Cartesian and Wittgensteinian positions provide us with examples of bad responses to the challenge. A prima facie peculiar aspect of the epistemology of self-ascriptions—the seeming (im)possibility of going wrong in identifying their subject (at least in some cases)—provokes a jump to “an exotic domain of the transcendent” or an implausible semantics, where what is needed instead is, in Peacocke’s phrase, “revising and deepening one’s epistemology.”

The considerations to follow are offered in the spirit of that suggestion. Even if we are confident that immunity to error through misidentification is compatible both with the view that selves are identical to living human beings and that “I” is a genuinely referring expression, the fact is that there has so far been little agreement either about the correct characterization of the phenomenon, or its extent. And important aspects

The driving thought behind McDowell’s position is that memories have immediate and irreducible first-person content. According to him, this is so because memories have the specific, biologically-selected function to retain, for each specific human being, information about his own past, and make it immediately available to him in the first-person mode of thought. Memories, therefore, are situated in the life of a specific human being and this latter fact, contrary to what Locke and Parfit seem to maintain, cannot be abstracted away in giving an account of persons and their identity. For an illuminating discussion of Parfit’s and McDowell’s positions, see Carol Rovane, “Personal Identity: Ethical Not Metaphysical,” in Graham F. MacDonald and Cynthia MacDonald, eds., McDowell and His Critics (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), forthcoming.

6 Peacocke, Being Known (New York: Oxford, 1999), p. 263. The task of locating the exact source of such a challenge in the case of reflections on the self—whether in what Peacocke calls the phenomenon of “representational independence” or in something else—falls outside the scope of this paper.

7 Evans, McDowell, Peacocke, and Crispin Wright in his “Self-knowledge: The Wittgensteinian Legacy,” in Wright, Barry Smith, and Cynthia McDonald, eds., Knowing Our Own Minds (New York: Oxford, 1998), pp. 13–45, just to mention the most prominent figures, have all made these points. The arguments are usually that immunity to error through misidentification is common to both some uses of “I” and, for example, to perceptual demonstrative judgments, for which there is no temptation to think they may not refer; and that immunity is a function of the absence of any identification component in the rational grounds for a given first person judgment and not of the fact that either there is no self to be identified in the first place, or that the identification is secured by the special kind of entity presented to one for recognition.

8 With respect to the former issue, we will see in the following that matters are far from being settled. With respect to the latter, nowadays nobody would agree with Wittgenstein’s position that all and only psychological self-ascriptions are immune to error though misidentification (but for a different interpretation of Wittgenstein’s position, see Brian Garrett, “Wittgenstein and the First Person,” Australasian Journal of Philosophy, LXIII (1995): 347–55). Since Shoemaker and Evans, it has become commonplace to hold that also nonpsychological self-ascriptions, such as those based on memory, perception, and somatic proprioception, as well as perception-based demon-
of the epistemology of the first-person judgments involved remain unclear. It is with the bearing of the Shoemaker-Evans dispute on these matters that I will be primarily concerned in this paper.

A useful discussion of some of the issues is James Pryor’s.9 His conclusion is that a proper understanding of the Shoemaker-Evans dispute should lead us to acknowledge two quite different kinds of error through misidentification—what he labels “de re” and “which-object” misidentification—involving respectively quite different structures of grounds and different kinds of mistaken belief. Below I shall argue that Pryor’s distinction is misguided in detail. However, I accept—and shall argue—that there is a (different kind of) distinction to draw, and that drawing it will allow us to reconcile the positions of Shoemaker and Evans. Let me start by outlining the Shoemaker-Evans dispute in more detail.

THE SHOEMAKER-EVANS DISPUTE AND PRYOR’S RESOLUTION

Surely there is something right about Shoemaker’s view. Once one accepts the notion of quasi-memory, it seems that I might have apparent memories as of, say, being in a particular remote part of Scotland five years ago, which in fact causally derive from someone else’s past. And in such an event, according to Shoemaker, my judgment, “I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago,” would be affected by an error of misidentification. There would be someone who was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago, and I would be right about that, but wrong about whom. Yet Evans’s counter seems powerful too. It is that even in those abnormal conditions, there would be no “identity-neutral” memory content, such as “I seem to remember someone being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago,” which could lead to the relevant self-ascription only via a collateral identity belief such as “I = the person whose past I seem to remember now.” Indeed, it is because the very content of my apparent memories is that

strative judgments are immune to error through misidentification. Moreover, since Evans (see pp. 219–20), it has been widely held that inferential psychological self-ascriptions are liable to error through misidentification. Finally, John Campbell by appealing to the phenomenon of “thought insertion”, whereby schizophrenic patients claim that they have a given thought which is not theirs, has gone so far as to argue that also noninferential ones can be liable to such an error—see “Schizophrenia: The Space of Reasons and Thinking as a Motor Process,” The Monist, lxxxii (1999): 609–25. (For a discussion critical of Campbell’s position, see my “Thought Insertion and Immunity to Error through Misidentification,” and “What There Really Is to Our Notion of the Ownership of a Thought,” Philosophy, Psychology and Psychiatry, ix, 1 (2002): 27–34, 41–46; and Campbell’s reply “The Ownership of Thought,” Philosophy, Psychology and Psychiatry, ix, 1 (2002): 35–39.)

I was in that place five years ago that I do not require collateral information bearing on whether I am identical to the person whose past is responsible for them, in order to be rationally justified in holding that I was. However, if my self-ascription is not arrived at and supported by my holding any suitable identity belief, then, according to Evans, there is no scope for the former to be affected by error through misidentification. No doubt such a self-ascription would be mistaken in the kind of case envisaged—I was not in that remote part of Scotland, after all. Still, it would not be mistaken because I have misidentified the person who instantiates the property of having been in that place five years ago, but, rather, because I am suffering from the illusion of having myself been in the place in question five years ago. I am not misidentifying anybody, but merely attributing to myself a property that I do not have.

It would perhaps be an overstatement to call this opposition a paradox, but it is undeniable that both theorists seem to have a point. There is indeed a strong intuition that, as Evans holds, memory impressions, no matter what their causal origin might be, have irreducible first-personal content and that the self-ascriptions based on them, being free of reliance on any collateral identification, are therefore immune to error through misidentification. Still, it is equally intuitive

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10 See Evans, pp. 235–48; McDowell, pp. 239–41; Wright, p. 20.

11 Another reason why Evans has often been taken to prevail in the dispute is that he construed error through misidentification as a case in which although one’s final judgment may be mistaken, one still retains knowledge that some (other) person was (or appeared to be) F. However, in deviant causal conditions, a subject who is storing memory information from someone else’s past cannot read off, from the content of his apparent memories, that someone else was F precisely because their content is as if he was F. As Evans put it, in discussing the parallel case of self-ascriptions based on somatic proprioception: “If the subject does not know that he has his legs bent (say) on this basis (because he is in the situation described, [that is, he is receiving proprioceptive information from someone else’s body], then he does not know anything on this basis. (To judge that someone’s legs were bent would be a wild shot in the dark)” (p. 221, see also pp. 244–45). Notice, however, that even so, the subject would still be a reliable indicator of someone else’s past. Hence, if he was given the additional information that he is storing information from someone else’s past he would, by means of his apparent memories, gain knowledge of someone else’s past.

Now, Evans allowed for the possibility of informing the subject of the fact that he could store information deriving from someone else’s past. But, in that case, he thought that the subject would also be “in the position of knowing that the information was not being received in the normal way” (p. 27n [emphasis mine]). So he agreed that the relevant identification-free judgments rest on an assumption, namely, the assumption that the information underpinning them is stored in the usual ways. But be denied that they rested on an identity assumption (p. 186). That is to say, he denied that they rested on an assumption such as “I = the person whose past I seem to remember now.” There will be more about such identity assumptions and their precise role in licensing the relevant judgments in the sequel.
to hold, with Shoemaker, that in the abnormal conditions envisaged, there would be an error of misidentification. After all, there would be someone who has the property of having been in that remote part of Scotland five years ago—it is just that the person in question is not whom I take him/her to be. So it would be a welcome result if both these intuitions could somehow be respected. Indeed, I submit, it is exactly because Shoemaker’s position has been taken to imply the denial of the fact that memory impressions, no matter what their causes might be, have irreducible first-person content that it has been contested. Yet the point remains that Evans’s position too involves denying a prima facie powerful intuition: that in the abnormal conditions envisaged there would be an error not of predication—after all I rightly judge that someone was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago—but, rather, of identification of the person who instantiates that property.

Pryor’s suggestion is accordingly welcome. It is that distinguishing between two different species of error through misidentification—his respective categories of de re misidentification and which-object misidentification—lets us settle the conflict. For although it is true that memory-based self-ascriptions cannot be afflicted by the former kind of error, because they are based on irreducibly first-personal contents and are, therefore, identification-free, just as Evans says, they can nevertheless be afflicted by the latter, since, as we shall presently see, this variety of error through misidentification supposedly does not involve a belief in any (mistaken) identity judgment. Pryor’s own announced intention is to vindicate Shoemaker’s position against Evans. But in effect what he suggests is a way of doing justice to

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12 See, in particular, Evans, pp. 240–48; and McDowell. It should be noticed, however, that while Shoemaker himself held the view that memory-based self-ascriptions are grounded in first-personal memory impressions (Shoemaker, Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity (Ithaca: Cornell, 1963), pp. 33–34) and yet, in the abnormal conditions envisaged, may be liable to error through misidentification (Shoemaker, “Introspection and the Self,” in his The First Person Perspective and Other Essays (New York: Cambridge, 1986), pp. ???–???, see p. 15), it is in fact Parfit (pp. 220, 222), who has contributed to spreading the view that memory-based self-ascriptions are always based on identity-neutral memory impressions and arrived at by holding in place the relevant identity beliefs.

13 See Pryor, pp. 274–76, 282, 284.

14 Friends of disjunctivism about memory should read Pryor’s claim as being about the grounds for I-judgments based on (apparent) memories. Accordingly, while I-judgments based on (apparent) memories would not be grounded in identificatory beliefs, they would nevertheless be grounded in beliefs such as “I seem to remember being in Scotland five years ago,” that remain liable to which-misidentification.

15 Pryor, p. 272: “I will show how we can put these distinctions to use in assessing a debate between Shoemaker and Evans about whether first-person memory-based beliefs are immune to error through misidentification. I will argue that, with respect to the most interesting sort of immunity, Shoemaker is right: our first-person memory-based beliefs do not have that sort of immunity.”
both their respective intuitions and a possible dissolution of their disagreement. For if we accept his proposed distinction we can say that while Evans was right on the former—allegedly less interesting—understanding of error through misidentification, Shoemaker too was right, on the latter—allegedly more interesting—understanding of it.

**Pryor’s Two Varieties**

Let us turn, then, to the detail of Pryor’s proposal. Consider the Aunt Miriam example. Suppose I am at a car park and see a woman with a red hat approaching. I mistakenly take that woman to be my Aunt Miriam. Hence, I form the judgment “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat.” My judgment can be seen as rationally grounded on a pair of beliefs, namely, the belief “That woman is wearing a red hat” and the belief “That woman = Aunt Miriam.” Call the former the *predication component* and the latter the *identification component*. Error through misidentification is naturally viewed as arising when, in a case of this general structure, the identification component is mistaken.17

This, I submit, is the paradigm case. The following three features are salient in it:

1. Paradigmatic error through misidentification proper does not involve mispredication. It involves neither a mistaken impression of what sort of object one is presented with, nor a mistaken attribution of a given property to that (successfully targeted) object. Rather, it involves the mistaken identification of that object with another—the object of one’s eventual judgment.

2. In consequence, error through misidentification can arise only if one’s grounds allow one to make an independent singular judgment (in the example, “That woman is wearing a red hat”). For since error through misidentification, properly so regarded, consists in the mistaken identification of the object, which instantiates a given property \( F \), the grounds at one’s disposal in making the judgment must be such as first to license a singular judgment about that object.

3. Finally, when paradigmatic error through misidentification occurs, the very same grounds that support the singular judgment will, if the eventual judgment is defeated, survive as grounds for a corresponding existential generalization. In our example: my visual grounds for “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat” are such that, although that judgment is defeated—since, as it turns out, the person I am seeing is not Aunt

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16 See the previous footnote.
Mindful of these three considerations, let us move directly to review Pryor’s second kind of error through misidentification—“which-misidentification.” (Pryor’s first kind of error through misidentification—the de re one—is relevantly close to the paradigm case just reviewed.) Pryor offers the following example to illustrate the general idea:

I smell a skunky odor, and see several animals rummaging around in my garden. None of them has the characteristic white stripes of a skunk, but I believe that some skunks lack these stripes. Approaching closer and sniffing, I form the belief, of the smallest of these animals, that it is a skunk in my garden. This belief is mistaken. There is a skunk in my garden, but it is not the small animal I see.19

The epistemological structure of the case, Pryor suggests, is as follows:20

(i) A subject has some grounds $G$ that offer him knowledge of the existential generalization that something is $F$.
(ii) Partly on the basis of $G$, the subject is also justified, or takes himself to be justified, in believing of some further object $a$ that it is $F$.
(iii) But in fact $a$ is not $F$. Some distinct object $b$ is $F$, and it is because the grounds $G$ “derive” in the right way from this fact about $b$ that they offer the subject knowledge that something is $F$.21

Note that it is crucial to this point that the grounds considered be exactly those that support the independent singular judgment. For, if we allowed for grounds other than the ones that support the independent singular judgment to license the relevant existential generalizations, it would then be possible to turn judgments into a case of error through misidentification ad libitum. To illustrate: suppose that I have prior testimonial grounds for the belief “Someone (in the car park) is wearing a red hat.” I look and see Aunt Miriam seemingly wearing a red hat. I then judge “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat.” However, as it turns out, Aunt Miriam is not wearing a red hat but a dark orange one. My visual grounds for the singular judgment “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat” would be defeated, yet my antecedent testimonial grounds would survive as grounds for “Someone (else in the car park) is wearing a red hat.” Obviously, however, my retained entitlement to the existential generalization would not turn my singular judgment “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat” into a case of error through misidentification properly so regarded.

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19 Pryor, p. 281.

20 In fact, Pryor’s which-misidentification is partly reminiscent of Wright’s characterization of error through misidentification, which is as follows:

A judgment of the form “a is $F$” is liable to error through misidentification iff its grounds are such that, if defeated, they would survive as grounds for the corresponding existential generalization (Wright, p. 19).

However, while Wright requires the very grounds for the singular judgment to be such as to survive as grounds for a corresponding existential generalization, once defeated, Pryor does not. There will be more about this in the sequel.

21 Pryor, p. 282 (with minor changes in the notation). This characterization is slightly revised later on in the paper (p. 284) in order to account for different kinds of defeating
In Pryor’s view, then, \textit{which-misidentification} does not require that one’s grounds for the eventual judgment include an identification component at all. The key difference between it and the paradigm above is that while, in the latter case, the grounds I have for my judgment justify me in believing \textit{of} some particular object \(b\) that it is \(F\), and I mistakenly take \(b\) to be identical with \(a\), in a case of \textit{which-misidentification} my grounds do \textit{not} justify me in believing \textit{of} a particular object \(b\) that it is \(F\) but only that \textit{something} is \(F\). As Pryor puts it: “In cases of \textit{which}-misidentification, I go wrong not in \textit{re-identifying} the thing I know to be \(F\) as some other thing; rather I go wrong in figuring out \textit{which thing} is \(F\) in the first place.”\textsuperscript{22}

It is then this feature of which-misidentification that, as Pryor intends, allows us to respect, on the one hand, Evans’s intuition that memory-based judgments are identification-free, while acknowledging, on the other hand, Shoemaker’s intuition that these judgments can be affected by error through misidentification when one is in fact storing memory information deriving from someone else’s past. Simply: such judgments, in Pryor’s view, are immune to \textit{de re} misidentification because they do not rest on any identification component, but are open, in principle, to which-misidentification.

Strikingly, an immediate problem with Pryor’s proposal is that even if he were right in inviting us to distinguish between these two kinds of error through misidentification, his template—and clause (i) in particular—will allow which-misidentification to apply to memory-based judgments only if their grounds are identity-\textit{neutral}. My apparent memory would have to be conceived as first giving grounds for the existential claim “Someone was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago” which would then have to be somehow connected to the eventual judgment about myself. So the proposal in effect merely invites a restatement of Evans’s original objection—that it simply distorts the epistemology involved to suppose that memory provides such identity-neutral grounds.

Be that as it may, a deeper problem with Pryor’s proposal emerges. Reflect that, on his view, the skunk example is said to be a case of error through misidentification because it involves identification of one object rather than another as the instance that verifies the evidence and for the possibility of the falsity of the existential generalization. For present purposes, the first, simpler characterization of which-misidentification will suffice.

\textsuperscript{22} Pryor, p. 283.
existential quantification for which the thinker has independent grounds.23 But how exactly, in the circumstances of the example, is that identification arrived at? On reflection it seems evident that the rational grounds underlying the identification may as well be conceived as follows. I smell a skunky odor and this gives me grounds for:

(1) The animal (in my garden) which is actually responsible for this odor I can smell is a skunk.

I go closer to one of the animals and sniff, while I can still smell the skunky odor. I then judge “This animal is a skunk” because I believe:

(2) This animal (I can now see) = the animal (in my garden) which is actually responsible for this odor I can smell.

So the resulting judgment—that this animal is a skunk—now has a similar structure of grounds to the paradigm case, and since the animal that is visually presented to me is not the one that is actually responsible for the odor I can smell (nor is it a skunk), my judgment is false precisely because the identification component, (2), is mistaken.

Once the case is thus represented, it exhibits all the characteristic features of error through misidentification in the paradigm case. It is a case of misidentification of the animal which is causally responsible for the skunky odor I can smell. Moreover, the olfactory grounds at my disposal allow me to make a singular judgment and my visual grounds, in turn, allow me to identify one particular object as the one which my olfactory grounds represent as having the property of being a skunk. Finally, the defeat of (2)—the identification component—is compatible with the retention of the original (olfactory) grounds for the belief in the singular predication component (1), “The animal (in my garden) which is actually responsible for this odor I can smell is a skunk,” from which the existential generalization follows.24

I therefore want to grant that Pryor’s paradigm example of which-misidentification may indeed be construed as a case of error through misidentification. But, when it is, the claim that it illustrates a different kind of error through misidentification, which does not involve as part of one’s grounds a belief in an identification component, is wrong. For, when it is properly reconstructed, the example offered

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23 I would like to thank an anonymous referee for making me see this point.

24 The fact that Pryor’s example involves mixed grounds shows that if one wished to read it as a case of error through misidentification properly so regarded then the following features will be salient. All grounds at a subject’s disposal in forming the relevant judgment are such that they independently sustain a singular judgment and, were they to be defeated, they would remain as grounds for the singular predication component, from which the existential generalization would follow.
by Pryor is merely one further illustration of the usual structure of grounds underpinning error through misidentification.

The source of Pryor’s mistake lies, I suggest, in too narrow a conception of the range of concepts which may feature in an identification component. An identification component may involve either de re concepts—that is, concepts which are grounded in identifying knowledge of their unique instances, like the concepts “That person” and “Aunt Miriam” in the recognition-based example I started with. Or else, it may involve non-de re but still singular concepts (hereafter, just “singular concepts”) that are not grounded in identifying knowledge of their unique instances, like “The animal (in my garden) which is actually responsible for this skunky odor I can smell.” The difference intuitively is this. Our thought can be directed onto a specific object in two different ways. It can be directed onto it by taking it to be the unique object that satisfies a given property—in Pryor’s example, the property of being the animal in my garden that is actually responsible for the skunky odor I can smell. Or else, it can be directed onto it in virtue of the fact that a subject has identifying knowledge of it—knowledge which, in typical cases, enables him to identify it perceptually among other objects.25

So it is true, as Pryor has it, that when I make an error through misidentification in the latter kind of case, I go wrong in reidentifying a, because I wrongly take b to be the single instance of the corresponding de re concept “A.” Similarly, it is true, as Pryor suggests, that in the former case, I go wrong in identifying which object is the one that satisfies a given uniquely identifying property. For instance, in our example, I mistakenly take this animal I can see in front of me as the one which is actually responsible for the skunky odor I can smell. Still,

25 It may well be that if one allows for de re mathematical concepts (see, for instance, Saul Kripke’s unpublished but widely circulated Whitehead Lectures on de re mathematical knowledge), then the identifying knowledge that would enable one to have such concepts would not depend on any kind of perceptual, or perceptual-like identification of the relevant objects. The intuitive thought behind the idea that there may be both de re empirical concepts and de re mathematical ones is this: in both the empirical and in the mathematical case, for certain instances of x, the question “The number of F s is x, but which number is x?” and the question “x is F (or the F), but which object/person is x?” would not make sense. For present purposes, however, it is enough if being able perceptually to identify a material object is a sufficient condition for (and the normal way of) having de re concepts of empirical objects.

Notice, however, that the mathematical case is relevant in order to motivate the view that genuine identification components can contain not only de re, but also singular concepts. For in mathematics this would be the usual case. For instance, “7+5=12” or “|9|=3” would all be identity judgments involving a singular concept on the left hand side—the number which is the sum of 7 and 5” or “the number which is the absolute value of the square root of 9”—and a de re concept on the right hand side—“12” or “3.”
there is no difference in the structure of the grounds underpinning my final judgment. In both cases they involve a belief in a false identification component. The difference resides, rather, in the character of the concepts configured in that component.

To sum up: error through misidentification, I am proposing, properly construed, always depends on the presence of a false identification component as part of the grounds for a given judgment. Yet, the constituents of such a component may vary, being either de re concepts, or merely singular ones. Pryor’s error, I want to suggest, consists in his interpreting the possibly different nature of the conceptual ingredients featuring in one’s grounds for the relevant judgments as a difference in the structure of those grounds.

Unfortunately, however, it is rapidly evident that even this emended version of Pryor’s distinction no longer subserves the thought that Shoemaker was right to take the kind of error that might be induced by a mere quasi-memory as an error of misidentification—as an error resting on a belief in a false-identification component. For, once again, what would the false identification component be? Suppose I merely quasi-remember being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago. Then the structure of grounds that would let us assimilate the example to the skunk case would be somewhat as follows:

1. The person whose past I seem to remember now was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.
2. I = The person whose past I seem to remember now.
3. I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.

If my judgment of (3) was indeed grounded in this way, and mistaken because (2) was mistaken, then it would involve error through misidentification in the corrected sense latterly elicited from our criticism of Pryor’s notion of which-misidentification. But it appears once again a decisive point in Evans’s favor that this utterly misrepresents the way in which ordinary memory claims are normally grounded, in which no role is played by identification components on the model of (2). The issue was whether, without tampering with that ordinary structure of grounds, the mere possibility of quasi-memory would introduce scope for error through misidentification. Pryor’s case for an affirmative answer does not survive. For we have seen first, that his notion of which-misidentification is spurious; second, that in any case it does not deliver the intended result without serious distortion of the grounds of the memory judgments typified by our leading example; and third, that a correct account of the intent of his principal example can be superimposed on memory judgments only, again, at the expense of serious distortion of their grounds.
It remains to be seen how something in the spirit of Pryor’s proposal may yet be redeemed.

**Varieties of Grounds and of Error Through Misidentification**

The previous discussion has urged that error through misidentification arises when and only when a judgment is rationally based on a mistaken identification component. Liability to error through misidentification is accordingly a squarely *epistemological* phenomenon: it is intrinsic to the character of the grounds a thinker possesses for a judgment, and belongs to its subject matter or semantics only in so far as they restrict its possible grounds to those of the appropriate kind. This claim is accepted by much discussion in this area; in particular—it is accepted by both Pryor and me. Although, as we have seen, he thinks that something properly described as misidentification may occur in cases where there is no identification component among the grounds, and I reject this. But the reader may at this stage be puzzled. For have I not just signaled an intention to make a proposal about the Evans-Shoemaker dispute broadly similar in spirit to Pryor’s? And how is that to be done if not by contrasting two different kinds of error through misidentification? And how is such a contrast to be made if it is insisted that all cases of such error share a common structure of grounds?

Well, I do in fact want to accept a qualification of that latter point: while all cases of error through misidentification, properly so viewed, do indeed involve a mistaken identification component, it is also true—as I shall later illustrate—that a mistaken identification compo-

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26 See, for instance, Evans, chapters 6, 7; Peacocke, *Sense and Content*, pp. 143–44.

27 Evans, McDowell, Peacocke, Pryor, and Wright.

28 The point is not taken universally. In my “Error through Misidentification, the Split between Speaker’s and Semantic Reference and the Real Guarantee,” this JOURNAL, c, 8 (August 2003): 216–31, I discuss extensively those interpretations of error through misidentification which take it to be a *referential* mistake, such as Elisabeth Anscombe, “The First Person,” in Simon Guttenplan, ed., *Mind and Language: Wolfson College Lectures 1974* (New York: Oxford, 1975), pp. 45–64; Andrea Christofidou, “First Person: The Demand for Identification-free Self-Reference,” this JOURNAL, xcii, 4 April 1995): 223–34; and Rovane, *The Bounds of Agency* (Princeton: University Press, 1998). On these latter views, when that error occurs, in using “*a*” one would in fact refer to the person visually presented to one, rather than to its semantic referent. So, in the Aunt Miriam example, when I am in the car park and I mistake a red-hatted woman approaching for Aunt Miriam, by saying “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat” I would be (speaker-)referring to the woman who is actually approaching and not to my aunt. Since they do not find this outcome plausible in the case of the use of “*I*,” they conclude that self-ascriptions are (almost) always immune to error through misidentification. In the paper I put forward the view that such an interpretation might in fact be based on a conflation between (immunity to) error through misidentification, the (im)possibility of a split between speaker’s and semantic reference and what I label the “real guarantee”: namely, the fact that any competent use of “*I*” is such that the speaker knows which object is its semantic referent, namely, *oneself*. 

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nent can nevertheless feature in differently structured sets of grounds. But that point is not the basis of the distinction I want to draw. Rather, I want to focus on what it means to say that a judgment which is liable to error through misidentification is rationally grounded in certain component beliefs or assumptions. My central contention will be that there are two intuitively quite different ways in which one judgment, or assumption, can ground another and that this distinction gives rise in turn to two potentially different ways in which an identification component can feature in the grounds for a given judgment, and thereby to two different kinds of error through misidentification. It will be the distinction so drawn that I think is of service in resolving the Shoemaker-Evans dispute.

Intuitively, we can distinguish at least three different kinds of roles items of information can play in providing the grounds of a given judgment $P$:

(*) The information may provide the premises for a conscious inference to $P$.

(I) The information, while not part of a conscious inference, may be what a particular (rational and appropriately conceptually equipped) subject would appeal to if he were requested to justify his judgment that $P$. In such a case, I shall say that the information enters into the subject's own rational grounds for the judgment.\(^{29}\)

(II) The information, while neither entertained in a process of conscious inference, nor part of the subject’s own rational grounds—part of what he would appeal to in order to justify his final judgment—may be such that, were it somehow to fall into question, a (rational and appropriately conceptually equipped) subject would be prepared to withdraw from the judgment that $P$. In such a case, I shall say that the information provides certain background presuppositions on which the subject’s final judgment rests.

We can set cases of kind (*) aside. For they involve no important epistemological differences from those of kind (I), contrasting only in whether the premises are used by a subject to arrive at his final judgment or to justify it \emph{ex post}. The important difference is between cases of kind (I) and (II)—between rational grounds and presuppositions. To illustrate it, consider the following example.

(I) I see someone in the distance and, immediately taking her to be my Aunt Miriam, judge “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat.” If, then, I had to justify my judgment, I would appeal to the relevant identification and predication components respectively (“Look, that’s Aunt Miriam—and see, she is wearing a red hat”). In such a

\(^{29}\) A somewhat similar point is made by Peacocke, \textit{Sense and Content}, pp. 143–44.
case, my judgment would be grounded in those components, although it was not arrived at through a process of conscious inference involving them.

(II) I again form the recognition-based judgment “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat” immediately. But if I were now to learn that, as a matter of fact, Aunt Miriam has an absolutely identical twin sister, nobody has ever heard of, and that she is in the neighborhood, I would be prepared to withdraw from my judgment. So my judgment rested on the background presupposition that Aunt Miriam is immediately visually recognizable—a presupposition that is defeated by learning that she has an absolutely identical, local twin sister. Plausibly, however, in order to be justified in forming the original recognition-based judgment “Aunt Miriam is wearing a red hat,” it is not required that I (be able to) enumerate all its implicit background presuppositions, nor find out whether they have been met. They are taken for granted. Still, if any of them were somehow subsequently called into doubt, that would defeat my justification for the judgment.30

My proposal is, simply, to apply this distinction to the case of error through misidentification. Depending on how a (mistaken) identification component actually features, a judgment can be affected by an error through misidentification that occurs either (I) in the subject’s own grounds for it or, (II) in its background presuppositions.

Construing the role of the identification component as in (I) will contribute towards accounting for error through misidentification from the perspective of the subject. For, on such a construal, despite the

30 I am relying on the fact that the distinction between a subject’s grounds and a judgment’s background presuppositions is evident, although, of course, its further clarification may require additional work. Notice, moreover, that such a distinction is ubiquitous. Take for instance the judgment “Here’s my hand.” A subject’s own grounds for it will, presumably, be given by his perceptual experience. Its background presuppositions, in contrast, will be that there is an external world, that he is not now dreaming, that his sense organs are working properly, and so on. So, were them to fall into doubt, he would have to withdraw from his final judgment. Still, this does not mean that he should be able to enumerate them and make sure they have been met in advance of forming his judgment.

For a discussion of whether the background presuppositions need in turn to be warranted (as such and not by the actual subject who is making a perceptual judgment) in order for the final judgment to be warranted, or whether it is enough for them not to be substantially questioned or doubted, see Wright, “Facts and Certainty,” Proceedings of the British Academy, lxxi (1985): 429–72 and his “(Anti-)sceptics, Simple and Subtle: Moore and McDowell,” Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, lxv (2002): 330–48; and Pryor’s “The Skeptic and the Dogmatist,” Nous, xxiv (2000): 517–49—here see pp. 537–38, respectively. So, in my view, although they do not explicitly distinguish between the subject’s own grounds for a given judgment and the background presuppositions of it, the best way of interpreting their dispute is to read it as bearing on whether background presuppositions need (or need not) be warranted.
fact that a subject may not have gone through any process of con-
sscious inference, he himself would appeal to the—as it happens, 
mistaken—identification component if he were asked to justify his 
own judgment. This contrasts sharply with cases of kind (II). None-
theless, construing the role of the identification component as in (II) 
can offer an important insight into the part that component may play 
in the epistemic structure underlying certain judgments—character-
istically, judgments we can make about our bodies, our physical loca-
tion and—crucially for the Shoemaker-Evans dispute—our past. 31 Let 
me briefly explain what I take this insight to be.

Consider again my judgment, “I was in that remote part of Scotland 
five years ago,” when based on memory. In such a case my own ra-
tional grounds would consist in—and be exhausted by—my apparent 
memory of my being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago. 
Yet, that apparent memory can provide a warrant for “I was in that 
remote part of Scotland five years ago” only so long as the identity, “I 
am the person whose past I seem to remember now,” is not called into 
doubt. Obviously, my final judgment need neither be inferred from, 
nor—from my own point of view—rationally grounded in that iden-
tity. Yet, it does rest on it as a presupposition. Were that identity to 
fall into doubt, I ought to withdraw from my final judgment (even 
though, to stress again, the fact that a subject should withdraw from a 
judgment, once apprised of the questionability of certain claims, does 
not suffice to make those claims into part of his own rational grounds 
for that judgment; he may never have considered them and may have 
no specific evidence in their favor.)

To illustrate the two different roles identification components can 
play, let us contrast the judgment “I was in that remote part of Scotland 
five years ago,” made on the basis of my memories, with the same judg-
ment made on the basis of finding out a piece of information in a diary, 
after, for instance, having lost any recollection of a visit to Scotland. In 
the latter case, the self-ascription could have the following grounds:

(1) The person who wrote this diary was in that remote part of Scotland 
five years ago.
(2) I am the person who wrote this diary.
(3) I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.

31 It should be kept in mind that in the literature on error and immunity to error 
through misidentification cases of self-ascriptions based on personal memories like “I 
was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago,” on somatic proprioception, such as 
“My legs are bent,” and on the perception of one’s environment, such as “I am in front 
of my car” are usually treated on a par. I will not expound on the latter cases. Arguably, 
however, they will rest on the background presupposition “I = the person from whose 
body I am now receiving perceptual/proprioceptive information.”
Here, the role of the identification component—(2)—is indeed that of rationally grounding the self-ascription of the property of having been in that remote part of Scotland five years ago, which would otherwise be rationally unjustified. If I did not believe (2), I would not be rationally justified in self-ascribing the property of having been in that remote part of Scotland. I would only be justified in believing that someone—the person who wrote the diary—was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.

Contrast the case in which “I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago” is once again based on my current memory impressions. Here, as remarked, the structure of the grounds is:

1. I seem to remember being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.
2. I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.

And the crucial thing to notice, just as Evans insists, is that premise (1) already involves a self-ascription, since I seem to remember being myself in that remote part of Scotland five years ago. The role of the background presupposition

0. I am the person whose past I seem to remember now.

is merely that of sustaining the passage from the self-ascription of the property of seeming to remember being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago to the self-ascription of the property of actually having been in that remote part of Scotland five years ago. So, the presence of identification components featuring merely as background presuppositions allows for the possibility of judgments—like “I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago” when based on one’s memories—which, despite being grounded in irreducibly first-personal contents, and having no identification component among their grounds at all from the subject’s point of view, may in principle yet presuppose a false identification.

THE RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE I: TWO VARIETIES

It remains to review the disagreement between Shoemaker and Evans more explicitly in light of this proposal. The question we must address is whether it is possible to rescue Shoemaker’s position, once it is acknowledged with Evans—as I do—that (apparent) memories have irreducible first-person content and that judgments based on them are not rationally grounded on any identification component. The suggestion for which I have been preparing allows of two versions. On the one hand, one might propose that there are, after all, two varieties of error through misidentification—respectively, error through misidentification rela-
tive to one’s grounds, and error through misidentification relative to background presuppositions—which can be defined as follows.

Error through misidentification relative to the subject’s own rational grounds: a judgment of the form “a is F” is affected by error through misidentification if and only if the subject’s own rational grounds for that judgment contain a mistaken identification component.

Error through misidentification relative to background presuppositions: a judgment of the form “a is F” is affected by error through misidentification if and only if a mistaken identification component features as part of its background presuppositions.

Two corresponding varieties of immunity to error through misidentification would then be characterized thus:

Immunity to error through misidentification relative to the subject’s own rational grounds: a judgment of the form “a is F” is immune to error through misidentification if and only if the subject’s own rational grounds for that judgment do not contain any identification component.

Immunity to error through misidentification relative to background presuppositions: a judgment of the form “a is F” is immune to error through misidentification if and only if no identification component features as part of its background presuppositions.

One may then argue that while memory-based judgments are in fact immune to error through misidentification relative to the subject’s own rational grounds—since the latter are based on irreducibly first-personal contents and, therefore, do not contain any identification component—they remain liable to error through misidentification relative to their background presuppositions, in so far as the latter contain identification components that, in certain—no doubt remote—circumstances, might be called into question or substantially doubted. Evans would then be right on the former understanding of immunity to error through misidentification, while Shoemaker would be right on the latter.

**THE RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE II: MERELY ONE VARIETY**

That has a pleasing simplicity. One may worry, however, about a notion of error that does not require the subject’s going wrong about anything—indeed, a notion of error that allows that a thinker may be mistaken through misidentification even though possibly lacking the conceptual resources to entertain the relevant belief. But just that is provided for by the characterized notion of error though misidentification relative to background presuppositions. One may therefore feel inclined to insist that it is best to countenance merely one variety of error through misidentification—that is, error relative to the subject’s
own rational grounds for his judgment—and that Shoemaker’s position rests in effect on a confusion of presuppositions and grounds. On this view, there would be no scope for redeeming Shoemaker’s view: if memory-based self-ascriptions are based on irreducibly first-personal contents, and therefore involve no relevant identification component in their rational grounds, then in the metaphysically abnormal, so to say, condition of quasi-memory one’s judgment will be false alright, but will not involve any mistake of identification.

This, however, would be a hasty conclusion. For the presence of a suitable identification component in the background presuppositions of a subject’s judgment makes for the possibility that in metaphysically and—more importantly—epistemically abnormal conditions, the subject’s memory judgments could be grounded in an identification component. In particular, they might be so grounded if the subject were also informed, prior to making his judgment, of the live possibility that he might be storing memory information deriving from someone else’s past. Knowledge of the fact that he might be (quasi)-remembering someone else’s past, together with grounds for supposing that this live possibility did not in fact obtain, would—in a rational subject—have the effect of moving the relevant identities from the role of tacit presuppositions into the role of the subject’s own acknowledged rational grounds. Asked to justify his final judgment “I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago,” he could then reasonably offer the following: I seem to remember being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago, and I am, fortunately, the person whose past is responsible for my occurrent seeming memories. In such a scenario, the final judgment would, after all, be liable to error through misidentification relative to the subject’s own grounds.

On this proposal Evans would once again be right in holding that the relevant judgments are immune to error through misidentification, because no identity belief features as part of subject’s rational grounds for such judgments in normal cases. But Shoemaker would be right at least to the extent that this normal epistemic architecture is a contingency—that once informed that I might be storing memory information deriving from someone else’s past, it could no longer rationally be taken for granted that I was not, and my memory judgments would after all rationally require grounding in a fallible identification component.

Note that, even if so, Evans’s contention that (apparent) memories have irreducibly first-personal contents would be respected. For, as we saw, the role of the identification component in this case is merely to license the passage from the self-ascription of seeming to remember
being $F$ to the self-ascription that one \emph{was} $F$. More explicitly, the subject’s own grounds for his judgment would be:

(1) I seem to remember being in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.
(2) I am the person whose past I seem to remember now.
(3) I was in that remote part of Scotland five years ago.

Since importing the identification component from the background presuppositions into the grounds does not challenge Evans’s point, this second proposed resolution of Shoemaker’s and Evans’s disagreement respects both their fundamental intuitions.

**Corollary**

A corollary of our findings is that the distinction between \emph{de facto} and \emph{logical} immunity to error through misidentification, originally introduced by Shoemaker, and recently challenged by many theorists, can now be properly characterized and endorsed.

As is familiar, Shoemaker’s distinction has been taken to amount to the view that while, for instance, memory-based self-ascriptions are immune to error through misidentification \emph{in this world}, where memory information is stored in the usual way, they would not be so in

\footnote{“Persons and Their Past.” It should be mentioned that “Self-reference and Self-awareness,” on p. 82, introduced yet another distinction: that between \emph{absolute} and \emph{circumstantial} immunity to error through misidentification: “First-person statements that are immune to error through misidentification [are] those in which ‘I’ is used ‘as subject’, [and] could be said to have ‘absolute immunity’ to error through misidentification. A statement like ‘I am facing a table’ does not have this sort of immunity, for we can imagine circumstances in which someone might make this statement on the basis of having misidentified someone else (such as, the person he sees in a mirror) as himself. But there will be no possibility of such a misidentification if one makes this statement on the basis of seeing a table in front of one in the ordinary way (without aid of mirrors, etc.); let us say that when made in this way the statement has ‘circumstantial immunity’ to error through misidentification relative to ‘I.’ Shoemaker’s distinction is drawn on the basis of the subject matter of the judgment, namely, whether it is a psychological or a nonpsychological self-ascription. As such, however, it cannot be sustained. It has in fact become commonplace to hold that, on the one hand, also nonpsychological self-ascriptions can be immune, when made on certain grounds and, on the other, that psychological, inferential self-ascriptions (at least) can be liable to error through misidentification. Thus, it should be replaced by the following: there are different kinds of grounds on which \emph{any} kind of self-ascription can be made and, among them, only some would lead to judgments that are immune to error through misidentification. In contrast, all kinds of first-personal judgments—individuated by their subject matter—can be either liable to, or immune to error through misidentification, depending on the “circumstances,” that is, the grounds, on which they are made.}

\footnote{I take it that Evans and McDowell do both at least implicitly challenge the \emph{de facto} side when they deny that a mere difference in \emph{metaphysical} conditions would make memory-based self-ascriptions liable to error through misidentification. Campbell,
different metaphysically possible worlds where one is storing information deriving from someone else’s past. In contrast, psychological self-ascrptions based on introspection would be immune to error through misidentification in all possible worlds. Accordingly, the distinction would be merely metaphysical: while certain judgments would be immune to error through misidentification only in this world, others would be so in any metaphysically possible world. But, the question is, how could that be? It is agreed that in this world judgments such as those based on occurrent memories are not grounded in any identification component. So how could a mere transfer to a metaphysically possible situation bring about such an error, if that error can arise only when the judgment is grounded in an identification component and there is no such grounding in the relevant kind of case?34

The previous discussion helps us answer these questions, albeit while giving us reasons to qualify the original characterization of the de facto/logical distinction. Judgments, I propose, will be de facto immune to error through misidentification if contingently true identifications—which may be false in other metaphysically possible worlds—feature as part of their background presuppositions. So, while metaphysical conditions will be relevant to the determination of the truth value of such identification components, it is their very presence in the epistemic structure underlying a given judgment which makes for its only de facto immunity (either relative to one’s grounds or to background presuppositions, depending on one’s theoretical preferences).

In contrast, Shoemaker’s category of judgments that are (rather unhappily described as) logically immune to error through misidentification will be the ones that either have no identification component as part of their background presuppositions—such as perceptual

34 This is indeed the kind of complaint Evans and McDowell would raise; but see the previous footnote.

“Schizophrenia, the Space of Reasons and Thinking as a Motor Process,” and Rovane, The Bounds ofAgency, pp. 220–32, openly challenge the logical side of it. While I have voiced my perplexities about Campbell’s and Rovane’s proposals elsewhere (see my “Thought Insertion and Immunity to Error through Misidentification,” “What There Really Is to Our Own Notion of the Ownership of a Thought,” and “Immunity to Error through Misidentification, the Split between Speaker’s and Semantic Reference, and the Real Guarantee”), in the following I will argue that Evans and McDowell can, at most, claim for a revision of that notion in a more epistemologically-oriented direction, whose proper explanation crucially depends on allowing for the existence of identification components as part of a judgment’s background presuppositions, contrary to Evans’s official position (cf. footnote 11).
demonstrative judgments like “That thing is approaching very fast”—or else, have an *a priori* true one—such as introspection-based self-ascriptions of occurrent psychological states, which at least some theorists construe as based on identification components like “I = the thinker of this thought.” For in the former case there would be no identification component which could give rise to an error of misidentification (either relative to one’s grounds or relative to background presuppositions). And, in the latter, no matter what role the identification component played, it could not sensibly be questioned, or called into doubt.

These considerations suffice to show, I think, that Shoemaker’s *de facto/logical* distinction, developed along the epistemological lines I have been suggesting, is in good standing. Both its categories can be explained and exemplified. But it remains an open question—and, indeed, one well worth pursuing—whether other routine psychological self-ascriptions, for instance of thoughts or sensations, also have identification components as part of their background presuppositions and whether, in such a case, it is an *a priori* true one. I personally side with Shoemaker in thinking that they do not, but other theorists, such as Peacocke, have supported this claim and other still, like John Campbell, think that the phenomenon of “thought-insertion” is proof of the fact that such an identification component is not even a *a priori* true. This issue will have to be taken further on another occasion.

My central point here has been that merely by “revising and deepening our epistemology”—specifically, by invoking the distinction between grounds and presuppositions—we can more satisfactorily resolve the Shoemaker-Evans dispute, in indeed either of two ways, than any resolution proposed hitherto and—in the course of doing so—shed more general light on immunity to error through mis-

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35 This example is in Wright, “Self-knowledge: The Wittgensteinian Legacy,” p. 20.
36 See Peacocke, *Sense and Content*, pp. 109–11; and *Being Known*, p. 275; also Rovane, *The Bounds of Agency*, pp. 220–32. Shoemaker “Self-reference and Self-awareness,” p. 89, in contrast, holds that it is a “tautology” that in being aware of a given mental state one is aware that it is instantiated in oneself. Hence, on his view, introspection-based psychological self-ascriptions would be logically immune to error though misidentification because they would not contain any identification component as part of their background presuppositions.
37 Notice, finally, that if immunity to error through misidentification (either relative to one’s grounds or to background presuppositions) could depend on the presence of an *a priori* true identification component, that would require a parallel revision of the corresponding definitions. Furthermore, it would imply the falsity of Evans’s equation between immunity to error through misidentification and identification-freedom.
38 But see my exchange with Campbell (cf. footnote 8) as well as my “Quelle ‘clé pour toutes les mythologies’ concernant le soi? Une note sur la question de savoir d’où viennent les illusions de transcendance et comment leur resister,” *Philosophie* (2006), forthcoming.

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identification in first-person judgment. And, not surprisingly, none of the considerations we have reviewed requires or even remotely suggests the adoption of a bizarre metaphysics of the self or of a peculiar semantics for “I.”

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