

I. Locke on ideas and mental powers

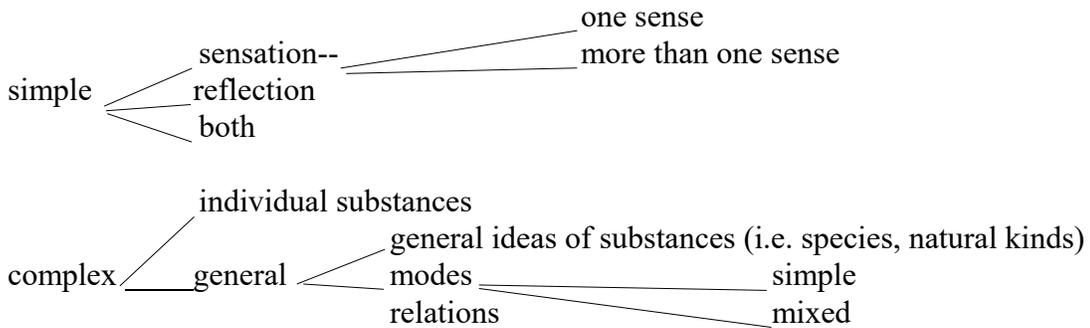
--the "idea"-idea

External-ideas vs. Internal-ideas

--L's empiricist model of the mind, and how it works:

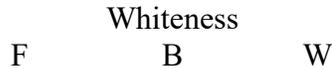
Things---> Blank tablet + God-given mental powers-->ideas
input ---> Us --->output

--Types of ideas:



--The Acquisition Thesis, and 2 consequences: (i) limits of intelligibility; (ii) philosophical analysis

--Locke on abstraction: platonism vs. constructivism; how abstraction happens:



II. Locke on perception

--to perceive is: to have simple ideas of sensation. 3 consequences: (i) what's the direct object (direct vs. indirect objects)? (ii) perceptual atoms; (iii) simple ideas never invented

--Molyneux's problem: (1) how is the sight of the cube perceived?

(2) can she tell the difference between visual and tactile cube?

--2 consequences: (1) atomic, uninterpreted ideas first

(2) simple ideas neither innate nor invented

III. Primary qualities and secondary qualities

--simple sensory ideas: more than one sense vs. one sense only

--qualities of objects: (i) PQs vs. ideas of PQs

(ii) SQs vs. ideas of SQs

(iii) TQs vs. ideas of TQs

ISQs intervene

--Two Problems Generated:

--Problem I (Berkeley's): how to tell PQs from SQs

No sense independent access

--Problem II (Plato's): do either IPQs or ISQs ever necessarily represent objects accurately?

- (i) same distal object/different proximal stimuli
- (ii) different distal objects/same proximal stimuli

IV. L's theory of corporeal substance

- so what's a substance?
- L's critique of traditional metaphysical realism: "real essences"/SIKNW
- L's cautious epistemological (scientific) realism: the "corpuscularian" hypothesis + "real internal constitution" + "microscopical eyes"
- Is it possible to be both an epistemological realist and an empiricist?

V. L's critique of metaphysical mental substance: SIKNW+L's anti-substance-dualism (poss: thinking bodies w/o souls).

- why souls are wheels spinning, unconnected to anything in the world of experience

VI. L's Problem of Personal ID

Follows from critique of incorporeal substances: if the latter are SIKNWI know myself only by means of the impressions (ideas of reflection) left by the effect on my awareness of my mental powers being exercised, and whatever underlies these is a SIKNW, how do I establish who I am?

--The concept of identity:

Physical ID; simple vs. over time (space/time worms)

ID over time: hunks of matter vs. living bodies

ID across living bodies: human beings vs. persons

--The Problem of Personal ID:

why we need to know who we are:

praise, blame and responsibility are impossible w/o it

can't give a history of the world w/o it

If my ID depends on my body, how to tell if I am same person after death?

what if god puts me in a different body?

if my body changes, do I become someone else?

--L's analysis of personal ID (PID):

(PID): x is one identical person iff x extends the same self-c'ness over a present conscious perception of at least a certain set S of memories.

--Problem I: lapses in self-c'ness

lapses in c'ness

L's response: (PID*)

--Problem II: Thomas Reid's objection

A: flogged child

B: brave in battle L's response: (PID**)

C: became a general

--Problem III: split brains. L's response?

I. Locke on Ideas and Mental powers

What is an idea for JL? "That which comes before the mind/that which is the object of the mind when it thinks." JP: this contains a problem. Sense perceptions 'come before the mind' as much as mathematical objects. So are ideas representations (i.e., internal objects), or are they also something else? The perceptual objects do not seem to be representations, but things (i.e., the outside cause of the inside rep). But if E-ideas are just external causes of internal ideas, which are the only true mental contents, then RD's scepticism steps in to ask: how do we know that the causes of the representations are really out there?

Since JL's empiricist model of mind involves God-given mental powers, are these not (saith JP) innate structures of mind, and does this not make JL a kind of innatist?

For JL, origin of ideas is "Input, external things perceived + god-given mental powers = output, ideas".

Simple ideas of reflection are those generated by reflection on our powers (thinking about what I heard, e.g.).

All the rest of the ideas must be buildable from the three types of simple ideas. This building is made possible by action of our mental powers.

JL's acquisition thesis: all ideas are either simple or complex. This is the heart of empiricist theory of ideas. Ideas either are acquired the way simple ideas are, or the way complex ideas are. And nothing else. This provides JL with two tools: can circumscribe the limits of what is intelligible (if it is properly acquired, it is intelligible, if not, not) and have here a ready-made analysis of how concepts are acquired, in what their content consists, and hence can give a complete analysis of all concepts using this empiricist acquisition thesis. A devastating meaningfulness criterion is herein embedded.

How abstraction works: you have two experiences (or more) of different objects and notice that each has associated with it a common simple idea (i.e., a common simple sensation, like whiteness). The mind then forms a new idea, which corresponds to what is common in the two sense experiences, which is the abstract idea "white". It is nothing more than the idea of what individual sense experiences have in common.

idea="immediate object of perception, thought, or understanding"

quality="the power [in an object external to the mind] to produce any idea in our mind"

primary qualities: solidity, extension, figure, motion/rest of x's insensible parts, and number.

secondary qualities: various sensations in us which have no counterpart in the real object, but are caused by primary qualities as they affect our senses. Also, the power in the object to change some of these secondary qualities over time.

II. Locke on Perception

--to perceive is: to have simple ideas of sensation. 3 consequences: (i) what's the direct object (direct vs. indirect objects)? (ii) perceptual atoms; (iii) simple ideas never invented

--Molyneux's problem: start with a cube and a ball: if you learned what a cube and a ball are via touch alone (since you were blind up until today), and then saw for the first time each, would you be able to pick out which is which? JL says no.

--Two conseq's: atomic, uninterpreted ideas come first (two dimensions visually, for example, later ideas like 'cube'); these atomic ideas are neither innate nor invented.

III. Primary vs. Secondary Properties

JL thinks we have, then, two kinds of simple ideas: those based on one sense only, and those based on more than one sense. JL then suggests the diff betw these two kinds of simple ideas reflects a diff in the corresponding objects in the world. The qualities which come in thru more than one sense are primary. These accurately represent the world. Those which come thru one sense only do not accurately represent the world (or 'reflect what is in the object'). A sec. qual. is based on a prim. qual., but only reflects how we respond to the primary quals. So, ideas of prim. quals. accurately repr. what is in the object, whereas ideas of sec. quals. do not. (JP: it seems it is the embedded relations betw prim qual's, nec for coordinating the qual's detectable thru diff senses so as to generate a single idea/quality, that distinguishes prim. from sec. qualities.)

This account of PQ's and SQ's, and associated ideas, generates two problems for Locke:

Problem I: the ideas of sec. qualities always intervene betw us and the prim. quals.

Problem II: can have same distal object but two people get diff. proximal stimuli (one of us is very close to it, the other far away); e.g., octagonal cone vs. smooth cone. Also the converse: diff. distal obj., same proximal stimuli. These phenomena suggest maybe neither IPQs or ISQs ever nec repr. objects accurately. JL has an answer: the theory of corporeal substance.

IV. L's theory of corporeal substance

--what's a material substance? That which really exists outside the mind, and which accounts for our perceptions

--L's critique of metaphysical substance: "real essence" = something-I-know-not-what [SIKNW] (effort to say what is big error of rationalist metaphysics)

--L's empiricist, realist alternative: the "corpuscularian hypothesis"

(Boyle)+"microscopical eyes". I.e., if there were no perceivers, SQs would disappear but PQs would stay. These would be attributes of corpusecles, out of which things are constructed, and that construction would exist without perceivers.

--the Worry about L's realism: look, what justific. do I have for believing that I will ever know primary qualities as they are in themselves (since we make errors in detection of these, and only get them via SQs)? Secondly, how then do we know that things actually do have primary qualities?

V. L's critique of mental substance

What do we know about the immortal soul, based on empirical experience? Well, we have ideas of refl. about our own mental powers, and clearly we have c'ness, memories, desires, beliefs (various ideational mental contents). JL says: are these the soul? No, since the latter is a unity, and these various properties are not any of them a unity. The soul is the substrate which underlies all of these, but we do not know anything about that.

JL also says: what would you add or subtract to/from these various mental powers and contents by introducing a soul? JL's answer: nothing. So, souls are like little wheels that are not connected to anything, spinning in a vacuum (for metaphysical purposes of explanation). NOTE: JL is possibly a property dualist, that is, he seems to acknowledge that there are mental properties and there are physical properties. Question: would mental properties be included among the Primary Qualities of the world? Answer: no. But what is JL's account of how our God-given mental powers arise from purely extensional entities (corpuscles)? Is this a gap in his account of mind?

VI. L's Problem of Personal Identity

Both physical and mental anti-substance Lockean stance: after properties appropriate to each domain are extracted, what's left? Nada. In the latter case, couldn't God insert a set of mental properties into a body, but leave out a soul? How would this differ from the same thing with a soul added? So, although JL is not a subst. dualist, he shows one can take property dualism and support the claim that minds & bodies can be conjoined (does JL avoid all the problems assoc'd with mind/body problem?--I do not think so).

A conseq. of this anti-substantialism: problem of personal ID. What stays the same thru changes (the substantialist says: the sub-stance)? Here he is focused on this problem for individual minds (but in the form of personhood). JP notes that moral concerns (praise, blame, responsibility, not to mention the ground of value) requires persons to get under way.

The concept of identity:

The first and most obvious thing about identity: space/time properties which locate x at a spime coordinate. Simple identity is of this kind. Then notice objects tend to retain identity over time. So ID is not simple ID, but simple ID over time. Now, what to think of gains/losses of material constituents? Is everything which retains its quantity of matter over time identical? No.

Are living bodies identical if they have different constituent matter? (Individuality of matter vs. individuality of organized beings whose organization individuates). JL thinks what makes identity is bio-functions (bio-systemic properties). That system has a history. Now, since bodies can stay the same & person change (prince & the cobbler), what is a person? (see above for this Lockean account of PID).

Prob I: a) does person ID survive loss of c'ness? JL response: S memories + later exp's which are connected by the power to extend self-consciousness over present consciousness & the S set of memories.

Prob II: Reid's Objection

B remembers A & supports A=B

C remembers B & supports B=C

C forgets A & doesn't support A=C.

JL's answer: look in the reading. (Hint: does set S of memories need to remain constant, with nothing ever lost, or can some core set of memories suffice?)

Prob III: Split brains. Left hemisphere has same set of memories as right hemisphere. Are these identical? One person or two? JL seems req'd to say two by the ego part of his criterion, one in virtue of the memory part. Conundrum.