

## 0 Simple and complex ideas

Simple ideas: of one sense; or of more than one sense: space, extension, figure, rest, motion

Complex ideas of modes: combinations of ideas taken to represent things that cannot subsist by themselves

Complex ideas of substances: combinations of ideas taken to represent distinct particular things subsisting by themselves

## 1 Primary and secondary qualities

Remember, simple ideas are the materials out of which other ideas are made, and they come from either sensation or reflection.

“Whatever the mind perceives in itself or is the immediate object of perception, thought, or understanding, that I call *idea*, and the power to produce any *idea* in our mind I call a *quality* of the subject in which that power is.” (2.8.8)

Primary qualities are those qualities that bodies must have, no matter how they are altered, and no matter whether they are being perceived: solidity, extension, figure, mobility, number

Secondary qualities are the powers in objects to produce sensations in us by their primary qualities: the power of fire to produce in me a sensation of heat or yellow

Tertiary qualities are the powers in objects to produce changes in other objects: the power in fire to produce a new color in wax

### On ideas of primary and secondary qualities

- Primary qualities produce ideas in us by impulse.
  - “And since the extension, figure, number, and motion of bodies or an observable bigness may be perceived at a distance *by* the sight, it is evident some singly imperceptible bodies must come from them to the eyes, and thereby convey to the brain some *motion* which produces these *ideas* which we have of them in us.” (2.8.12)
- Ideas of primary qualities resemble their causes; ideas of secondary qualities do not.
  - Fire at one distance produces warmth, but from a closer distance produces pain; these are not *in* the fire.
  - Manna (2.8.18)
  - Almond (2.8.20)
    - An almond produces whiteness and sweetness in us.
    - But when pounded, it produces a dirty color and an oily taste.
    - There is no difference between the unpounded and pounded almond except its texture etc..
    - Therefore it must be its primary qualities that produce ideas of secondary qualities in us.
  - Water (2.8.21)
    - The same water may (at the same time) produce warmth in one hand and cold in the other.
    - If secondary qualities were in objects, then this could not be the case.
    - Therefore secondary qualities cannot be in objects.

## 2 Power and freedom

Active power: ability to make change

Passive power: ability to receive change

On ideas of active and passive powers

- Our idea of passive power comes from observation of our sensing; our idea of active power comes primarily from reflection on operations of our own minds.
- Will and understanding are powers.
  - Will is the power to order the performance of or abstention from action.
    - Action is either thought or motion.
    - So will is the power to order the consideration/nonconsideration of ideas, and prefer the motion/rest of parts of the body.
      - Volition is an exercise of the will
      - Voluntary action is the result of volition
  - Understanding is the power of perception.

Liberty is the power in an agent to do or refrain from a particular action, according to the preference of the mind.

- An action may be voluntary without being free: man in locked room.
- "...where anyone is such that we have power to take it up, or lay it by, according to the preference of the mind, there we are *at liberty*." (2.11.12)
- It doesn't make sense to talk about a will's being free.
  - First, freedom is a power, and the will is a power, and powers don't have powers.
  - Second:
    - "...a man is not a liberty to will or not to will, because he cannot refrain willing, liberty consisting in a power to act or to refrain acting, and in that only." (2.11,24)
    - "Since it is plain that in most cases a man is not at liberty whether he will or not, the next thing demanded is *whether a man is at liberty to will which of the two he pleases, motion or rest?* This question carries its absurdity so manifestly in itself that one might as a result sufficiently be convinced that liberty does not concern the will. For to ask whether a man is at liberty to will either motion or rest, speaking or silence, which he pleases, is to ask whether a man can *will* what he *wills*, or be pleased with what he is pleased with? A question which, I think, needs no answer; and they who can make a question of it must suppose one will to determine the acts of another, and another to determine that, and so on *in infinitum*." (2.11.25)
- Nonetheless, a person may be free when he or she has the power to do what he/she wills.