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Philosophy

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Reading Question 4

Locke, "Qualities and Ideas" (Essay . . .) – pp. 86-90

1. Explain in your own words what Locke means by a "quality" of matter.

Locke describes matter as having an inherent quality that cannot be taken away or changed in any way from it, and it is a quality that cannot be taken away from anything relating to a body or object. According to him, the elements that he identifies as part of the elements of his list are solidity, extension, shape, motion or rest, and number. It is Locke's opinion that a grain of wheat, as an example, will retain its solidity, extension and shape no matter how many times it is divided, regardless of how many times it is split. This is true even if you split the grain many times.

2. Give three examples of Locke's Primary Qualities, and three examples of Secondary Qualities. How does Locke explain the key differences between Primary and Secondary Qualities?

A primary quality is defined by Locke as the property that one believes to be a property of objects which are unrelated to the eyewitness, for instance their strength, their expansion, their movement, their number, or their figure. For the purpose of explaining their argument, they basically are saying that the objects belong to the object and that they cannot be changed. He does this by taking a variety of examples to illustrate this point, such as texture and motion, in order to gain a better understanding of this point.

In addition to primary qualities, Locke also presents us with secondary qualities. These are qualities that are believed to be properties that produce sensations in observers, such as the senses of taste, smell, and sound. Also, it can be interpreted in a way that can be portrayed as a message that impacts the things that an individual may have and can affect the things that they may be doing.

One of Locke's points is that the primary qualities (such as solidity, figure, extension, motion and rest), which are actual physical properties, differ from secondary qualities (such as colour, taste, and smell), which are simply the effects of such real properties on the mind, that these real properties are merely the effects of such real properties on the mind.

3. Present an example from Locke's writing that describes a material object in terms of its fundamental primary qualities versus its secondary qualities, and how Locke's distinction makes sense of the reality of that object.

Among the characteristics of marigolds, Locke cites the bright yellow color, the distinct flavor, and the distinct perfume it has. Ultimately, it is only after that that we can comprehend and recognize the shape of the flower in its actual form, and therefore, we can agree that it is, in fact, a flower when you see it with your own eyes.

The ability to form any ideas in our minds, the quality of the [thing] wherein that power resides, is what I call the idea of whatever the mind senses in itself or what the immediate object of perception, thought, or understanding is. A quality, according to Locke, can be defined as that characteristic of a substance that gives rise to emotions that enable us to form opinions about that substance.

Berkeley, "Nothing Outside the Mind" (Principles . . .) – pp. 97-102

4. Explain Berkeley's criteria for "existence" - what does he think we mean when we say something is "real" or that it "exists"?

According to Berkeley, there is a precise distinction between things that are real and things that are imaginary. As a criterion for existence, this concept that I imagine exists solely in my mind alone, and it remains alive only as long as I continue to think of it, in my head. There is no doubt that what is real exists in different minds, so I do not believe we can be opposed to its existence, regardless of whether or not we believe it or grasp this perspective.

5. Based on his definition of existence, why does Berkeley think we should not believe in the existence of independent Primary Qualities? What does this mean about the existence of matter?

This idea of independent primaries is rejected by Berkeley because he believes it causes optimism due to the idea of independent qualities. There is a reason for this, because when we think of primary qualities like figure, solidity, motion and rest, these qualities can also be found in our minds as well. Material parties that are independent of each other. Bodies. Her objection to this idea is that it implies that our bodies are almost nothing like what we experience when we see them with our senses. Due to this being the case, it does not support the concept of matter as a means of explaining the existence of the ideas that are formulated within the mind of the individual.

6. As a result of his critique of materialism, explain what Berkeley has to say about the ultimate source of all the sensory experiences we receive.

We collect sensory experiences from the environment because of the ideas we can think about as we relate them to our own sensory perceptions, according to Berkeley. Our inability to conceive of mind independent objects is due to our lack of experience with the unconceived state. It is due to the fact that we are unable to comprehend objects that have not been thought about.