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

I believe what Locke meant by "quality" of matter is a characteristic/quality of an object. According to Locke, matter is the main building block of the world in its physical form, and its properties what make matter what it is. For example, an object's color, shape, size, etc. are considered properties of matter.

Three examples of Locke's Primary Qualities are size, shape, and motion. Three examples of Locke's Secondary Qualities are color, taste, and smell. Locke says that the main difference between Primary and Secondary Qualities is that Primary Qualities are ones that are objective and can be measured in some way. Secondary Qualities are one that are subjective, and they can change based on a person's perspective of them.

One 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 is description of the snowball. It describes it in primary and secondary properties. The primary properties it gave were shape, motion, and extension. The secondary properties of the snowball were color, taste, and texture. It is dependent on the person who is observing it. Locke's distinction makes sense of the reality of that object because of its primary qualities. Those primary qualities are definite while the secondary qualities can vary.

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

The idealism of Berkeley, which argues that only perceptions and ideas exist and that material things are only groupings of ideas in the mind, is closely tied to his standard of existence. Berkeley says that when we describe to anything as "real" or "existing," we mean that it can be perceived or is at least able of being perceived. In other words, whether or not an object can be viewed by people, or is actually seen, determines whether or not it exists. According to Berkeley, things only qualify as "real" only they are able to be viewed by a mind or do so, and they do not exist outside of it. He gave the example of a tree falling in a forest and no one hears it, and argued that a tree cannot exist in any meaningful way because no mind can see it.

Berkeley argued that our perception of the world is entirely determined by our sensory experience. So, we can only talk about what exists in our heads and cannot reference anything outside our heads. Berkeley said that to say something exists is to say that it is seen or can be seen. He argues that we should not believe in the existence of independent primary properties because we cannot see them without perceiving their secondary properties. Since our perception of primary qualities is tied to our perception of secondary qualities, Berkeley felt that primary qualities exist only in our perception,

not in the world itself. This means that Berkeley denies the existence of matter as it would regularly be understood, things that exist outside of our thoughts and that contain primary properties that can be seen without reference to secondary properties. In Berkeley's view, matter is a construct of the human mind, and what we see as matter is really just a group of ideas that exist in our heads. So, according to Berkeley, there is no such thing as a physical thing outside of our mind.

Berkeley did not accept the idea that material objects exist independently of perception. He felt that God is the ultimate source of all sensory experience received. According to Berkeley, objects are not things that exist independently of the mind; they are ideas that the mind is constantly perceiving. These thoughts are caused by God, who constantly creates them in our heads. So the existence of objects depends whether they are seen or not. In other words, for Berkeley, to be is to be perceived. He said that if an object is not seen, it does not exist. This perspective is subjective idealism and it says that the only reality that exists is that which the mind sees.