

## Ankara Üniversitesi Açık Ders Notları

### PHI 107 EPISTEMOLOGY I

#### TOPIC 4:

**John Locke, *Essay Concerning***

***Human Understanding***

**(Book I, Chapter i)**

§ 8. Thus much I thought necessary to say concerning the Occasion of this

Enquiry into humane Understanding. But, before I proceed on to what I have

thought on this Subject, I must here in the Entrance beg pardon of my Reader, for

the frequent use of the Word *Idea*, which he will find in the following Treatise. It

being that Term, which, I think, serves best to stand for whatsoever is the Object

of the Understanding when a Man thinks, I have used it to express whatever is

meant by *Phantasm, Notion, Species*, or whatever it is, which the Mind can be

employ'd about in thinking; and I could not avoid frequently using it.

I presume it will be easily granted me, that there are such *Ideas* in Men's

Minds; every one is conscious of them in himself, and Men's Words and Actions

will satisfy him, that they are in others.

Our first Enquiry then shall be, how they come into the Mind.

**(Book II, Chapter i)**

§ 2. Let us then suppose the Mind to be, as we say, white Paper, void of all Characters, without any *Ideas*; How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy and boundless Fancy of Man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of Reason and Knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, From *Experience*: In that, all our Knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives it self. Our Observation employ'd either about *external, sensible Objects; or about the internal Operations of our Minds, perceived and reflected on by our selves, is that, which supplies our Understandings with all the materials of thinking*. These two are the Fountains of Knowledge, from whence all the *Ideas* we have, or can naturally have, do spring.

§ 3. First, *Our Senses*, conversant about particular sensible Objects, do convey into the *Mind*, several distinct *Perceptions* of things, according to those various ways, wherein those Objects do affect them: And thus we come by those *Ideas*, we have of *Yellow, White, Heat, Cold, Soft, Hard, Bitter, Sweet*, and all those which we call sensible qualities, which when I say the senses convey into the mind, I mean, they from external Objects convey into the mind what produces there those *Perceptions*. This great Source, of most of the *Ideas* we have, depending

wholly upon our Senses, and derived by them to the Understanding, I call

*SENSATION.*

**(Book II, Chapter xxxii)**

§ 3. But 'tis not in that metaphysical Sense of Truth, which we enquire here, when we examine, whether our *Ideas* are capable of being *true* or *false*; but in the more ordinary Acceptation of those Words: And so I say, that the *Ideas* in our Minds, being only so many Perceptions, or Appearances there, none of them are *false*.

The *Idea* of a Centaur, having no more Falshood in it, when it appears in our Minds; than the Name Centaur has Falshood in it, when it is pronounced by our Mouths, or written on Paper. For Truth or Falshood, lying always in some Affirmation, or Negation, Mental or Verbal, our *Ideas* are *not capable* any of them *of being false*, till the Mind passes some Judgment on them; that is, affirms or denies something of them.

§ 4. When-ever the Mind refers any of its *Ideas* to any thing extraneous to them, they are then *capable to be called true or false*. Because the Mind in such a reference, makes a tacit Supposition of their Conformity to that Thing: which Supposition, as it happens to be *true* or *false*; so the *Ideas* themselves come to be denominated.