

## JOHN LOCKE (1632-1704)

Locke's law of nature is normative ('ought'), unlike Hobbes' 'scientifically' descriptive ('is') method

- How is this, Locke's "moralized state of nature", arguably the biggest difference between Locke and Hobbes?
- See two key quotes, IPT p. 86

### Key Questions

- What is the role of God and Christianity in Locke's political philosophy?
- Roberts and Sutch say that "even if we fail to live up to [the moral law's] requirements it is still there. We have a normative scale by which to judge our condition". What is this passage implying about the different 'moral bars' society places, and about whether it's better to set the moral bar higher or lower?
- What is the **two-step social contract**, and how is it distinct from Hobbes' conception?
  - Jean Hampton's 'alienation social contract' and 'agency social contract'
- "Hobbes may give good reason to think of our state *as if* it were an absolute power (the appalling nature of anarchy etc.) but he cannot prove that the state should be absolute. This is a vital argument, for if political power is not absolute...then the way we view politics is radically different." (IPT 112) How so?
- "governments sometimes claim that 'rights' claims can undermine the effectiveness of rule. Which is more important, stability and effective rule or liberty? Deciding which of these must be sacrificed, or where to find the balance between them, is the core of politics" (IPT 114)
- Our social contract rarely involves **express consent**, so what should we accept as **tacit consent**? (IPT 115)
- Why is Locke unconvinced that Hobbes' Leviathan would solve the problems experienced in (either Hobbes' or Locke's) state of nature? (MPT 66)

### *The Second Treatise, or An Essay Concerning the True Original, Extent and End of Civil Government*

#### Chapter V, "Of Property": the arguments from **dominion, labor, and money**

- Q) "Though the water running in the Fountain be every ones, yet who can doubt, but that in the Pitcher is his only who drew it out" (71) How might this argument be problematic on a larger scale?
- "As much as any one can make use of to any advantage of life before it spoils; so much he may by his labour fix a Property in. Whatever is beyond this, is more than his share, and belongs to others." Is this a satisfactory maxim?
- "No Body could think himself injur'd by the drinking of another Man, though he took a good Draught, who had a whole River of the same Water left him to quench his thirst." (72) Do you agree?
- What does it mean to say that "he who appropriates land to himself by his labour, does not lessen but increase the common stock of mankind"? (74)
- "[A Native American,] for want of improving [his land] by labour, have not one hundredth part of the conveniencies we enjoy: And a King of a large and fruitful Territory there feeds, lodges and is clad worse than a day Labourer in *England*." How is Locke framing the issue here? (Rousseau will take a different tack...)
- "Land that is left wholly to Nature...is called...waste; and we shall find the benefit of it amount to little more than nothing." Any thoughts?

Your thoughts on property? When, if ever, should property rights be limited, and how? Should animals be property? Genes? Humans? All plants? Some plants? And so on...

#### Chapter VIII, "Of the Beginning of Political Societies" – man is by nature "free, equal, and independent"

- "For if *the consent of the majority* shall not in reason, be received, as *the act of the whole*, and conclude every individual; nothing but the consent of every individual can make any thing to be the act of the whole." Do you agree?
- "Every one that is *born under the Dominion* of another may be so *free* too, and may become a Ruler, or Subject, of a distinct separate Government."
- Only "positive engagement, and express promise and contract" make a man a "*member of a commonwealth*"

**Introducing Rousseau:** property is the foundation of civilization, but civilization perverts humanity's 'natural' self