

Of Identity  
by Thomas Reid



# Thoughts on Existence

- ⊗ Indirectly challenges Presentism
- ⊗ Memory is absolute
- ⊗ Remembrance implies existence
- ⊗ Identity necessitates continual existence (opposed to successive)
- ⊗ “I am not thought, I am not action, I am not feeling; I am something that thinks, and acts, and suffers” (344)

# Definition of Identity

- “If you ask a definition of identity, I confess I can give none...” (344)
- States identity is indivisible, thus not made up of anything
- Leibnitz’s *Monad*
- Cannot be applied to pains, pleasures, or thoughts

# On Others' Identity

- ⊙ Determined from circumstances and leave room for doubt
- ⊙ Evidence of identity in others varies, regardless their identity is whole
- ⊙ Can only find similarity
- ⊙ Example: man claims thief stole his watch, watchmaker claims sold watch to such man, both claims based solely on similarity

# What does Reid Imply?

- ⊗ Identity can be likened to an element, for that reason your identity is purely you
- ⊗ By Reid's theory only you can fully define your identity
  - ⊗ “memory...gives undoubted certainty” (344)

# Reading Between the Lines

- ⦿ Using Reid's theories on identity, what does it mean to truly know someone? Can it be achieved?
- ⦿ What does this mean about passing judgment on others?