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# QUASI-BERKELEYAN IDEALISM AS PERSPICUOUS THEISM

Nicholas Everitt

In this paper, I argue that the kind of idealism defended by Berkeley is a natural and almost unavoidable expression of his theism. Two main arguments are deployed, both starting from a theistic premise and having an idealist conclusion. The first likens the dependence of the physical world on the will of God to the dependence of mental states on a mind. The second likens divine omniscience to the kind of knowledge which it has often been supposed we have of the contents of our own minds. After rebutting objections to these arguments, I conclude that both theists and non-idealists should be surprised and discomforted by my contentions.

## 1. Introduction

Berkeley famously maintained that physical objects are nothing but collections of ideas. From the *Commentaries*, we have the claim that

We see the Horse it self, the Church it self it being an Idea and nothing more. The House it self the Church it self is an Idea...<sup>1</sup>

while in the *Principles*, we find

...collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things.<sup>2</sup>

Equally famously, Dr. Johnson sought to refute Berkeley's position by kicking a stone:

Sir, I refute it thus.<sup>3</sup>

One does not have to be a follower of Johnson's blinkered commonsense to share his feeling that there is something obviously wrong with the Berkeleyan claim. One's first response is that the claim does not make sense, because it involves a category mistake. Just as (say) numbers could not turn out to be physical objects, so (one feels) it could not be the case that objects are collections of ideas. And if one gets beyond this feeling of there being a category mistake, the identification nevertheless



seems plainly mistaken (objects are publicly perceivable, distinct from perceivers, able to exist unperceived, etc., whereas none of these seems to be true of ideas or collections of them). Berkeley himself seems to have felt some embarrassment at the position he was defending, though he attributed this to the verbal formulation rather than to the substance of his thesis. In the *Commentaries*, he remarks

truly I should perhaps have stuck to ye word thing, and not mention'd the Word Idea.<sup>4</sup>

and in the *Principles*, we find the following objection with his reply to it:

But, say you, it sounds very harsh to say we eat and drink ideas, and are clothed with ideas. I acknowledge it does so, the word *idea* not being used in common discourse to signify the several combinations of sensible qualities, which are called *things*...But this doth not concern the truth of the proposition.<sup>5</sup>

I believe that Berkeley's position can be seen in a much more sympathetic light if viewed against a theological background. Berkeley's best-known route to his idealist conclusion went via his argument that to understand our claims about chairs, tables, etc., in terms of matter involved us in contradictions. But his idealist conclusion can be reached by two other routes, which I shall call the dependency route and the knowledge route. These have an interest different from and independent of the interest which attaches to Berkeley's own route. For Berkeley's idealism, even if not strictly implied by the theistic assumptions which he shares with his critics, is at least a much more natural expression of those assumptions than Berkeley's own arguments would suggest. To that extent Berkeley's position is more consistent than that of many of his critics—certainly more consistent than that of his theistic critics.

## 2. The Dependency Argument

Let us begin with the dependency route. We can conveniently take as our starting point the Cartesian concept of substance. Descartes takes over from earlier philosophers the concept of substance as that which can exist independently of other things.

By substance [he tells us] we can understand nothing other than a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other things for its existence.<sup>6</sup>

This definition can be interpreted in different ways, each way yielding substantial status to different items. If we take the independence to be causal independence, for example, we will get one extension for the concept of substance; and if we take it to be logical independence, we will get a different extension.

It is not entirely clear which of these two kinds of independence Descartes has in mind, perhaps in part because he does not have the modern distinction between causal and logical independence. But he appears to mean that in order to achieve substantial status, an item must display at least causal independence, i.e. it must not depend causally on the existence of anything else for its own existence. Given this rather demanding conception of substance, Descartes rightly draws the conclusion that only God could be a substance:

There is only one substance which can be understood to depend on no other thing whatsoever, namely God. In the case of all other substances, we perceive that they can exist only with the help of God's concurrence. Hence the term 'substance' does not apply univocally, as they say in the Schools, to God and to other things...<sup>7</sup>

Thus, when Descartes says that matter and minds are substances, they are substances in a different sense from that in which God is a substance. They are, as it were, second class substances, in that they depend on nothing other than God for their existence, in contrast to, e.g., attributes like thought and extension, which depend not just on God, but also on the existence of mental and material substances of which they are the attributes. So God is the only wholly independent being. In more familiar theological terms, he is the uncaused causer.

Now we need to focus a little more closely on what is implied by this conception of causation. Living in the shadow of Hume, we think naturally of causation as a relation between events. On this conception, the cause is something that happens at a time, then ceases to happen and does not thereafter continue to exert its causal influence. Thus, if the window broke because it was struck by the stone, the impact of the stone occurs at one moment, and is followed by the breakage of the glass. And for the glass to stay broken, the stone does not have to keep exerting its destructive power: it needs to hit the glass only once. On this conception of causation, the causative role of God in relation to the rest of the universe would consist in his creating the universe at a time, after which his creative power would no longer be required. And this is how Pascal interpreted Descartes's view of God's causative role:

I cannot forgive Descartes. He would gladly have left God out of his whole philosophy. But he could not help making him give one flip to set the world in motion. After that, he had no more use for God.<sup>8</sup>

But in fact this is a complete misunderstanding of the Cartesian conception of divine causal power. Descartes takes the metaphysical view that all created things have a continuous tendency to undergo annihilation. So if they are to remain in existence moment by moment, there has to be a constant opposing force to counter this annihilatory tendency. God not only has to create things in the first place: he also has to continue exercising this very same creative power, moment by moment, to keep things in existence. The moment he ceases to exercise his creative

power in respect of any created object, it ceases to exist. So, in Descartes's eyes, God not only gives the initial "flip" to which Pascal refers - he also supplies a continuous subsequent "flip" to keep things in existence. This comes out very clearly in a passage in the 3rd Meditation:

...a lifespan can be divided into countless parts, each completely independent of the others, so that it does not follow from the fact that I existed a little while ago that I must exist now, unless there is some cause which as it were creates me afresh at this moment - that is, which preserves me. For...the same power and action are needed to preserve anything at each individual moment of its duration as would be required to create that thing anew if it were not yet in existence. Hence the distinction between preservation and creation is only a conceptual one...<sup>9</sup>

Precisely the same thought is echoed by Spinoza in his *Ethics*:

...God is not only the cause of things coming into existence, but also of their continuing in existence.<sup>10</sup>

So the position we have reached is that God brings about the existence of the world of objects by the exercise of his creative power; and by the exercise of the same power, though under the different label of conservation, he keeps those objects in existence. There appears to be nothing Berkeleyan or suspiciously idealist about such claims. Rather, they express one strand of mainstream Western theism.

Now let us turn to the relationship between a human and the ideas in her own mind. In particular, let us focus on a situation in which she is consciously recalling events from the past. By the exercise of her will, she summons up thoughts of what she did the day before. Whether those thoughts come into her mind is up to her. If she chooses to summon them up, she can; if she chooses to keep them in the forefront of her mind, she can; and if she chooses to banish them, she can. Suppose we now add the plausible assumption that those thoughts do not exist antecedently to her thinking them, and do not continue to exist after she has stopped thinking them. Certainly the capacity to summon them up, and the capacity to dismiss them exist both before and after her conscious contemplation of the thoughts. But the thoughts themselves do not exist outside her consciousness of them; and whether she is conscious of them depends entirely on her will in the matter.

We can now see that there is a very striking parallel between the human mind and such thoughts on the one hand, and God and the objects in the world on the other. The person's thoughts are in a sense created from nothing (in the sense that they did not exist antecedently to her consciousness of them, unlike, e.g., written records of the past, which she might have consulted). They continue to exist for as long as she chooses to be conscious of them, and they exist only because she so chooses. The moment she chooses to cease to be conscious of them, they

cease to exist. They do not merely cease to be present to her: they are annihilated. Her thoughts are thus dependent on her mind in very much the same way that traditional theism thinks that the objects in the world are dependent on God's mind.

What I have here been illustrating in connection with memory will go for other mental states. Whenever our conscious thoughts are under our control, the parallel between our thinking and God's causal/conserving activity will be present. In addition to cases of memory, it would also be present in, e.g., cases of deliberation of an untaxing kind. I choose when to begin my deliberation, I keep it in existence by my free choice, and when I choose to stop deliberating, the deliberation ceases to exist. The mental states which will be excluded will be those which are not wholly under our control, either because we cannot summon them up in the first place (lapse of memory, inability to concentrate, etc.) or because we cannot get rid of them (obsessive thoughts which keep crowding in on us). But it remains true that a large range of typical cases of human conscious thought will have the features which I noted in the case of memory.

This, then, gives us the first alternative route (the dependency route) from traditional theism to idealism, going via the concepts of creation, causation, and will. In traditional theism, God is the creator and sustainer of all things. It is only because he continuously exercises his creative power or will that the whole physical universe continues to exist moment by moment. So chairs and tables are related to his mind, and in particular to his volitional nature, in very much the same sort of way that at least some of our conscious states are related to our minds. From here, it is clearly but a small step to declare that chairs and tables just *are* a certain sort of idea in the divine mind.

### 3. *Could Berkeley have accepted the dependency argument?*

It is clear that Berkeley could comfortably have accepted the dependency argument. As noted above, its central premise that everything is ultimately dependent on God is a tenet of orthodox theism, and one which there is no reason to think that Berkeley would have rejected. Further, the assumptions which the argument makes about the dependence of conscious states on the person whose states they are would have been acceptable to him. He would of course have envisaged persons as being just minds or spirits, not persons in the Strawsonian sense. But those assumptions about the nature of conscious states are neutral on the issue of how the term "person" is to be interpreted. So there are good reasons to believe that Berkeley would have accepted the premises of the dependency argument; and since the conclusion (i.e., idealism) is one of the things he was most concerned to establish, it is clear that the way is open to him to accept the dependency argument as I have stated it.

But further, there is some reason to think that Berkeley would have found the argument even more compelling than I suggested when I presented it. For Berkeley strengthens the parallel between God's relation to objects, and our relation to our thoughts, in two further ways. First, he interprets causation in terms of willing. For some thinkers, to say

that God causes something would not be to say anything about God's will. Spinoza, for example, while attributing causal powers to God, denies that God has a will. But the position is quite different with Berkeley, for he asserts that it is only in terms of will that we can understand causation at all:

...I have no notion of any action distinct from volition, neither can I conceive volition to be any where but in a spirit: therefore when I speak of an active being, I am obliged to mean a spirit.<sup>11</sup>

So the causal dependence of creation on God turns out to mean simply that God wills the created universe to exist; just as in the dependency argument, it is simply by our willing that some of our conscious states are brought into existence.

That gives us, then, one way in which claims peculiar to Berkeley allow him to accept a strengthened version of the dependency argument. But there is also a second way in which the Berkeleyan version of the argument could be stronger. For Berkeley at least flirts with a supplementary thesis which implies that a God-like dependency relation holds between a person and *all* of her conscious states. In the *Commentaries*, he writes:

While I exist or have any Idea I am eternally, constantly willing, my acquiescing in the present State is willing.<sup>12</sup>

A natural reading of this is that in respect of *all* the ideas I have, it is entirely up to me whether they are present to my mind, continue to be present to my mind, or cease to be present to my mind. And if we interpret Berkeley in this way the parallel between a person and her ideas on the one hand, and God and objects on the other, is even closer than I suggested above. For of course orthodox theism maintains that *all* objects in the universe, not just some subset of them, display the dependency relation which Berkeley is here attributing to all of our ideas.

This thesis that we are constantly willing is one that does not appear in his published writing, at least not if we construe it to mean that all our ideas are under our control. It is replaced by the incompatible view that at least some of the changes in our ideas occur without any input from our wills (from which he infers that the changes must be caused by some other spirit). So perhaps *this* strengthening of the dependency argument is not one which he could embrace consistently with his published writing. But he does not backtrack on the thought that in relation to that subset of ideas over which we do have control, we exercise a God-like power.

That this is not a forced reading of Berkeley's meaning is further confirmed by another passing remark which he makes, also in the *Commentaries*:

Why may we not conceive it possible for God to create things out of Nothing. certainly we our selves create in some wise whenever we imagine.<sup>13</sup>

This, too, is a thought which is not explicitly found in the published writings. But it nonetheless simply makes explicit what is implicit in both the *Principles* and the *Dialogues*.

Given the parallels between the dependence of objects on God's causal power, and of some human thoughts on our volition; and given Berkeley's assimilation of causation and volition; and given that our volition is something that exists in our minds; it is clear that one very natural way in which Berkeley could have established his idealism is by invoking the dependency argument.

#### 4. The Knowledge Argument

The dependency argument described in section 2 went from traditional theism to idealism via the concepts of causation and dependence. But there is another route from the same starting point to the same destination, going by the concept of divine omniscience.

That God is omniscient is a familiar and central tenet of traditional theism. Exactly how this concept of omniscience is to be understood is a matter of some debate, and I shall return to it later. But its precise definition is not a matter of importance in *this* context. For our present purposes, a close enough approximation will be that the thesis of God's omniscience is the acceptance of the claim:

(A) For all values of  $p$ : if  $p$ , then God knows that  $p$

The converse of this, namely

(B) For all values of  $p$ : if God knows that  $p$ , then  $p$

is of course trivially true, and is a simple consequence of the fact that knowledge requires truth. If we put (A) and (B) together, we get

(C)  $p$  if and only if God knows that  $p$

and this in turn implies the weaker claim

(D)  $p$  if and only if God believes that  $p$

This implies

(E) For all values of  $p$  having the form " $x$  exists":  $p$  if and only if God believes that  $p$

Now let us turn to the question of the relation between a person and the contents of her mind. Consider a claim very close to (E), namely

(F) For all values of  $p$  having the form " $x$  exists" (where  $x$  ranges over conscious states):  $p$  if and only if the owner of the mental state believes that  $p$

If we accept for a moment that this claim is true (and I will come back to that assumption in just a moment), then again what we have uncovered is a very striking parallel between God's epistemic relation to the world, and our epistemic relation to our own conscious states. It is a parallel which does not require us to accept subtle Berkeleyan criticisms of a philosophical doctrine of matter. It starts from one central strand of orthodox theism, and combines that strand with one very widely accepted view about the nature of conscious states. And although the parallel between the two does not *entail* (strictly imply, in the logician's sense) the conclusion of idealism, it is obvious that idealism is one simple and elegant and attractive way of expressing the parallel. If one accepts the premises of the argument but rejects the idealist conclusion, some other explanation has to be found of why such a striking parallel should exist. An appeal to brute fact coincidence would hardly be satisfactory here.

That, then, gives us a second route from theism to idealism.

#### 5. *Could Berkeley have accepted the knowledge argument?*

That Berkeley accepted the omniscience of God is certainly a safe assumption. It does not figure largely in his writings, because it was not centrally relevant to what he wanted to say. But when the occasion makes it appropriate, he certainly endorses a belief in God's omniscience. For example, in the Third Dialogue, Philonous says

That God knows or understands all things, I make no question.<sup>14</sup>

So there is no problem about Berkeley's acceptance of the first premise of the knowledge argument.

Now let us turn to Berkeley's conception of the relation between a person and the contents of her mind. He accepts a proposition which is structurally very close to (E), namely

(F) For all values of p having the form "x exists" (where x ranges over conscious states): p if and only if the owner of the mental state believes that p

Let us take the two halves of this biconditional in turn, and see what evidence there is for supposing that Berkeley would have accepted them. If we focus on the first half of the biconditional first, it is clear that Berkeley does accept that if a person believes that they have a particular mental state, then they do indeed have it. Several passages in the Introduction to the *Principles* give voice to this thought. Here is one example:

...so long as I confine my thoughts to my own ideas divested of words, I do not see how I can easily be mistaken...I cannot be deceived in thinking that I have an idea which I have not.<sup>15</sup>

What this amounts to is

(G) For all values of  $p$  having the form “ $x$  exists” (where  $x$  ranges over conscious states): if the owner of the mental state believes that  $x$  exists, then  $p$

Evidence that Berkeley accepted the second half of the biconditional in (F) comes from his claim that for ideas, *esse is percipi*, “the existence of an idea consists in being perceived” (*Principles*, sec.2). This is claiming that if an idea exists, then someone must be aware of it; and this is very close to saying if an idea exists, then someone (in particular its owner) must believe that it exists. In other words

(H) For all values of  $p$  having the form “ $x$  exists” (where  $x$  ranges over conscious states): if  $p$ , then the owner of the mental state believes that  $p$

It might be objected to this that the phrase “is very close to saying” used above slurs over an important gap in the argument. For (it could be said) there *is* an important difference between

(i) If an idea exists, someone is aware of it

and

(ii) If an idea exists, someone believes that it exists

for although *awareness* of an idea might be cashed in terms of *beliefs* about the idea, it does not have to be; so showing that Berkeley accepts (i) will not show that he accepts (ii).<sup>16</sup>

But this objection can be met. For even if it is the case that Berkeley thinks that there is an important difference between (i) and (ii), it is clear that he does accept (ii). At the end of the First Dialogue, we find the following interchange between Philonous and Hylas:

Hylas: ...Do you not perfectly know your own ideas?

Philonous: I know them perfectly; since what I do not perceive or know, can be no part of my idea.<sup>17</sup>

Philonous’s claim amounts to this: if I do not perceive *or know* something about an idea, that something cannot be part of my idea. By contraposition, if something *is* part of my idea, then I will know that something. So, if an idea exists, its owner will know that idea. Given that you cannot “know an idea” without knowing at least that it exists, and given the standard interpretation of knowledge as requiring belief, it then follows that if an idea exists, its owner will believe that it does.

We can thus see that there are good grounds for saying that Berkeley does accept both halves of the biconditional, and hence does accept (F). And given that he accepts the other premise of the argument (i.e., the assumption of divine omniscience), and also accepts the conclusion, it seems that, like the dependency argument, the knowledge argument is a

good one which Berkeley could and should have used.

6. *How the arguments would have fitted into Berkeley's overall strategy*

Let us pause for a moment to see how, if Berkeley had deployed either of the two additional arguments for idealism which I have outlined, such a tactic could have fitted very neatly into his overall strategy.

The full title of the *Principles* reads as follows:

A Treatise concerning The Principles of Human Knowledge, Wherein the chief causes of error and difficulty in the Sciences, with the grounds of Scepticism, Atheism, and Irreligion, are inquired into (my emphasis).<sup>18</sup>

But it is not immediately clear from a reading of the *Principles* why or how Berkeley thought that he was inquiring into "the grounds of...atheism." What are the grounds of atheism that he discusses and tries to refute? It is clear that he argues *for theism*, invoking God both as the cause of those changes in our ideas which we do not cause ourselves, and as the continuous owner of those ideas which exist when we do not perceive them. But arguing for theism is quite distinct from inquiring into the grounds of atheism. However, had Berkeley been arguing from theism to idealism, he would obviously have been supposing that non-idealism (e.g., materialism) implied non-theism, i.e., atheism. Someone who believes that objects have an ontological status unlike that of ideas in mind of God (who thinks, for example, that objects exist independently of God's creative power, or independently of his cognitive powers) is elevating such objects to the substantial status which Descartes had declared could belong to God alone. If there were such objects, God (*per impossibile*) would not be the all-powerful creator and he would not be omniscient. More perspicuously, if there were such objects, God as traditionally conceived would not exist, since there would be no one being on whom the universe depended, and there would be no omniscient being. So arguments in favour of such objects are necessarily arguments against the existence of God and hence arguments for atheism. Those who argue in favour of "unthinking matter" have not just embraced a flawed scientific hypothesis (Berkeley believes). They have (perhaps unwittingly) committed themselves to atheism.

For as we have shewn the doctrine of matter, or corporeal substance, to have been the main pillar and support of *scepticism*, so likewise upon the same foundation have been raised all the impious schemes of *atheism* and irreligion.<sup>19</sup>

A similar line of thought can be found in the *Dialogues*, which are subtitled "in opposition to Sceptics and Atheists." Here again, we find no examination of traditional atheist arguments (e.g., focusing on the problem of evil, or alleged incoherencies in the very concept of a divine being). But what we do find is a reiteration of the thought that admitting

the existence of mind-independent entities is incompatible with theism. Hylas incautiously seeks to explain what he means by "matter" by saying that matter is an "instrument in general", the implication being that it is an instrument for producing ideas. Philonous then counters by saying that such an instrument would have to be causally inert, and continues:

Thus it seems to me that you are obliged to own the use of a lifeless inactive instrument, to be incompatible with the infinite perfection of God.<sup>20 21</sup>

### 7. *A criticism of the dependency argument.*

Having outlined the two arguments, and made out a *prima facie* case for thinking that Berkeley could and should have used them in his defence of theism, I want in the following sections to raise some more critical questions about the arguments. In section 7, I will consider a criticism of the dependency argument; in section 8, I will examine two criticisms of the knowledge argument; in sections 9 to 12, I will consider whether both the dependency argument and the knowledge argument presuppose something which Berkeley rejects.

Let us start, then, with some critical comments on the dependency argument. I said at the end of section 5 that the argument *appeared* to be a good one, and hence one which Berkeley should have used. But I now want to consider briefly the objection that it is bad argument, and hence one that Berkeley was wise to avoid.

One claim that the argument is a bad one would run as follows: the premises of the dependency argument point out a parallel between God's relation to the natural world and our relation to some of our ideas. From these premises, it infers that the natural world is a set of divine ideas. So it has the form "Objects I have relation R to M; objects O have relation R to G; so all Os are Is." But (the objection would go) this is a fallacious inference. Arguments with this form are clearly not deductively valid. Yet nor does the argument seem to fit some standard forms of inductive argument, such as induction by simple enumeration. How, then, can it be regarded as a good argument? And if it is not a good argument, why should Berkeley have accepted it?<sup>22</sup>

How should we meet this objection? We can note first of all that showing that the argument has a non-valid form does not show that the argument is not deductively valid. For arguments can have more than one logical form. Every valid deductive argument has at least one non-valid form. What makes an argument deductive is that it *also* has a valid form, and one cannot show that it does not have a valid form merely by showing that one of its forms is non-valid. So the objection as posed does not show that the argument is not deductive.

However, let us grant that the argument is not in fact deductive. Is it then inductive? That will depend upon what types of argument we take "inductive" to cover. But if the term covers inferences to the best explanation, then the argument *is* best seen as inductive. To bring out why the argument is plausible, we need to focus on the oddity of the notion

of dependence which the argument invokes. It tells us that (in this sense of "dependent") A depends on B if and only if A is brought into existence merely by B's willing that A should start to exist; and that A carries on existing only as long as B wills it. This is a *very* strange sort of relationship, and the only (arguably) plausible candidate that we have for it is the relationship between ideas and minds. When therefore we find a thinker advancing a view of the relationship between chairs and tables, etc., on the one hand, and the mind of God on the other, with precisely these very strange features, a natural interpretation of what she is saying is that she holds that chairs, tables, etc., are ideas in the mind of God. How, we might ask, could something have *that* kind of dependence on a mind without itself being in some way a mental content? Further, what *is* the difference (according to such an objector) between the relation in which physical objects stand to God's mind, and the relation in which God's ideas stand to God's mind? To ask rhetorical questions is not itself to supply an argument. But the questions *do* locate a problem, and it is a problem which is solved if we accept that the premises of the dependency argument support the conclusion. Of course, the premises themselves may be false - I will come to that possibility in just a moment. But if a thinker accepts those premises (as I have argued that Berkeley does), she is then faced with a choice: either accept the conclusion of the dependency argument, or be left with the otherwise unsolvable problems posed by the rhetorical questions above.

### 8. *Two criticisms of the knowledge argument*

I now want to consider two objections that can be raised to the knowledge argument. As with the objection to the dependency argument, these objections suggest that the knowledge argument is a poor argument, and hence one which Berkeley was well-advised not to use.

The first objection focuses on the assumption that the argument makes about the relation between a person and her conscious states, the assumption expressed by (F). The objection comes in two versions. The first version would argue that (F) is straightforwardly false; the second would argue that although it may be true, it is true only contingently, whereas the parallel claim about God's knowledge (expressed in (E)) is necessarily true. Let us consider these objections to the knowledge argument in turn.

The first version of this objection could be developed in the following way. Suppose we take as an example of a conscious state my thought of Cleo. Then the objection would claim that although it may often be true that when the thought occurs to me, I believe that the thought is occurring to me, and when I believe that the thought is occurring to me, the thought is occurring to me (i.e., that a substitution instance of (F) is true), there are also many cases where this co-occurrence does not obtain. To have a conscious state is one thing; to believe that you have it is another. The latter is a second-order mental state of some intellectual sophistication, and it may be that creatures who are capable of consciousness nevertheless lack the sophistication required for these second-order beliefs.

So, the objection would continue, (F) is false; so the knowledge argument (which uses (F) as one of its premises) fails to be a sound argument.

The second version of this first objection grants that (F) is true, but alleges that it is at best a contingent truth. Even if my thought of Cleo and my belief that I am thinking of Cleo do in fact each occur only in the presence of the other, it could nevertheless have been the case that one occurred without the other. God, for example, could have made us with different cognitive equipment so that the co-occurrence which we do experience could have been lacking. By contrast, so the objection would continue, the truth expressed by (E) is a necessary truth. Given that one of God's *essential* characteristics is omniscience, and given that (E) accurately captures what that omniscience amounts to, a being of whom (E) was true only contingently could not be God. Correlatively, given that God exists necessarily and that one of his essential characteristics is omniscience, (E) must express a necessary truth. So, the objection concludes, there is not after all a close parallel between (E) and (F) of the kind which the knowledge argument assumed, and hence the argument fails to provide an adequate defence for the claim that the relation between God and the objects of his knowledge is very like the relation between a person and her ideas.

The second main objection to the knowledge argument mirrors the objection which we have already considered to the dependency argument, and it can therefore be stated more briefly. It says that all that the knowledge argument appeals to is a parallel between God's knowledge of chairs and tables, etc., and a human's knowledge of the ideas in her own mind. But this parallel (the objector maintains) is insufficient to sustain the conclusion that chairs and tables, etc., are no more than ideas in God's mind.

How should we assess these criticisms of the knowledge argument? Let us start with the second criticism first, as it is the weaker of the two and it can be met by drawing on considerations already presented in relation to the objection to the dependency argument. Briefly, the idealist inference is justified as an inference to the best explanation. The *kind* of epistemological relation which (according to the knowledge argument) a person has to her own ideas is so strange, that when we find someone claiming that that relation holds between an entity G and items O, the most plausible assumption is that G must be a mind of some kind, and Os must be ideas within that mind. If we do not make this assumption, then we would be left with a puzzle for which there appears to be no other solution in the offing - the puzzle namely, of how such a relationship could hold between a mind and things which were not ideas in that mind.

Having said this, I think it must be granted that the inferential move in the case of the knowledge argument is weaker than in the case of the dependency argument. The reason for this is that the puzzle we are left with if we do not draw the conclusion of the dependency argument is greater than the puzzle we are left with if we do not draw the conclusion of the knowledge argument. The puzzle in the first case is expressed by the question:

How could there be something which has *that* kind of dependence on a mind without being an idea in that mind?

The puzzle in the second case is expressed by the question:

How could there be something which has *that* kind of epistemological relation to a mind without being an idea in that mind?

Although neither question looks easy to answer, it does look as if it might be easier to find some alternative answer for the second than for the first (some alternative answer, that is, to accepting the idealist conclusion) and to that extent the knowledge argument relies on a weaker inference than the dependency argument. But this can be conceded while insisting that the knowledge argument does have *some* strength; and that by consilience the two arguments together have more weight than the two arguments considered singly.

In relation to either form of the first objection (which was the objection to (F) on p.10), I grant that they are strong objections, and that they mark major (perhaps irremediable) defects in the knowledge argument. But it is worth noticing that Berkeley's own comments suggest that he would have rejected both forms of the objection. I have already pointed out that there is good textual evidence to believe that he does accept (F), which is the claim whose truth is challenged by the first objection. It is harder to be sure what his response would have been to the second version of the first objection (that the modal status of (F) and (E) is different). I suspect that he would have denied that (F) and (E) had a different modal status; and would anyway have thought that if they did have a different modal status, that would weaken but not destroy the parallel which the knowledge argument appeals to.

Further, and perhaps more importantly for Berkeley's polemical purposes, whether or not (F) is true, it would clearly have been accepted by a wide variety of Berkeley's opponents. It expresses the broadly Cartesian conception of the nature of consciousness which can be found in such writers as Locke, Hume, Russell, Ayer, and in our own day Chisholm. It would almost certainly have been accepted by most of Berkeley's 18th century critics who, like Johnson, found his idealistic conclusion absurd.

#### *9. General objection 1: Berkeley does not believe that objects are collections of ideas in God's mind*

I now want to consider the first of two general objections to the claim that the two arguments are ones which Berkeley could consistently have used. This first objection focuses on the assumption made above that Berkeley believes that objects are collections of ideas in the mind of God. The implication of this view is that when I perceive an object, God and I share an idea (or set of ideas). This might well be thought to be a scarcely coherent thesis, and hence one that we should hesitate to attribute to Berkeley unless the evidence is particularly strong. And (so the objec-

tion would go) there is an alternative way of reading Berkeley that does not credit him with the incoherent thesis. According to this alternative interpretation, God does not have in his mind continuously existing collections of ideas some of which we become aware of when we perceive objects. Rather, what exists continuously in his mind is a set of predispositions to cause ideas in finite minds. These ideas are caused in a coherent and interlocking way and are the ideas which we describe in terms of houses, tables and other familiar objects. But at no stage is it the case that we and God are aware of the very same ideas. Nor is it the case that houses, tables, etc. exist unperceived by finite minds. When no finite mind is aware of the table at which I am writing, the table ceases to exist. All that carries on existing independently of awareness is God's predisposition to cause further sequences of table-like ideas in finite minds, where those sequences cohere in various ways with at least some of the sequences of table-like ideas which we have already had.

If this view is right, it would be fatal for the claim that Berkeley could and should have used the dependency argument which I distinguished above. The dependency argument assumes that objects continue to exist (including existence when finite minds are not aware of them) only because God wills that they do. It is thus directly challenged by an interpretation which says that Berkeley denies that objects continue to exist at all when finite minds are not aware of them.

#### 10. *Reply to General objection 1*

There is certainly something to be said for this rival interpretation. It is clear that Berkeley's principal argument for the existence of God lies in an appeal to God as the cause of those changes in our ideas which we do not cause ourselves; and this argument does not require God to have in mind any ideas at all, as opposed to a predisposition to cause ideas in other minds. Even less does it require that there should be times when God and other minds share the very same ideas.

Had Berkeley confined himself to the claim that God's mind contains only predispositions to cause ideas in our minds, the alternative interpretation would have had a good deal of plausibility, and my account of how Berkeley could have and should have argued for idealism would have been correspondingly weaker. But this is not Berkeley's view of the contents of God's mind. He clearly does believe that God's mind is stocked with the ideas which we perceive, that we and God are aware of the very same ideas. This comes out particularly clearly in a passage towards the end of the Third Dialogue. Hylas raises an objection to Philonous's idealism in the following terms:

But the same idea which is in my mind, cannot be in yours, or in any other mind. Doth it not therefore follow from your principles, that no two can see the same thing?<sup>23</sup>

In his reply to this, Berkeley does not say clearly "I am not committed to the thesis that the same idea can be in two minds." His reply, rather, is

a fudge. He says that it all depends what you mean by "same", that philosophers cannot agree on what they mean by "identity", that no one is misled if we speak of two people having the same idea, and that anyway his (Berkeley's) opponents have just as much difficulty over the issue. If he really did not accept that God and finite minds can share the very same idea, in the problematic sense of that claim, one would expect him to advance in his defence some such line of argument as the following (in modern terms): "No mind, finite or otherwise, shares with any other mind any idea tokens, and in that sense no two minds can have the same idea. But the idea tokens which each mind has can of course be tokens of a single type, and in that sense, two minds can have the same idea." Berkeley's failure to take even a faltering step in the direction of such a position strongly suggests that it was not a position which he held; that he did thus accept (however unwillingly) the incoherent idea that two minds might share an idea token; and hence that this line of objection to the interpretation of Berkeley which I have been offering fails.

It is perhaps worth adding that Berkeley could scarcely be rescued from incoherence even if what he really meant was only that God's mind contained predispositions to cause ideas in finite minds. For that view seems as incoherent as the one which it seeks to avoid. The unproblematic examples of causation or production which Berkeley mentions are cases of a person's voluntarily thinking or imagining something. But these exemplars are inadequate to explain the divine case. If God thinks or imagines something, he may be active with respect to his own ideas. But how could he be active in relation to mine? The problem here is not an epistemological one of the kind that typically surrounds statements about God. It is more general than that, and arises whether we are thinking of God being active or Joe Bloggs being active. The problem is how one mind can be active with respect to ideas in another mind.

Further, it seem clear that Berkeley does think that God's mind contains not just those ideas which he causes us to be aware of in our perceptions of sensible objects. It also contains other collections of ideas (sensible objects) of which we are unaware. To say this is not to endorse the view that Berkeley holds what Bennett has called the "continuity" argument for God's existence.<sup>24</sup> The continuity argument maintains:

1. Ideas cannot exist unperceived
2. Objects are collections of ideas
3. Objects exist when unperceived by us (humans)
- so 4. There is a non-human mind who perceives them when we do not.

Bennett makes out an excellent case for denying that Berkeley makes any serious use of this argument. But that claim is compatible with the view that objects do in fact exist when unperceived by us, and that God is aware of them even when we are not. One expression of this view comes in the Third Dialogue. Hylas points out that the person in the street believes that a sensible object like a tree "hath an existence out of

his mind." Philonous in reply says:

...to a Christian it surely cannot be shocking to say, the real tree existing without his mind is truly known and comprehended by (that is, *exists in*) the infinite mind of God (Berkeley's emphasis).<sup>25</sup>

Nor is this an isolated passage. There is more to the same effect later in the same Dialogue. Hylas asks Philonous how his view can be squared with the Creation story. For that story tells us of the existence of a world of objects in which there were no finite spirits to have the requisite ideas. Philonous's response is to say that God had the requisite ideas, i.e. that what we call physical reality was no more than a set of ideas in the mind of God:

All objects are known eternally by God, or which is the same thing, have an eternal existence in his mind <sup>26</sup>

What happens when the first finite minds arrive is that God, by a special decree, makes those pre-existing objects perceptible to the finite minds. There is no suggestion here that the objects cease to exist in God's mind and are replaced by divine dispositions to cause orderly sets of ideas in the finite minds.

It might be argued that this is an unsatisfactory passage to quote, in as much as in the subsequent discussion, Philonous is forced to concede a distinction between "a twofold state of things", between objects thought of as having existed eternally in the mind of God, and those same objects thought of as coming into existence for finite minds at a particular time.

I am doubtful myself whether such a distinction is sufficient to throw doubt on the claim that Berkeley has in this passage committed himself to the existence of objects as collections of ideas in the mind of God. But there is no need to argue the point, since there are yet further passages where he quite clearly does commit himself to God's mind containing those collections of ideas of which we are currently unaware. Here is one clear example:

When I deny sensible things an existence out of the mind, I do not mean my mind in particular, but all minds. Now it is plain they have an existence exterior to my mind, since I find them by experience to be independent of it. There is therefore some other mind wherein they exist, during the intervals between the times of my perceiving them: as likewise they did before my birth, and would do after my supposed annihilation. And as the same is true with regard to all other finite created spirits; it necessarily follows, that there is an *omnipresent eternal Mind*, which knows and comprehends all things.<sup>27</sup>

(Notice that in making the three claims that Berkeley maintains that objects are collections of ideas in the mind of God; that this accounts for

their existence unperceived by us; and that when we perceive objects, we perceive ideas in God's mind; I am not committed to saying that we have the same kind of cognitive contact which God has with those ideas. Pitcher has argued that it is a mistake to think that Berkeley is saying that God *perceives* those collections of ideas which are not perceived by us.<sup>28</sup> Rather (in Pitcher's view), he *conceives* them. This may be correct, but if it is, it has no implications for the interpretation which I am here advancing. The crucial issue is whether objects are continuously existing collections of ideas in the mind of God, not whether God's awareness of these ideas is specifically perceptual.)

So the conclusion thus far is that the first general objection to the claim that Berkeley could and should have used the dependency argument fails.

#### *11. Objection 2: why doesn't Berkeley regard finite spirits as ideas in God's mind?*

There is, however, a second objection to consider, and this is an objection to the claim that Berkeley could consistently have used either of the two arguments. I have so far argued that orthodox theism, when combined with some fairly plausible ideas about the nature of conscious states (ideas that Berkeley's opponents would probably have regarded as uncontentious), yields two arguments for Berkeley's paradoxical-sounding idealist conclusion that objects are no more than collections of ideas in the mind of God. But now it might be objected that, according to orthodox theism, finite spirits too have a dependence on God's will, apparently of the very same kind as that possessed (according to theism) by sensible objects. So whatever reason there is for saying that sensible objects are collections of ideas in God's mind ought to apply equally to finite minds. We would therefore expect to find Berkeley saying not just that mountains and tables are ideas in God's mind, but also that human minds are ideas in God's mind. But in fact, he not only does not say this, he very clearly denies it. He operates with a very sharp distinction between minds or spirits on the one hand, and ideas on the other, and he is committed to theses which exclude the possibility of minds being a species of idea. Minds, he maintains, cannot even be represented by ideas, let alone be identical with them. Since minds and sensible objects have (according to theism) a similar dependence on God, and since minds are not ideas in God's mind and yet sensible objects are, it follows (so the objection goes) that it cannot be in virtue of their dependence on God that sensible objects are ideas in God's mind. So the attempt to display Berkeleyan idealism as simply a clear-headed expression of orthodox theism fails.

#### *12. Reply to general objection 2*

One adequate reply to this second objection would be to admit that the historical Berkeley could not after all have accepted the dependency and knowledge arguments; for they would commit him not only to a conclusion which he wants (that objects are ideas in the mind of God),

but also to a conclusion which he rejects (that finite minds are ideas in the mind of God). It would be quite compatible with this view of the historical Berkeley to maintain nevertheless that idealism in general *is* implied by traditional theism; and hence that Berkeley's critics like Johnson were a good deal less perspicacious than Berkeley himself. For traditional theism holds that everything is in some way or another created and sustained by God, where the conception of creation and sustaining makes it difficult to see how what is created and sustained can achieve any more reality than the contents of God's mind.

But there is also some interest in pursuing the question of whether there is any interpretation of Berkeley which would allow us still to argue that he could and should have used the two arguments. To identify such an interpretation, we need to find some reason which Berkeley could have accepted either for denying that finite minds depend on God's mind in the way that sensible objects do; or for asserting that although finite minds and objects have a similar dependence on God, objects can properly be called collections of ideas in the mind of God although finite minds cannot. If we can find such a reason, we would have found a way in which Berkeley could combine the acceptance of the dependency and knowledge arguments with his denial that finite minds are ideas, and hence it might still be possible to portray his idealism as simply perspicacious theism.

Let us consider the first option first: how might the dependence of finite minds on God be different from the dependence of sensible objects on God? Here is one explanation which could be provided from within a fairly orthodox theistic perspective. Orthodox theism holds that God is omniscient. Does this mean that he knows everything? It is possible to answer "Yes", as I was suggesting earlier. But it is also possible to offer a more qualified answer, such as that he knows everything which it is logically possible to know, or perhaps even more weakly, that he knows everything which it is logically possible *for him* to know. So if there are some propositions which it is logically impossible to know, then it would not be a disproof of God's omniscience to say that he did not know them.

But are there any such propositions? One possible source of such propositions comes from another strand of orthodox theism, namely that God has given human beings free will. Exactly what free will is, is of course a controversial issue. But *one* traditional way of construing it is to say that free actions must be uncaused: up until the moment that the agent makes her choice, there is no causally sufficient condition for her making the choice that she does. Given that conception of free will, it would be intelligible for someone to say that it is impossible to know beforehand which way the person will make her choice, where the impossibility is logical. This would mean that if God created finite minds and gave them the power of free will, he would be creating beings whose future behaviour would be in part unpredictable by him.

I am not here endorsing such a view of freewill. What I am claiming is that this alleged conflict between divine omniscience and human freedom is one of the traditional problems of theism (or of Christian theism

at least), and that one way of showing the conflict to be merely apparent, not real, is so to construe omniscience that future free actions are excluded from its scope. That the argument is by no means fanciful or dead is shown by the fact that it is precisely the line taken by one of the leading contemporary theists, Richard Swinburne. In his discussion of free will and omniscience, Swinburne raises the question of how we are to understand the idea of free will, and he says:

...if a man P does A freely, then no cause makes him do A

and he claims that this is the central idea to the concept of freedom, an idea which encapsulates "the kind of freedom which philosophers...ought to be discussing."<sup>29</sup> It is, in other words, the kind of full-blooded, contra-causal freedom presupposed by moral responsibility, not some watered-down variety which (a philosopher might judge) is all that is compatible with an acceptance of determinism. He then raises the question of whether it is possible for God to be omniscient if the world contains free agents. If God's omniscience requires him to know every true proposition, then

...it seems doubtful whether it is logically possible that there be both an omniscient person and also free men.<sup>30</sup>

The conclusion Swinburne draws from this is that divine omniscience needs to be understood in a more restricted way:

A person P is omniscient at time t if and only if he knows of every true proposition about t or an earlier time that it is true and also he knows of every true proposition about a time later than t, such that what it reports is physically necessitated by some cause at t or earlier, that it is true.<sup>31</sup>

What this means is that God's omniscience does not require him to know what all the future actions of free agents will be.

Swinburne is not alone in endorsing such a line of thought. Other recent theists to endorse it include James Ward, F.R.Tennant, and J.Lucas, and in the sixteenth century it had been defended by Sozzini.<sup>32</sup>

But what bearing, it might be asked, does the existence of such a line of thought have on the interpretation of Berkeley? It would be absurd to attribute it to him simply because it can be found in the writings of (principally) twentieth century theists. Berkeley does not endorse, or even consider the doctrine in any of his writings, so definitely to attribute it to him would be unwarranted. Granted that much, however, there are two claims which we can entertain. First, nothing in Berkeley's writings shows that he would have rejected such a line of thought. Indeed, he might even have found it attractive, given that it turns on a sharp distinction between what is active (finite spirits) and what is not active (sensible objects) of a kind which is central to his own philosophy.

Further, it is a doctrine which would allow him to ascribe to sensible objects and finite minds two different kinds of dependence on God's

mind. In the case of God's causal and conservative powers, minds and objects would be on a par: they would both be brought into existence by the causal power of God, and both would be kept in existence moment by moment by the conservative power of God. So far, then, sensible objects and finite minds have an equal claim to be regarded as ideas in the mind of God. But in respect of God's omniscience, a difference emerges. For God can know everything about the total life history of a sensible object - since an object has no free will, it cannot do anything which is in principle unpredictable, and hence is in principle entirely knowable. By contrast, a finite mind equipped with free will can keep doing things which are in principle unknowable beforehand, even to an omniscient being. So although a consideration of God's causal and conservative powers should lead a theist like Berkeley to group sensible objects and finite minds together, a consideration of the scope of God's omniscience would lead him to group them separately. We thus have found a way in which, *even within a specifically Berkeleyan idealism*, the two arguments could both be deployed.

There is however one final objection to be considered against the above line of thought. I suggested that from God's point of view, all the behaviour of sensible objects is foreknowable, but that of finite spirits is not, and that this epistemological difference could explain why Berkeley says that objects are ideas in the mind of God but finite spirits are not. But (the objection would go) sometimes the behaviour of sensible objects is dependent on the free actions of finite minds. If free actions are unpredictable in principle, then so is the behaviour of sensible objects which is dependent on free actions. So if I freely choose to raise my arm, and my arm goes up, on the assumption that my free choice was unpredictable, so too was the movement of my arm. And yet the movement of my arm was clearly an event in the history of a sensible object. So, contrary to what was assumed above, some sensible objects will share with finite minds the property of having histories which are not totally predictable even by God. They will stand in the same relation to divine omniscience as do finite minds; and we will therefore have failed to find a good reason which Berkeley might have had for saying that finite minds and sensible objects should be classified separately. (We might notice in passing that if sensible objects like my arm are collections of ideas in God's mind, and if my free will allows me to produce changes in my arm which are in principle unpredictable even by God, it follows that God's omniscience does not require him to know all the truths about even his own ideas, let alone about other finite minds.)

But this objection has a limited force. What it shows is that Berkeley would not have a good reason for distinguishing between objects and finite minds in terms of the possibility of divine foreknowledge. What it does not show is that Berkeley would not have an understandable (albeit mistaken) reason for drawing this distinction. Although the Swinburnean line of thought will not ultimately justify Berkeley's position, what I claim is (a) that the Swinburnean line is a fairly plausible line for a theist to take, (b) that if it is taken, it seems *prima facie* to justify a claim that God has a different epistemological relation to finite minds and to finite objects, (c)

that this difference lies in the fact that the 'God/finite objects' relation is like our paradigm of a 'mind/ideas' relation whereas the 'God/finite minds' relation does not match that paradigm, and hence (d) that someone who is pushed towards idealism by theism might plausibly register this difference by saying that finite objects are, but finite minds are not, collections of ideas in the mind of God.

### 13. Conclusion

Let me now try to draw together the threads of what I have been saying. I started by distinguishing two arguments from theism to idealism. If these arguments are any good, then (a) they show that theistic critics of Berkeley are more confused than he is, and (b) they are arguments which he surely should have used. The *prima facie* textual evidence is that he could have accepted them both, and that they would have fitted in well with his polemic against atheism. I then considered and rejected one criticism which would apply to both the arguments; and suggested in relation to two further criticisms of the knowledge argument that although the criticisms were sound, they were probably ones that neither Berkeley nor his opponents would have attached much weight to. Next I considered and tried to rebut two general objections to my reading of Berkeley. The first of these denied that Berkeley accepted a view which I had attributed to him, namely that objects are collections in the mind of God, and I tried to show that there was good textual evidence for thinking that Berkeley *did* hold that view. The second objection claimed that my interpretation of Berkeley would have committed him to a view which he clearly rejected, that finite minds are ideas in the mind of God. Here, I tried to show that Berkeley's theism provided him with the resources for constructing a plausible even if controversial line of argument to the conclusion that finite minds are not in the mind of God.

But what, it might be asked, can the interest be in this exploration of routes which could have been taken but weren't, between positions which themselves are pretty unattractive? The question is a reasonable one; but I think that it can be given a satisfactory answer. First, if it is the case that theism implies idealism, this must have *some* interest for at least two groups of people, namely both theists and non-idealists. As regards theists, it tells them that they are committed to an idealist ontology, a fact that might come as a surprise to that puzzling band of people who are both theists and practising scientists. As regards those of us who are non-idealists (presumably the enormous majority of us) it tells us that we are committed to the falsity of theism. In other words, it supplies an argument for atheism, or at the least for agnosticism, an argument which the great majority of people are committed to regarding as sound. Given that it is not the case that this great majority of people *are* atheists or agnostics, they should be at least *somewhat* surprised to discover that they ought to be.

Of rather more *recherche* interest is the light which these reflections throw on moves, usually condemned as naive, in debates about scepticism, especially Cartesian scepticism. First year students are often intro-

duced to Descartes's First and Second Meditations, and there they discover that common sense has no way of disproving the thought e.g. that everything around them is part of a dream, or is a hallucination produced in us by the malicious demon. They are then presented by Descartes with the claim that 'I exist' can defeat this hyperbolic doubt and is absolutely indubitably true. But, having entered with perhaps too much enthusiasm into the sceptical games of Meditation I, students then object 'But maybe I am just a character in the demon's dream, and don't really exist at all'. They are then assured that this is an incoherent thought: if you think to yourself 'I am just an element in someone else's mind', your thought *could* not be true. But if what I have been saying is correct, it is the student who has the last laugh here. For (so I have been claiming) orthodox theism *is* committed to maintaining that what a person takes to be her body is just a collection of ideas in the mind of God. And if the theist is unwilling to embrace the reasons provided in section 12 for denying that finite minds also are in the mind of God (reasons which presuppose the existence of contra-causal freewill), then she is committed also to the claim that each of us, mind and body is no more than a set of elements in the mind of God.

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#### NOTES

1. *Philosophical Commentaries* nos.427 and 427a, in A.A.Luce and T.E.Jessop (eds), *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne* (London: Nelson, 1967) (hereafter referred to as *Works*), vol.1, p.53. In all the quotations, I follow Luce and Jessop in giving Berkeley's own unmodernised and idiosyncratic spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, etc.
2. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec.1; *Works*, vol.2, p.41.
3. George Birkbeck Hill (ed), *Boswell's Life of Johnson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934), vol.1, p.473.
4. *Philosophical Commentaries* no.807, *Works*, vol.1, p.97.
5. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec.38, *Works*, vol.2, p.56.
6. R.Descartes, *The Principles of Philosophy*, Part I, sec.51, in John Cottingham et al. (eds), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), vol.1, p.210.
7. *Ibid.*
8. B.Pascal, *The Pensees*, tr. J.M.Cohen (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961), p.82.
9. Cottingham et al (eds), *op.cit.*, Vol.2, p.33, (Meditations III).
10. B.Spinoza, *Ethics*, tr.R.H.M.Elwes (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), p.65 (Part I, prop.24, Corollary).
11. *Three Dialogues*, 3rd Dialogue, Philonous speaking; *Works*, vol.2, p.239.
12. *Philosophical Commentaries* no.791, *Works*, vol. 1, p.95.
13. *Loc.cit.*, No.830, p.99.
14. *Works*, vol.2, p.240. Cf. also p.257, where Philonous includes omniscience as one of God's defining features.

15. Introduction to *The Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec.22 (with more to the same effect in sec.25 of *The Principles* themselves), *Works* vol.2, pp.39, 51.

16. I owe this objection to a useful comment by an anonymous referee.

17. *Works*, vol.2.

18. *Works*, vol.2, p.1.

19. *The Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec.92, *Works*, vol.2, p.81.

20. 2nd Dialogue, *Works*, vol.2, p.219.

21. It may well be that the passages from Berkeley which I quote on p.15 illustrate a confusion which has been exposed by Bennett (see his "Substance, Reality and Primary Qualities", *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol.2 (1965), and cf. also his *Locke, Berkeley, and Hume: Central Themes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) ch.3). Bennett argues that Berkeley conflates a thesis about property instantiation with a completely different thesis about the distinction between mind-dependent and mind-independent entities. He (Berkeley) uses the concept of substance in connection with both doctrines. In connection with the first, he attacks the view that for something to have a property is for there to be a substratum substance which "supports" properties; in connection with the second, he claims that a believer in mind-independent entities must believe in the existence of corporeal substance. The passage from *Principles* sec.92 quoted on p.15 alleges that corporeal substance leads to scepticism, which seems to be using "substance" in the property-instantiation sense. But when in the same sentence it goes on to link corporeal substance with atheism, "substance" is clearly being used in the "independent-existence" sense. Similarly, in the passage on p.15 from the 2nd Dialogue, when Philonous says that "matter" can refer only to "a lifeless inactive instrument", it sounds as if he has the property-instantiation thesis in mind. But when he immediately adds that matter is "incompatible with the infinite perfection of God", he is reverting to the concept of substance as what is capable of independent existence. An anonymous referee drew my attention to this link between my claims and the Bennettian view of Berkeley - though the referee and I differed about the interpretation of that link.

22. This objection was raised in different ways by two anonymous referees. I have followed one referee in particular very closely in the way in which I have worded the objection.

23. 3rd Dialogue, *Works*, vol.2, p.247.

24. J.F.Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, and Hume: Central Themes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p.169.

25. 3rd Dialogue, *Works*, vol.2, p.235.

26. *Op.cit.*, pp.252.

27. *Op.cit.*, pp.230-231.

28. George Pitcher, *Berkeley* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), ch.10.

29. Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p.142.

30. *Op.cit.*, p.172.

31. *Op.cit.*, p.175.

32. "If now it be further allowed that the actions of free and advancing intelligences make new beginnings possible, imply real initiative, it would follow that even complete and absolute knowledge (or omniscience)...would still leave every finite subject completely unknown as regards its utterances, its objective relations with the rest, but not as it is in itself" (James Ward, *The Realm of Ends, or Pluralism and Theism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

Press, 1920), p.236. "Foreknowledge implies predestination or predeterminism, and it is incompatible with the freedom or self-determination of human souls...[God's purpose] leaves room for non-omniscience as to particular forms which free action will take" (F.R.Tennant, *Philosophical Theology* vol.2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1930, reprinted 1968), pp.175-176. See also J.Lucas, *The Freedom of the Will* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p.75. For Sozzini, see Anthony Kenny, *The God of the Philosophers* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), p.60.