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ABSTRACTS

Timo AIRAKSINEN : *Visual Language: A Kantian Analysis*

I distinguish between two different versions of Berkeley's theory of Visual Language, and discuss the problem of meaning in this language. I show that only one version of the language has a semantic feature, the other is more or less associative. This paper utilizes a Kantian perspective in the following sense. When a person opens her eyes for the first time, she sees something. What does she see? Berkeley says that the proper objects of vision are lights and colors. This has been taken to mean that the proper objects of vision are extended, that is, color is always 2-dimensional. Moreover, what is extended is always colored. This need not be so if we think in terms of the adverbial theory of vision. But then we do not see color as an object; we see, for instance, redly. The question is: How much structure does original perception contain? Does it reveal objects? Berkeley thinks the perceiver needs the sense of touch to create a personal 3-dimensional world. The Kantian interpretation of this claim is as follows. Human original visual perception is an abyss or chaos before it is organized and interpreted. Kant has his a priori categories which Berkeley the empiricist does not have. But it is also implausible to suppose that Berkeley's original perception is a flat picture of one's visual environment. He says, for instance, that visual and tactual squares do not resemble each other, but both have four distinct elements by means of which they can be connected in the imagination. This is to say that original visual perception is not mere chaos.

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Margaret ATHERTON : *The Nature of Berkeleianism: Lessons Learned from PHK 1-33*

There is perhaps a rather surprising disarray among readers of Berkeley when it comes to stating or even labeling the nature of the position for which he is arguing. Berkeley's position is quite commonly called 'immaterialism' and there are good reasons for adopting 'immaterialism' as the name for Berkeley's theory. For one thing, it is the term he himself adopts. There are reasons for being cautious about using this term to describe Berkeley's philosophical outlook, however. This claim is entirely negative. So if the conclusion of Berkeley's thinking is taken to be summed up by the word 'immaterialism' then it seems Berkeley had no positive views to contribute to his subject, the principles of human knowledge. Another word commonly used is 'idealism.' This word suffers from ambiguities, since many more people besides Berkeley have been called or have called themselves 'idealists.' More troubling, in a Berkeleian context, is that if 'idealism' is taken to constitute Berkeley's theory, then he seems to have completed his argument for his position by *PHK* 7. What is the rest of the book about? The most obvious way out of these difficulties is to say that Berkeley is both an immaterialist and an idealist. But this, while quite possibly true, raises further questions. What is the relationship between the two theses? Which is premise and which conclusion? Or, perhaps, are both premises for some further conclusion?

I propose to try to sort through these matters by looking in detail at the summary statement of Berkeley's argument in *PHK* 1-33. I divide this passage into three parts. In my talk I will show:

PHK 1-7 establishes the truth of idealism against common sense realism, relying solely on anti-abstractionism.

PHK 8-23, while containing a brief refutation of materialism, is devoted to showing that ideas do not stand for or signify a mind-independent world.

PHK 24-33 provides a positive account of how ideas signify real but mind-dependent things.

I conclude that the upshot of Berkeley's argument is to be found in *PHK* 24-33, which therefore provides the best source for understanding Berkeleianism. I point out that Berkeleianism, so understood, is completely consistent with the position of the *New Theory*.

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Bertil BELFRAGE : *Berkeley's Psychological Concept of Thinking Substance 1710*

As a young student, George Berkeley was a poor psychologist, convinced that our perceptions of 'real things' are passively received God-given copies or images of these things. In the *Theory of Vision*, however, studies in contemporary optics made him ask: How can two persons perceive different things in the same situation, or the same person perceive the same thing differently in different situations? He began to study what happens between input (unconditioned raw data or 'sensations') and output (intelligible 'perceptions') in the process of perception. This causal chain between what I call 'sensations' and 'perceptions' can be illustrated thus:

Sensations * [- - ? - -] * Perceptions

The centre of activity in this perceptual process is often referred to in the *Principles* by the term 'thinking substance', but what does this term mean? In the present paper, I follow Berkeley's advice to read his books 'in the order wherein [he] published them... to take in the design and connection of them'. That is to say, the question I ask is this: How should one understand the concept of thinking substance against the background of Berkeley's psychology in the *Theory of Vision*?

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Laura BERCHIELLI : *Berkeley on Language in the New Theory of Vision and the Principles*

Two aspects of Berkeley's theory of language have mainly attracted the attention of commentators: his theory of general non-abstract ideas in the *Principles*, and his theory of meaning without ideas in *Alciphron*. In this paper, however, I shall focus on the general notion of language as it appears in the *New Theory of Vision* and in the first edition of the *Principles*.

In the *New Theory of Vision*, Berkeley defends the claim that vision is a language. A year later, in the first edition of *Principles*, he writes that the laws of nature are the grammar of a divine language. However, in the second edition of the *Principles* (1734), nature loses its status as a language, whereas vision, in other works, is still treated as the language in which God speaks to mankind.

It is possible to extract a series of essential characteristics for a system to be a language from the arguments in the *New Theory of Vision* and the *Principles*, which aim at proving that God speaks to mankind. I am particularly interested in comparing the features of two sets of signs, i. e. visual signs and natural phenomena. I study more precisely the internal articulation of such languages and, amongst others, the question whether it is possible to speak of compositionality or productivity. In the definition of language in *Alciphron*, Berkeley refers to 'the arbitrary use of sensible signs', which, by their 'opposite management', can suggest an 'endless variety' of significations. I argue that the most important difference between the two sets of signs concerns the very characteristics of the 'opposite management' of those signs and the rules according to which they get their meaning.

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Dominique BERLIOZ : *Percipere and Concipere, Berkeley's Way to Abstraction and Knowledge*

Three hundred years after publication the *Principles of Human Knowledge* remain a source of inspiration for philosophical research that is very much alive. Indeed, the bold positions adopted by Berkeley have continued to the present day to be thought-provoking for philosophers world-wide. Berkeley's views on ontology offer an instance of his stimulating insights. His views are at once realistic and nominalistic. I would like to focus on this paradoxical stance. I shall examine, first, some aspects of Berkeley's ontology, which turn to be a one level ontology or, as John Heil would put it, a no level ontology, and then consider some epistemological consequences of Berkeley's New Principle for knowledge and sciences via his conception of abstraction.

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Talia Mae BETTCHER : *Berkeley's Positive Notion of Substance*

In this paper, I provide an interpretation of Berkeley's account of substance as outlined in the *Principles of Human Knowledge*. In my view, Berkeley's account ought to be understood within the context of the dispute about substance between Locke and Stillingfleet. By using Berkeley's critique of Locke's conception of substance as an interpretive framework, I draw out the details of Berkeley's own account and show why he thinks he can offer Stillingfleet what Locke will not. My central thesis is that while Locke denies there is a positive idea of substance and affirms that there is merely a relative idea of it, Berkeley allows for a non-relative, positive notion of spiritual substance in addition to a merely relative one. In my view, Berkeley maintains that we have a positive notion of 'subsistence by itself.'

Berkeley, I argue, departs from the Lockean conception of (self-) consciousness in a subtle but significant way. This departure affords an explanation of Berkeley's peculiar views about self-knowledge while providing the basis for his innovative conception of substance. In my view, this positive notion of spirit as agent or self is given by the reflective datum "I" in conscious thought, where 'subsistence by itself' is understood as 'consciousness of oneself.' In this view, spirits self-subsist because they are self-aware. Ideas, by contrast, aren't self-aware and so don't subsist by themselves. On the contrary, they require self-subsisting spirits to perceive them. In my view, then, Berkeley can provide a response to Locke's claim that one lacks a positive idea of substance. While Berkeley agrees that one lacks such a positive *idea*, he also affirms that one has a positive conception of substance, which is provided through the very consciousness of *sum*.

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Martha BRANDT BOLTON : *'The Most Abstract and Incomprehensible Idea of All': Berkeley on Existence*

The paper tries to show that Berkeley's theory of what constitutes a sort or species implies that there is no sort of species that contains all things that exist, merely as existent. The paper considers the implications of this for two issues. One is Berkeley's view of metaphysics, or the central metaphysical issue, in comparison with views of other early modern thinkers. The second is the use of anti-abstractionist considerations in support of the doctrine that the being of sensible things is their being perceived (e.g. PHK 5 and 6). The aim here is to explain what the relevance of these considerations is in view of the fact that the attack on abstract ideas in the Introduction to PHK does not apply to the conception of the absolute existence of a sensible object without any mind perceiving it.

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Wolfgang BREIDERT : *God's Role in Berkeley's Philosophy*

Admirers of Berkeley's theology expect that God would have an important role in his philosophy, but critical scholars give the impression that Berkeley's system could do without God, or they regret that God is involved in it. A discussion of these different positions presupposes a distinct consideration of God's role (or roles) in Berkeley's philosophy. In ethics God is the legislator and the leader guiding our actions by fear of him. Whereas immaterialism requires a special explanation of Creation, God's existence is inferred both by 'immaterialistic' reasoning (God as the origin of sensible ideas) and by physico-theological arguments. On the one hand God is able to produce our perceptions immediately, on the other hand He uses instruments in order to teach or to inform us and in order to reveal Himself. Berkeley attempts to explain why God takes such round-about methods. Although Berkeley emphasizes the sublime of nature and the pleasing horror caused by it, this seemingly persuasive argument is weakened, because God prefers to convince our reason rather than to astonish us. Either the philosopher of enlightenment does not recognize that God's use of reason is an unreasonable round-about or there is a total difference between divine and human reason. Theodicy cannot be successful, because it is unreasonable to allow freedom if it may be used in an unreasonable way.

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Dick BROOK : *Berkeley, and the Passivity of Ideas: A Look again at PHK 25 and 26*

In the *Principles of Human Knowledge* Berkeley famously writes: "All our ideas sensations, or the things which we perceive, by whatever names they may be distinguished, are visibly inactive—there is nothing of power agency included in them. . . . To be satisfied of this, there is nothing else requisite but a bare observation of our ideas. For since they and every part of them exist only in the mind, it follows that there is nothing in them but what is perceived; but whoever shall attend to his ideas, whether sense or reflection, will not perceive in them any power or activity; there is, therefore, no such thing contained in them. A little attention will discover to us that the very being of an idea implies passiveness and inertness in it." Taking a helpful classificatory hint from Ken Winkler ¹, I consider two ways (not mutually exclusive) of interpreting Berkeley's claim. The first is phenomenological; that is, it is clear from introspection that ideas—in this case immediate or mediate objects of sense—can't be efficient (strict) causes. The second is conceptual; that is, it follows from the fact that ideas can't exist unperceived that they are causally inert. In both cases I argue that Berkeley hasn't made the case that ideas are passive.

Philosophers of course have challenged the claim (challenges generally directed at Hume) that we don't perceive strict causality. I look, however, at the contemporary experimental work stimulated by the writings of Albert Michotte (directed at Hume) in the middle of the 20th century ². Using models of collision scenarios Michotte called "launching," and "entraining," Michotte and others argue that representing causal relations in perceptual experience is robust and automatic even when subjects believe no causal relation exists. The conceptual argument, I believe, is more challenging. As suggested by Winkler, it claims that the *esse est percipi* doctrine with respect to sense objects rules out any causal power for ideas. I argue, however, that if we treat causal perception as Berkeley treats mediate perception of objects, then a causal role for ideas can't be ruled out.

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Geneviève BRYKMAN : *Berkeley et le scepticisme pyrrhonien*

L'immatérialisme, en tant que démonstration de la non-existence de la substance matérielle, n'est pas sans susciter un paradoxe immédiat : Berkeley se réclame du sens commun et de ses « évidences » et il a, de fait, produit une philosophie qui fut aussitôt tenue pour extravagante. Mais un paradoxe plus fondamental tient à ce que, pour lutter contre un scepticisme, germe de toute irréligion, Berkeley a entrepris de *retourner les armes même de l'adversaire contre lui*. Avec l'immatérialisme, il a utilisé les démarches du scepticisme pyrrhonien pour combattre le scepticisme. Qu'est-ce à dire ?

Rappelons que le scepticisme pyrrhonien est un phénoménisme, c'est-à-dire une philosophie qui s'en tient aux seuls phénomènes sensibles. Son contenu est à rapporter au sens propre du verbe grec *skepteskhai* : *examiner minutieusement, inspecter*; ce qui semble l'inscrire dans le registre du connaître. Cependant, le phénoménisme est d'abord d'une manière de vivre, une méthode, et non pas d'une position théorique qui se résumerait dans l'affirmation (en fin de compte dogmatique) que "rien n'est certain", comme ce fut le cas pour le scepticisme reconnu comme académique. Comme Pyrrhon, Berkeley propose que, en matière de connaissance, on suspende son jugement pour écouter la nature en s'en tenant aux représentations sensibles.

Dans les oeuvres de jeunesse de Berkeley, on peut mettre à jour un combat sans merci contre la théorie représentative de la perception. Inspirés par Descartes, ce sont Locke et Malebranche qui sont les adversaires les plus directement visés par Berkeley. Bayle est au contraire une lecture à l'évidence très féconde pour découvrir les armes d'un scepticisme pyrrhonien capable de lutter contre le scepticisme académique secrété par toute la « nouvelle philosophie ». Nous tenterons de montrer comment les *Trois dialogues* (1713) et plus encore l'*Alciphron* (1732) manifestent que le scepticisme pyrrhonien, interprété

¹ Kenneth P. Winkler, *Berkeley, an Interpretation*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989)

² Albert Michotte, (1946). *The Perception of Causality* (trans. T. R. and E. Miles, 1963)

comme « méthode sceptique », était tenu par Berkeley comme capable de vaincre le scepticisme académique comme position dogmatique.

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Sébastien CHARLES : *Activité et passivité de l'esprit selon Berkeley*

L'immatérialisme berkeleyen se présente sous la forme d'un dualisme particulier, qui, plutôt que d'opposer deux substances, âme et corps, oppose deux états, activité et passivité, sans faire pourtant de cette opposition une distinction radicale puisqu'une même substance, à savoir l'esprit, peut être dite à la fois active et passive, ce qui n'est pas sans poser problème. Depuis l'article de Willis Doney consacré à la question dans les années 1950 jusqu'à l'interprétation toute récente de Genevieve Migely parue en 2007, les commentateurs se sont efforcés de rendre compte de ce qui a tout d'un paradoxe. Car Berkeley ne cesse en effet de définir l'esprit comme une substance active, « an active being », dont la nature consiste à percevoir, produire ou combiner des idées, tout en rappelant à mainte reprise que le même esprit peut être dit à juste titre passif quand il perçoit. Si l'activité constitue bien la nature même de l'esprit, l'envisager en tant que passif demande quelque explication. C'est cette prétendue passivité de l'esprit que nous voudrions clarifier en nous intéressant non seulement au statut prétendument passif de la perception, que l'on peut expliquer de l'intérieur du système berkeleyen en déjouant le paradoxe de la duplicité de l'esprit, mais également à des états où l'esprit apparaît comme absent ou étranger à lui-même et qui semblent relever de la catégorie de l'involontaire, et qui tendent en partie à redoubler l'impression d'une véritable passivité de l'esprit, et du fait même la question à résoudre.

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Stephen H. DANIEL : *Berkeley's Appropriation of Bayle's Constitutive Scepticism*

Most discussions of Berkeley's relation to Bayle focus on Bayle's insights about (1) how primary qualities are like secondary qualities and (2) how the infinite divisibility of material extension is unintelligible. More generally, Popkin, Luce, Bracken, McCracken, Brykman, and Glauser argue that Bayle provokes Berkeley's use of doubt about the existence of material objects to formulate his immaterialist response to skepticism. As far as I know, though, no one has indicated how Berkeley draws on Bayle to develop his views on God's communication of ideas to (or rather, in) finite minds. This is understandable, considering how Bayle appeals to Malebranche's occasionalism (which Berkeley rejects) to account for our experiences. But in appropriating Malebranche's doctrines, Bayle points out that "the creative act that brings about the substance of minds and their capacity for thought necessarily brings about their actual thought." This is Berkeley's point as well, even though (as Todd Ryan has recently noted) it means that "in creating a substance with, say, the faculty of volition, God must create the volitions themselves." That, of course, raises problems for both Bayle and Berkeley regarding God's causation and human freedom.

I suggest that the key for solving those problems consists in considering how the two issues most associated with the Bayle-Berkeley connection (viz., the mind-dependence of extension and the impossibility of infinite divisibility) bear directly on Berkeley's treatment of finite minds in terms of their actively perceiving particular arrangements of ideas. To make this point, I invoke Hume's specific recommendation that we read Malebranche, Bayle, and Berkeley together. In this way, we can develop a strategy for interpreting Berkeley's antidote to skepticism that draws especially on Bayle to identify finite minds in terms of their specification of the limits of what can be known. In doing so, we discover how our not knowing external bodies is thus not a result of our finitude, but rather our finitude is shown to consist in the identification of what we do not know.

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Georges DICKER : *Berkeley's Challenge*

This paper offers an interpretation and a critique of Berkeley's argument in *PHK* section 5, where he defends his idealism by challenging us to conceive the *esse* of a sensible object apart from its *percipi*.

Berkeley's challenge is not easy to interpret. He is evidently saying that people who believe the "tenet" that sensible objects such as houses, mountains, and rivers exist unperceived do so for a bad reason, namely, because they think they can abstract such an object's existence from its being perceived, since they can conceive its existence apart from its being perceived. The purpose of section 5 is to show that this reason is false. But why does Berkeley think that it is false? One possible answer suggested by the text is that for him "light and colours, heat and cold, extension and figures, in a word, the things we see and feel" are merely "sensations, notions, ideas or impressions on the sense," which as such cannot, of course, be conceived as existing unperceived. Another possible answer, also suggested by the text, is that even quite apart from the doctrine that they are only ideas, "light and colours, heat and cold, extension and figures, in a word, the things we see and feel" cannot be conceived as existing unperceived without "divid[ing] a thing from it self" (as Berkeley already suggests in the latter half of section 3).

In part I of the paper, I argue that section 5 should be read as primarily giving the second of these answers. I defend my interpretation against several possible objections, and I criticize alternative interpretations, including the view that Berkeley's challenge is merely an application of his anti-abstractionism in the Introduction of *PHK*. In section II of the paper, I offer a critique of Berkeley's challenge. I examine it in what I take to be its strongest form, namely as it applies to secondary qualities. I argue that it is undermined by my distinction between the dispositional and the manifest aspect of a secondary quality, but that this distinction also enables us to identify an element of truth in Berkeley's *esse est percipi* doctrine.

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Keota FIELDS : *Transcendental Arguments in Berkeley's Immaterialism*

Berkeley's argument for immaterialism is routinely read as a straightforward transitivity argument. After identifying material bodies with sensible objects, and the latter with ideas of sense, Berkeley is said to conclude that putative material bodies are actually identical to collections of ideas of sense. George Pappas has recently defended an alternative reading that grounds Berkeley's immaterialism in his rejection of what Pappas calls 'category-transcendent abstract ideas': abstract ideas of beings, entia, or existence. This paper uses Pappas' reading as a framework for interpreting Berkeley's immaterialism in terms of transcendental arguments. On this reading, Berkeley rejects Locke's transcendental argument for the existence of material substratum (*Essay* II.xxiii.1-6; and Locke's letters to Stillingfleet) on the grounds that it turns decisively on the aforementioned category-transcendent abstract ideas, which Berkeley rejects as logically inconsistent. In its place, Berkeley offers his own transcendental argument designed to show that only minds and ideas exist.

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Richard GLAUSER : *Revisiting Berkeley on the Sameness of What We Perceive*

Although in the *PHK* (e.g. §95) Berkeley shows interest in the problem of what constitutes the identity of a physical body over time, it is only in the *TDHP* (247-248) that he explicitly addresses the question of whether two or more finite minds can ever perceive one and the same thing (simultaneously or successively). For numerous reasons Berkeley's less than straightforward reply, as worded by Philonous, is notoriously difficult to pin down. Some commentators take Berkeley to be endorsing a clear-cut positive reply, whereas others have him giving an emphatically negative one; others hold that for Berkeley there is no fact of the matter that can determine an answer one way or the other. I argue that all three readings, *if taken unrestrictedly*, are mistaken. One of the reasons is that the conclusion that Philonous accepts, as worded by Hylas, is a disjunction: "either [...] there is no difficulty at bottom in this point; or if there be, [...] it makes equally against both opinions [the materialists' and Berkeley's]" (248). Building upon a previous paper (Rennes 2003) I attempt to show why each of the three replies is partly true, and then try to show that a coherent broad picture of Berkeley's position about the identity of what several minds perceive can be made out due to his distinction between immediate and mediate perception, and to the type-token distinction that is required by all languages, whether of human or of divine institution. I try to show that the proposed reading accounts for Berkeley's not taking Hylas's objection as detrimental. One may wonder

how Berkeley's mitigated reply fares with common sense. It must be remembered that Berkeley does not wish to accommodate all common-sense opinions; his basic argument on this question is only that his philosophy can *often* endorse more of them than a "materialist" philosophy can. Often, but not necessarily always; whence the disjunctive conclusion.

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Petr GLOMBÍČEK : *Berkeley's Notion of Common Sense*

Berkeley's doctrine is clearly counter-intuitive; nevertheless, it claims to be in agreement with common sense. Traditionally this paradox is resolved in one or the other of the following ways. (1) Berkeley changed his view on what is in agreement with common sense between writing the *Principles* and the *Dialogues*. Therefore he started to claim an agreement with common sense for his doctrine only after he had come to the conclusion that the belief that minds and physical things are on the same ontological level is not a part of the set of ordinary beliefs. (2) Berkeley's doctrine proposes nothing more than a "metaphysical" analysis of commonsensical beliefs. Thus, interpretations up to now have held that Berkeley must be – intentionally, or unintentionally – misinterpreting his own doctrine, when he claims it is in agreement with common sense. One can solve the paradox by abandoning the idea of common sense as a set of shared ordinary beliefs. Berkeley's claim to common sense is then just the claim that his doctrine is *rational*. First, such a reading makes Berkeley's claim that he agrees with common sense throughout his writings intelligible. Secondly, it is supported by explicit textual evidence starting with the identification of common sense with the light of nature or light of reason. Finally, it makes Berkeley an integral part of the philosophical tradition of his contemporaries, since e. g. Locke or Descartes use the term in the same way as Berkeley.

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Heta Aleksandra GYLLING : *Prudentiality, Expediency and Afterlife*

Berkeley's contribution to moral philosophy has mostly concentrated on two questions, based on his sermon *On Passive Obedience*. First, whether he indeed was a utilitarian; secondly, whether he can be properly called a *theological* utilitarian, as for instance Ernest Albee claims in his *History of English Utilitarianism*: "[Berkeley was] one of the very first to put [the] doctrine of so-called "Theological Utilitarianism" into definite form". The basic tenet of his version of utilitarianism seems to be, especially according to the above-mentioned sermon, that prudence and morality dictate that our actions should be guided by the good of all human beings. But since rational individuals understand that earthly pleasures should play no serious role when compared to eternity and the kind of happiness only God can guarantee, our actions should be guided by godly rules only.

The question I will explore in my presentation is the following. On the basis of what Berkeley has written in his sermons, do we have reason to believe that we human beings should be motivated in our actions by our sincere faith in an Almighty God and do what he wills us to do? Is it so that even independently of any prudential considerations it is our moral duty to obey God's will? My answer to the latter question will be that Berkeley is actually more motivated by prudentiality and expediency than has been presumed, so that all our actions and omissions should be guided by one ultimate end, that is, an attempt to secure Afterlife.

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Jani HAKKARAINEN : *Ideas Are Ideas: Of the Ontological Status of Berkeley's Ideas*

I argue that the ontological status of Berkeley's ideas is the way of being of an idea. This counters John Yolton's (2000) view of ideas as non-entities, George Pitcher's (1977) and Richard Watson's (1987) adverbial accounts, Ken Winkler's object reading and Marc Hight's (2008) view that Berkeley's ideas are "quasi-substances".

For Berkeley, ideas depend for their existence on minds, which function as substrata and are

entirely distinct from ideas. This ontological status is problematic from the point of view of the traditional substance-property ontology in which dependent entities do not seem to be capable of *really* distinct existence. As properties depend on substances, they cannot exist without the 'support' of substances and as such cannot be really, but merely modally, or rationally, distinct from substances.

I suggest an obvious solution to the problem of the ontological status of Berkeley's ideas: his metaphysics is a substance-idea ontology, which departs from the traditional substance-property ontology. According to Berkeley, there are two kinds of entities: substances and ideas. Substances are either infinite or finite persisting spiritual beings, and the existence of the latter is dependent only on the former. Ideas are dependent entities, for which substances function as substrata. Their category covers also bodies.

This does not entail, however, that ideas modify minds or are its properties, that my mind is for example red when I have a red perception. In this picture, the mind does *not* consist of ideas and a substratum (in any sense). Rather, the mind works as the substratum that supports the existence of ideas that are distinct from it. So ideas are neither properties nor modifications of the mind; the mind merely makes their existence possible. In the argument of the paper, I use contemporary trope nominalism as an heuristic tool in order to show that dependent and wholly distinct existence is a coherent idea, that was denied in the traditional substance-property ontology.

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Marc HIGHT : *The Myth of Privacy*

That sensory ideas are private to the minds that perceive them is often asserted with respect to Berkeley's immaterialism. I call the claim that no single idea is perceived by more than one mind the *privacy* thesis. In this paper I argue that after analysis there is in fact no compelling reason to believe that Berkeley either held or was committed to the privacy thesis. Although in some cases the perception of ideas may be private, that is not because the logic of Berkeley's philosophical system requires it. After engaging the most prominent arguments for privacy, I conclude by demonstrating why Berkeley had good philosophical reasons to resist the claim that all sensory ideas must be private.

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James HILL : *Berkeley's Notions: A Middle Way between Empiricism and Innatism?*

Berkeley is usually classified as an empiricist. In this paper I argue that the doctrine of notions is an account of the mental sphere that offers a significant alternative to both innatism *and* empiricism. I begin by drawing attention to the conflict between the doctrine of notions and concept-empiricism, pointing in particular to Berkeley's reservations about both Locke's critique of innate ideas and his 'ideas of reflection'. Then I argue that, despite certain affinities, Berkeley's position is ultimately opposed to Cartesian innatism, too, because notions represent the mind as *necessarily* operating with the images of sense. Next, I explore the suggestion, made by Berkeley himself at *Siris* §308, that notions offer a middle way between concept-empiricism and innatism, which has important philosophical advantages over its two rivals. Despite these advantages, in the final part of the paper I raise doubts about the ability of the doctrine of notions to ground Berkeley's theism, it being unclear how we can form a notion of 'the infinitely perfect' mind.

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Laurent JAFFRO : *Berkeley on Assent and the "Belief of Matter"*

In PHK 73 Berkeley draws on the Lockean account of assent: our holding a proposition to be true is grounded in our "motives or reasons" for holding it to be true, and is proportioned to them. Berkeley applies this view of assent to our "belief of matter" (PHK 75; DHP II & III). Changing that belief - the main aim of PHK and DHP - supposes, first, that people become aware that their reasons for believing that a material substance exists are wrong, and secondly, that they have good reasons for believing that a spiritual substance exists.

I wish to show that Berkeley makes use of a doctrine of assent at the meta-philosophical level, i. e. in order to account for our holding the immaterialist claim to be true. Philosophy itself is the object of assent. Does this entail that the status of immaterialism is similar to that of religion? Does Berkeley leave intact Locke's conception of the "grounds of probability"? Does he answer the old question whether assent is voluntary? Does he subscribe to Locke's claim that the object of assent is a proposition and to the related claim that having a proposition to which one may assent requires having the ideas of which the proposition is made up? My aim is to reconstruct the main lines of Berkeley's account of assent and to assess whether it is consistent with his philosophy of mind.

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Nancy KENDRICK : *The Empty Amusement of Seeing; Berkeley on Causation and Explanation*

"Hence it is evident that were our eyes turned into the nature of microscopes, we should not be much benefited by the change; we should be deprived of the forementioned advantage we at present receive by the visive faculty, and have left us only the empty amusement of seeing, without any other benefit arising from it..." (NTV §88). Berkeley's commitment to volitional causation is not, in itself, a problem for materialists. Descartes and Locke, for example, surely thought that minds had causal powers, and they both rely on the causal power of the will to advance a variety of arguments. What materialists would reject is Berkeley's further view that volitional causation is the only kind of causation there is. The aim of materialism was to place causal power in the collisions between the material parts of bodies in the hope of generating an explanatory framework for understanding the natural world. Berkeley is not the only philosopher to claim that these alleged material causes do not, in fact, provide a genuine explanation. What is unique to Berkeley is the view that explanation does not reside in causal accounts of relations anyway. Berkeley is very much committed to *causation*, but even his brand of it – volitional causation – does not provide explanation or prediction. Necessary connection is not a potent explanatory concept.

I argue that Berkeley is offering a radical alternative not just to the details of materialism, but to the broader Galilean-Cartesian-Lockean conception of the uniformity of nature. Of course, Berkeley appreciates the uniformity and predictability of the natural world. But, his point is that the universe is orderly, uniform, and dependable not because of causal relations – material or volitional – but because such orderliness is conducive to our well-being. My reading of Berkeley provides solutions to two problems: 1. It explains why Berkeley's God is not a deceiver, despite his being the cause of our sensory ideas; and 2. It explains why Berkeley dismisses an ontological type of proof for God's existence.

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George PAPPAS : *Berkeley and Epistemic Fallibilism*

Fallibilism in epistemology is the thesis that one may know some proposition *p*, even when it is possible that one is mistaken in one's belief that *p*. We rightly associate a defense of fallibilism with Charles Peirce, as he famously defended this position. But the roots of the fallibilist position lie much farther back, even if Peirce himself did not recognize this fact. In this paper it is argued that Berkeley adopted the fallibilist position as well.

I start with a look at Ockham who, I believe, explicitly defended a fallibilist position very similar to Berkeley's. There is no evidence of which I am aware either that Ockham's fallibilism attracted any followers, or that it had any influence on Berkeley. So it is of great interest that Berkeley came up with the Ockhamist position on his own, and very early on in his philosophical career, starting with the *Notebooks*. One key to Berkeley's position is his comment in *Notebooks* # 776 where Berkeley speaks of "my doctrine of certainty." He is there speaking of religious statements, but I believe he intends this doctrine of certainty to have wider scope. It is this which is documented in this paper, so that his doctrine of certainty develops into the fallibilist position.

Attribution of fallibilism to Berkeley is not without its problems, however. There are texts which make it appear that Berkeley adopts the opposite position, for he seems to maintain that immediate perception infallibly leads to knowledge. If this were his considered view, then of course Berkeley would be no fallibilist. I argue that this is not Berkeley's considered view at all. He does not hold that immediate

perception infallibly leads to knowledge in all cases where an event of immediate perception occurs. He holds, instead, a much narrower position according to which immediate perception when directed at individual ideas of sense infallibly yields knowledge. Even in that case, however, the knowledge so generated is greatly restricted in scope, applying only to intrinsic properties of those sensible ideas.

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Silvia PARIGI : *Berkeley and Boyle: Qualitative Corpuscularianism and the Laws of Nature*

In this essay a double convergence between George Berkeley and Robert Boyle will be shown and analysed: “qualitative corpuscularianism”, and the conception of laws of nature as “customs” (Boyle) or as instrumental hypotheses concerning the second causes of natural things (Berkeley).

Two versions of corpuscularianism existed in the seventeenth century. The strictly mechanistic, Cartesian one has recently been called “reductive atomism” by Catherine Wilson, who distinguishes it from Boyle’s “qualitative corpuscularianism”. This latter version does not induce “the impression of a major rupture with the eclectic systems of the Renaissance”, while the former does: corpuscular effluvia may be considered “either as important constituents of the mechanical philosophy or as residues of an older qualitative chemistry”³.

Two theses will be defended: (1) qualitative corpuscularianism is not to be identified with mechanism, nor does it imply some form of mechanism, either in Boyle or in Berkeley; (2) Boyle and Berkeley’s conceptions of laws of nature make religion and natural philosophy not only compatible, but complementary, within an apologetic design.

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Ville PAUKKONEN : *Berkeley’s Likeness Principle*

Berkeley challenges the view held by representational realists that we directly perceive only our ideas, but that we nevertheless perceive mind-independent physical objects, albeit indirectly, by an argument based on the so-called likeness-principle. This principle states that an idea can be like nothing but another idea, and hence rules out the option that ideas represent objects by means of resemblance, i. e. likeness. The aim of my paper is twofold: first to examine the view on resemblance defended by the main advocate of representational realism, namely John Locke, as Berkeley understood him. I hope to show by this that Berkeley’s view on resemblance which is relevant for a correct formulation of the likeness-principle, was shaped by Locke’s in an important way. Secondly, I aim to review reconstructions of the likeness-principle offered in the secondary literature and to judge them in the light of the new understanding of resemblance. I shall argue that the reconstruction of Berkeley’s account of likeness recently offered by Todd Ryan fares best in comparison and fits well with the primary texts.

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Luc PETERSCHMITT : *Berkeley’s Implicit Corpuscularianism in the Principles of Human Knowledge*

In this paper, I claim that Berkeley is a corpuscularian from the beginning of his career to the end. However, in his first works, his corpuscularianism is only implicit. To sustain my claim, I will show that in his first works Berkeley did not hold any explicit position, nor against, nor in favour of the existence of corpuscles. (i) In two sections of the *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision*, Berkeley refers to corpuscles to explain the Moon illusion (§ 68, 72). One may object, however, that this does not prove that, for Berkeley, there is no contradiction between immaterialism and corpuscularism, since the *New Theory of Vision* is not necessarily an immaterialist treatise. (ii) In the *Principles*, two sections show Berkeley’s commitment to corpuscularism: in section 50, he claims that his philosophy does not “destroy the whole of corpuscular philosophy” (his aim is only to show that none of its explanations require the existence of a material

³ Catherine Wilson, “Corpuscular Effluvia: Between Imagination and Experiment,” in *Ideals and Cultures of Knowledge*, ed. Detel and Zittel, 161-84.

substance); in section 106, his argument against universal attraction presupposes that corpuscles do exist. (iii) Last, Berkeley's conception of light (as exposed by Philonous in the *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*) cannot be read as a proof of his anti-corpuscularianism, since it is a purely *ad hominem* argument.

Thus, we should interpret his principle in the light of this question: Is it possible to be an immaterialist and a corpuscularian? As Berkeley did not see any contradiction between his principle and the existence of unperceived particles, there should be a solution (if the corpuscles are unperceived, it does not mean that they are unperceivable). If such a solution is not possible, then it is necessary to admit that a contradiction affects not only *Siris*, but all of Berkeley's philosophical work.

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Timothy QUANDT : *Berkeley's Immaterialism and the Evidential Problem of Evil*

Berkeley poses a challenge to the reader of the *Three Dialogues* to "show one [difficulty] that is explained by matter; nay, which is not more unintelligible with, than without that supposition" (260). I believe that I have found such a difficulty. I argue in this paper that Berkeley's unique immaterialist ontology is more susceptible to evidential, or naturalistic, problems of evil than materialist ones. According to Berkeley, God is omni-perceptive, and as such the primary cause of objects being and remaining in existence, even objects that are outside the immediate scope of human perception. The evidential problem of evil argues that it is reasonable to believe that gratuitous amounts of evil, or suffering, exist in the world, e.g., animals may suffer in locations far removed from human perception. Berkeley raises this objection but seems to indicate that the theodicies delineated in his writings are insufficient to salve such concerns. I argue that Berkeley's immaterialism is meant to provide an answer to these particular problems of evil since it cannot appeal to resources from which competing materialist ontologies are free to draw.

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Samuel C. RICKLESS : *The Relation Between Anti-Abstractionism and Idealism in Berkeley's Metaphysics*

In the *Principles*, Berkeley prefaces his first defense of idealism with an attack on the doctrine of abstraction. This immediately raises the question whether Berkeley uses anti-abstractionism as a premise in his argument for idealism. A number of scholars (including Pappas, Atherton, and Bolton) have argued that he does. In this paper, I argue that the relation between anti-abstractionism and idealism is more complex than these commentators make it out to be. Berkeley distinguishes between two kinds of abstraction, "singling" abstraction and "generalizing" abstraction, and then uses his denial of the possibility of singling abstraction, but not his denial of the possibility of generalizing abstraction, to argue for idealism. Berkeley then uses idealism to argue for the impossibility of a particular kind of singling abstraction, namely the mental separation of the idea of a sensible object's existence from the idea of its being perceived. Interestingly, as I argue, this procedure is non-circular.

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Katia SAPORITI : *A Bet with High Stakes: Reflections on Berkeley's Master Argument*

"You cannot imagine a tree that isn't perceived, or at least imagined, by anyone." - "Well, I can." - "All right, go ahead and do it." - "OK, I imagine a tree standing in a remote place where it is not perceived by anyone, and no one happens to think of it." - "There you are, you have just thought of that tree. You have even imagined it. Hence you have not imagined a tree which is not imagined by anyone." According to a widespread view, it is this feeble sort of argument by means of which Berkeley attempts to support his claim that the existence of perceivable things consists in their being perceived. But Berkeley was no fool, nor did he try to convince his opponents by logical sleight of hand (or fallacious reasoning). The point of the so-called Master argument is a different one. A close reading of central passages of the *Principles* and the *Three Dialogues* enables us to see the argument as a kind of bet on whether abstract ideas are to be rejected - a bet with high stakes indeed.

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Daniel SCHULTHESS : *Berkeleyan Ideas and Profiles : An Inquiry on Perspective*

In *Principles* § 14 and elsewhere, Berkeley endorses a view about perspective that is at the same time obviously erroneous and difficult to correct appropriately. In this view a parallel is drawn and exploited between types of perceptual relativity that appear utterly different. The inference that Berkeley assumes to work for ideas of secondary qualities (inferring from their relativity to their being “not at all patterns of real beings existing in the corporeal substances which excite them”) is squarely extended to visual profiles: given that “to the same eye at different stations [...], [figure and extension] appear various, [...] [they] cannot therefore be the images of anything settled and determinate without the mind” (*Principles* § 14).

Of course, we may question the inference sketched above in the case of ideas of secondary qualities, and this has been done already in elegant ways by several authors. The criticism that is applied in such a context, however, does not capture the specific difficulties we may have with the parallel between the kind of variation we find in the two very different cases of ideas of secondary qualities and of visual profiles. The aim of this paper is to sort out the differences that Berkeley passes over with this parallel, and to find a framework in which visual profiles may find a more adequate treatment.

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Claire SCHWARTZ : *A new scientific methodology? Metaphysical principles and physical laws in De Motu*

Prima facie, it seems that the main purpose of *De Motu* is to present an interpretation of physical science that is consistent with the epistemological and metaphysical principles stated in the *Principles*. In particular, Berkeley wants to show the necessity of ridding physics of abstract entities that have almost constantly accompanied explanations concerning bodies and their motions. By doing so, however, Berkeley does not seem to offer anything new concerning the nature of force. His critique is indeed very similar to the Cartesian critique of the Aristotelian metaphysics of substantial forms and entelechies that will be renewed by Leibniz’s dynamics. More specifically, the way Berkeley insists upon the absence of natural causes and the inefficacy of bodies in order to refute any realist interpretation of the notion of force follows exactly the line of argument by which Malebranche defends occasionalism.

In this regard, *De Motu* cannot be seen as a very significant and innovative contribution to the debates on the nature of force and motion in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Descartes and Malebranche, particularly, had reached the same conclusions on this matter. On the other hand, they did not follow the methodological principles stated in *De Motu*. Berkeley clearly claims that physical laws and hypotheses must not depend on metaphysical principles, and he thus defines physics as an autonomous science. On the contrary, the fundamental principle of physics, namely the principle of conservation of quantity of motion, is based on metaphysical arguments according to Descartes, and the reduction of the notion of force to actual motion in bodies is explained by the metaphysical principle of “continuous creation” for the Cartesians.

We will examine the exact meaning of this methodological principle of separation, and answer the following question: What would the justification of physical laws be in this context? This methodological stance could be related to an instrumentalist interpretation of Berkeley’s theory of truth.

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Tom STONEHAM : *Agency and Blind Agents*

I have elsewhere argued (2002 ch. 6, 2010) that we should interpret Berkeley as continuing to hold in his published works the realist view expressed in PC 548. This leads us to the question of how to analyse attributions of agency such as ‘we move our legs’. In particular, how to explicate the relation between volition and bodily motion. Undoubtedly the relation is causal, but it seems there must also be further constraints to rule out effects which are not the result of exercises of agency, for there is a clear distinction between doing something and causing something to happen by wanting it to happen. Locke deals with this

issue by proposing an epistemic condition upon true volitions (Essay 2.21.15). I shall argue that when we interpret Berkeley's comment – contra Winkler – that 'a blind Agent is a Contradiction' (PC 812) in the light of 17th century discussions of blind powers (*caeca potentia*), we can see that he would accept a similar epistemic, rather than merely representational, condition upon agency. However, within an empiricist framework where such knowledge of our own powers must be learnt by experience, such an epistemic condition is threatened by a regress: we observe what we can and cannot do by observing our successes and failures in what we try to do. To stop the regress, Berkeley must allow that, if finite minds are to reach the state of being agents, they must first exercise blind powers.

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Reed WINEGAR: *Berkeley's Escape from the Labyrinth*

Berkeley's infamous rejection of infinite divisibility has typically been regarded as merely a (potentially problematic) consequence of his Idealism. Here I argue, however, that Berkeley has independent worries regarding infinite divisibility that help to *motivate* his Idealist position. Specifically, Berkeley fears that infinite divisibility leads to inconsistencies that threaten human reason's integrity. While obviously nobody today shares Berkeley's worries on this score, I show that Berkeley displays great sensitivity to his own day's mathematical and philosophical treatments of infinite divisibility. But more importantly, I also argue that Berkeley hopes to save *reason* from paradox and that this hope is rooted in a deeper wish to prove that finite human minds can fully comprehend the physical world, a point that Berkeley sees as necessary for God's benevolence. The denial of infinite divisibility is, thus, *essential* to Berkeley's thought. And this increased emphasis on the role of reason in Berkeley's philosophy invites interesting contrasts between Berkeley and so-called 'Rationalists', such as Leibniz.

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