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CONSTANTINE GEORGE CAFFENTZIS

EXCITING THE INDUSTRY OF MANKIND. GEORGE BERKELEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF MONEY

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EXCITING THE INDUSTRY OF MANKIND
GEORGE BERKELEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF MONEY

by
CONSTANTINE GEORGE CAFFENTZIS

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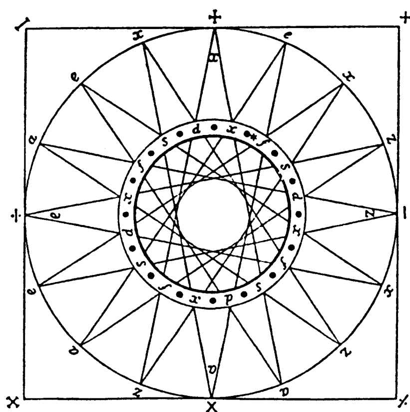
EXCITING THE INDUSTRY OF MANKIND GEORGE BERKELEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF MONEY



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All of old. Nothing else ever. Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.

Samuel Beckett, *Worstward Ho* (1983)

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Acknowledgments

From its inception during a New Year's Day walk on the beach in Ibeno, Nigeria, to a final stroll on Old Orchard Beach, Maine, diagonally across the Atlantic from Ibeno, fifteen years later, this book has been my constant companion. It has been the source of and excuse for many travels, adventures, diversions, and work stoppages. I will miss it.

At this moment of parting, however, the communal aspect of scholarly work becomes most apparent and compelling. More than a decade of generosity and hospitality offered to me and this book by friends and institutions across three continents demands acknowledgment.

When I first arrived in Nigeria I marveled at the acknowledgment sections of university students' theses. They would often be a dozen pages long and might evoke more than a hundred names. These students openly acknowledged the inevitable commonism of intellectual work and the debts it incurs. They knew that though children might require villages for nurturance, books like this require libraries, conversations, plenty of time for preparing to write, long-term material support, and endless gifts of thought from the living, the dead, and those still to be born.

If I was to be fair to their insight, this section would be a dozen pages longer than my Nigerian students'. But I will limit myself and parcel out by continents my return gift of naming.

I began to write this book in Nigeria in 1985 when I was a Senior Lecturer in the University of Calabar's Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy. I would like to thank Professor Maurice Ene, the Chair

of the Department then, for his concern for and interest in my work. Some of the early ideas were discussed in graduate seminars and public lectures in Calabar and I mention with special fondness the following students who participated in these discussions: S. Alabi, O. Oshita, and G. Ozumba.

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I hope this book returns to them even a pale shadow of intellectual and political excitement that they gave me.

In the course of my research on the book I often went to Ireland and luckily I found a much needed scholarly embrace there. After all, I was a philosopher trying to maneuver through the turbulent waters of eighteenth-century Irish history and economics. There were moments, I must admit, when my confidence flagged. The most important help came from Professor Patrick Kelly of Trinity College, Dublin, who periodically assured me that I was sailing in the general vicinity of the historical trade routes. Professors Tom Boylan and Pascal O'Gorman helped to arrange a two-month stay at the University of Galway in 1993 that was crucial to the transformation of early drafts into the beginning of a credible manuscript. I also must thank Kevin Whelan and Kevin Barry for encouraging me to make my work more available to Irish intellectuals.

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One of the most important moments in the writing of this book was my month-long residency in Whitehall, George Berkeley's home in Middletown, Rhode Island, in August 1997. My stay brought me in direct contact with the sights and sounds Berkeley himself experienced during his American period. This intimate sharing of life with the subject of my book had a peculiar influence on me. I seemed to have gained a much greater confidence in my hypotheses concerning Berkeley's life afterwards. My thanks go to the International Berkeley Society and Society of Colonial Dames for giving me their permission to stay in Whitehall. Special thanks to Mrs. Joanne Dunlap for welcoming me and introducing me to Whitehall's mysteries.

During the writing of the book my mother, Vasiliki Caffentzis, became mortally ill with cancer and died. I was able to be close to her

in her last months of life, to express my love for her and to feel again her love for me. In those months, I abandoned Berkeley, but in an inexplicable way her death gave me an existential push to finish this work.

Finally, I acknowledge my loved companion of these last fifteen years of Atlantic life. Her comments, criticisms, and material helped make this book possible.

Thanks to and for all.

Abbreviations

A	*The Analyst* (1734) in Luce and Jessop (1951iv). References are by paragraph number.
AL	*Alciphron, or The Minute Philosopher* (1732) in Luce and Jessop (1950iii). References are by dialogue and section number.
D	*Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* (1713) in Luce and Jessop (1949ii). References are by dialogue and section number.
Dis	*A Discourse Addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority* (1737) in Luce and Jessop (1953vi). References are by page number.
DM	*De Motu* (1720) in Luce and Jessop (1951iv). References are by paragraph number.
Essay	*An Essay Towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* 1721) in Luce and Jessop (1953vi). References are by page number in text.
F	*A Defense of Free Thinking in Mathematics* (1735) in Luce and Jessop (1951iv). References are by paragraph number.
IP	*Irish Patriot or Queries on Queries* (1738) in Luce and Jessop (1953vi). References are by query number.
LA	*De Ludo Algebraico* in Luce and Jessop (1951iv).
Letters	*Letters* in Luce and Jessop (1956viii). References are by recipient, date, and page number in text.

NTV	*An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* (1709) in Luce and Jessop (1948i). References are by paragraph number.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary.*
P	*A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710) in Luce and Jessop (1949ii). References are by paragraph number.
PC	*Philosophical Commentaries* (1707) in Luce and Jessop (1948i). References are by entry number.
P Intro	*Introduction to the Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710) in Luce and Jessop (1948ii). References are by paragraph number.
PO	*Passive Obedience* (1712) in Luce and Jessop (1953vi). References are by paragraph number.
A Proposal	*A Proposal for the Better Supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations* in Luce and Jessop (1955vii). References are by page number.
S	*Siris* (1744) in Luce and Jessop (1950v). References are by paragraph number.
TVV	*Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained* (1733) in Luce and Jessop (1948I). References are by paragraph number.

All references to *The Querist* will be to the first edition of the form (I. 3) where "I" refers to the first part of *The Querist* and "3" to the third query in that part. Tables to locate the queries can be found in Luce and Jessop (1953vi: 96–100) and Johnston (1970: 119–23).

Introduction

Since Thales first stumbled into his well, "Philosophy" and "Money" have been considered mutually dissonant. Popular consciousness has always associated philosophy with "other-worldly asceticism." Did not Socrates distinguish himself from the Sophists by the simple fact that he did not receive money for his work? Did not Diogenes, the cynical philosopher, say that he went to Athens to debase its currency?[1] George Berkeley himself, when he embarked on one of the earliest Anglican missionary ventures to the Americas, was labeled a "true philosopher" by Dean Jonathan Swift because he was quite eager to give up an ecclesiastic sinecure of 1000 pounds sterling a year.[2]

The general dissonance of philosophy and money is extremized in Berkeley's case. For his philosophy has been invariably reported to be "idealist" or even "idea-ist," "immaterialist," "spiritualist"—only the most diaphanous adjectives would do.[3] Berkeley's major philosophical slogans seem to intensify the traditional tension between philosophy and money to the breaking point. His most famous principle is, "to be is to be perceived." With this ontological razor he hoped to shave off the whole framework of material objects, whether they were Newton's corpuscles or the "macroscopic furniture of the world." If only ideas are perceived, then, Berkeley argued, the existence of a system of non-ideational physical bodies (whether "middle-sized" or atomic) was a hypothesis neither he (nor God) needed nor desired. But how could "hard cash" be reconciled with this idealism?

There is an additional, often forgotten clause qualifying the famous Berkeleyan motto, "to be is to be perceived *or* to be perceiving." In

Berkeley's ontology, ideas only exist parasitically dependent upon spirits (I, thou, God, and, perhaps, angels, devils, or even yet other undetected spiritual substances). There must be spirits because ideas cannot exist on their own, and an unperceived idea is Berkeley's version of a round square. But the monetary seems to be the antithesis of the "spiritual," hence it verges on the contradictory from Berkeley's perspective.

Finally, Berkeley's motto must be amended once more to read, "to be is to be perceived, to be perceiving, *or* to produce perceptions." Ideas cannot produce or create ideas in Berkeley's ontology; they are as inert as the mechanist's masses. Only active beings can produce ideas or make them change. Hence the only kind of causality he would acknowledge is a voluntaristic one, as found in our productive imagination, or in God's production of sensations in us. But money, as Kant later pointed out, cannot be a product of mere thinking!

Synthesizing these layers of Berkeley's philosophy results in a fluid, whirling vision of the human cosmos which ironically claims to defend common sense and established religion against the disintegrating analyses of the new science and the nihilating sophistry of modern skepticism. But common sense would find itself distinctly lost in Berkeley's mysterious universe where ideas are projected by totally unimaginable spirits (ourselves included) who interact through a form of telepathy. Even Berkeley's Anglican Church found this absolute "spirituality" disconcerting. Certainly, Berkeley's philosophy hardly provides, prima facie, a promising conceptual framework for economic and monetary analysis. W. B. Yeats delineated this standard view of Berkeley's philosophy in these lines:

> And God-appointed Berkeley proved all things a dream.
> That this pragmatical, preposterous pig of a world its farrow that so solid seem,
> Must vanish in the instant if the mind but change its theme.[4]

Yeats incorporated Berkeley into an Anglo-Irish conceptual heritage, wherein "Everything that is not God [is] consumed with (an) intellectual fire," which is antithetical to materialism and capitalism.

Exciting the Industry of Mankind contradicts Yeats' vision of Berkeley by foregrounding Berkeley's concern with this very "pragmatical, preposterous pig of a world" and his undreamy monetary

proposals to transform early eighteenth century Ireland from a depressed "underdeveloped" land into a dynamic accumulating economy.

Bringing Berkeley's economic concerns into focus is not straightforward because *The Querist,* the locus of his thoughts on money which was published in installments between 1735 and 1737, is a series of more than a thousand questions, and only questions! These questions are the matrix for my questioning of Berkeley and money. Were Berkeley's monetary proposals disconnected from the rest of his philosophical program or can we trace subtle but firm bonds between Berkeley's "immaterialist" philosophy and his "pragmatical" economics? Why did Berkeley choose to write on money and economics in such a querying mode? Can his work on money be explained? Is such an explanation useful for contemporary social thought and practice?

The key premise of my method is that there is a deep coherence between the philosophical and economic aspects of Berkeley's work and that both can be best understood as arising from the basic social struggles Berkeley was implicated in. *Exciting the Industry of Mankind,* therefore, is a book about the philosophy of money and monetary practice. The value of such an intersected field for both philosophy and economics can, perhaps, be best measured when its methods are applied to a philosopher like Berkeley, whose idealism was apparently so antithetical to the "piggish" concerns of money. If an analysis of Berkeley's views on money can help explain the structure of his philosophy and vice versa, then the philosophy of money would have passed a most demanding test.[5]

No *thorough* study of Berkeley and his philosophy can evade a confrontation with *The Querist* and his views on money, for the simple reason that Berkeley has been hailed as one of the most original and insightful economists of the eighteenth century, while his theory of money has been universally recognized as an important forerunner of the now dominant non-metallist theories.[6] But most Berkeleyan philosophical commentators and biographers have either totally ignored his monetary philosophy or dealt with it in passing. Consequently, *Exciting the Industry of Mankind* is the first full-length book to date on the philosophical aspects of *The Querist.*[7]

But this book is not a commentary on a text. To answer the questions Berkeley's philosophy of money pose I had to go beyond the quizzical text, as it itself suggested. I discovered that I needed to know the nature of Berkeley's "money business" in some detail. This

business, however, is rarely discussed by his biographers. Thus my greatest research effort was devoted to tracing out his monetary dealings. Let me sketch them in broad outline here.

Throughout his maturity Berkeley held high ranking posts (first as Dean and then as Bishop) of the Anglican Church of Ireland. The mixture of "Anglican" and "Ireland" had very important consequences for Berkeley. It arose by virtue of the English conquest of Ireland during the seventeenth century. In the aftermath of the conquest, the Catholic aristocracy and "peasantry" (for want of a better sociological category)—who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population—were for the most part expropriated from their lands by the English soldiery and ruling class. The Church of Ireland was the conquerors' Church, hence it was "Anglican."

This Church, like most other established churches, financed itself from tithes and rents. The tithes were paid by the Anglo-Irish gentry (who were largely members of the Anglican Church) as well as the Catholic natives (whose own Catholic Church had been outlawed by the English conquerors). The rents were paid out of the produce of the largely Catholic tenants who worked the Anglican Church's Irish lands.

But in 1734, the year of Berkeley's appointment to his bishopric, the Anglo-Irish landowners as a class unilaterally and illegally refused to pay tithes to their own Church, much to Berkeley's and other Anglican Churchmen's chagrin. The reasons for this tithe revolt were complex, but they ultimately stemmed from the severe and chronic depression of the early eighteenth-century Irish economy. This tithe revolt put the Anglican Church of Ireland in an immediate fiscal crisis by cutting a substantial percentage of its revenues. All legal and political attempts to force the Anglo-Irish gentry to pay failed. Consequently, the burden of supporting the Anglican Church of Ireland fell on the tithes and rents paid by the Irish Catholic natives, who now were expected not only to work for the comfort of the Anglo gentry on this earth, but to finance their masters' salvation in heaven!

The Anglican Church of Ireland was betrayed by its rebellious Anglo-Irish laity—who were blind to their real interests, according to Berkeley and his colleagues. It was forced to depend on the economic activity and enthusiasm of the "cynically content" Irish Catholic natives. This was a plot worthy of Samuel Beckett's imagination.

But as a leading officer of the Church, Berkeley saw little humor in the situation as he desperately searched for a way out of this precarious

socioeconomic situation for himself and his institution. His solution was a reformation of the Irish monetary system based on his new theory of money. Hence the tithe revolt was the proximate cause of the writing of *The Querist.*

According to Berkeley, the basic problem of Ireland was a lack of Industry and Public Spirit in both the Anglo-Irish ruling class and the Irish ruled. The tithe revolt, the chronic Irish economic depression, and the much lamented underemployment of Irish labor were dramatic evidence of this deficiency. Its immediate causes were the prodigality of the Anglo-Irish rich, which was matched by the squalor of the Irish poor. One hundred more sermons on Frugality would not change the situation. Something more drastic was needed.

Berkeley suggested in *The Querist* that gold and silver coinage should be phased out of circulation because specie made it too easy for the rich to buy foreign commodities, hence valuable currency was drained from the country. Further, the precious metals made small change quite rare, thus crippling the petty trade that is the microscopic health of the economy and the stimulator of the poor's work effort. The old coinage would be replaced by new money supply of paper bills of larger denominations and of metallic small change tokens.

Berkeley knew that many would immediately reject such a suggestion as preposterous. It was an axiom of the day that money was either gold or silver or had to represent these metals in some strictly defined way. An economy without gold and silver was seen as a ship without a rudder and ballast to give direction and stability, so that the slightest disturbance would veer it off course or capsize it. Moreover, the Anglo-Irish gentry would immediately consider his proposal as a thinly contrived form of expropriation (inspired, perhaps, by ecclesiastical revenge), since the commodities they sold would be exchanged for money that was, in their eyes, almost worthless.

Such *a priori* beliefs had some recent experiential backing in a variety of major monetary catastrophes and controversies Berkeley directly encountered in his travels in Europe, England, Ireland and the Americas which are studied at length in Chapter 1 of *Exciting the Industry of Mankind.* The collapse of the London-based South Sea Company and the Law System in France in 1720 brought a good part of the bourgeoisie to bankruptcy; thus there was much suspicion towards monetary "novelties" of any sort in the 1730s.[8]

Moreover, in 1724, when the English crown commissioned William Wood to coin small change for Ireland, the Irish, both Anglo and Catholic, for the first time since 1689, put up an effective anti-English resistance and successfully refused to accept the coins. The common justification was that the value of the Wood's coins' metal was substantially less than the denomination of the coin. One of Berkeley's closest friends and supporters, Dean Swift, wrote the pamphlets that spearheaded the resistance (known as *The Drapier's Letters*) and his arguments could work equally well against Berkeley's projects. Berkeley's proposed National Bank would "back" its paper bills not with gold but with land, or even agricultural commodity stocks, and his Mint would produce coins of purely token value that would make Wood's look substantial. Thus, Berkeley's monetary proposals were a distinctly "hard sell" in Ireland of the 1730s.

BERKELEY'S ANTAGONISTS

In examining Berkeley's monetary proposals and their Irish political economic background, we seem far removed from the "winding, gyring, spiring" philosophical world of active, productive spirits communicating at lightning speed. The real eighteenth-century Irish economy appears to be the antithesis of Berkeley's world or ideas and spirits. Where the economy is based upon determined material commodities like beef, lace, and gold, the other consists of ideas, images, and sensations, signifying and symbolizing the future. Where one is chaotic but mechanistic, the other is structured and planned by a divine intelligence. But, according to Berkeley, the economy should be like a well ordered mind responding to a series of monetary signals that reveal a harmonious economic grammar. It should not be allowed to follow a haphazard path determined by millions of confused agents that would dissipate Ireland's collective energies. The country's path should be guided by a single will, the state's, just as the order of Nature was planned by God and revealed to humans through their sensory ideas. Landlords and tenants, Catholics and Protestants, Anglo-Irish citizens and natives must all be helped to become industrious by monetary symbols designed by prudent, self-conscious public officials. Thus, the universe of the mind Berkeley discovered in his philosophy was an abstract model for an ideal economic system.

Berkeley's vision was opposed not only by the conventional "mercantilist" minds of the day. His main antagonists were disciples of the intellectual pillars of the Whig regime of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries: Locke and Newton. Locke (1632–1704), as a bureaucrat in the English Board of Trade and Plantations, laid the foundations of the monetary and commercial policies of the post-Settlement English Empire. He produced a sophisticated version of mercantilism, supported and unified by his social and semantic philosophies. The resulting policies were designed to keep Ireland from competing with England on the world market.

Newton (1642–1727), as Master of the English Mint, brought the prestige of his scientific career into the service of an empire based on the exploitation of its colonies through monetary means. He devoted his last thirty years to keeping England's world money sound, accurate and plentiful while consistently resisting all efforts to establish an independent mint in Ireland for fear of the "degradation of coinage" and the loss of control it implied.[9]

Both Locke and Newton were convinced of the essential relation of money to the precious metals and were powerful voices behind what Berkeley called "The Prejudice" that correlated money with precious metals. They were the main sources of the social and conceptual ambiance of the early eighteenth century that Berkeley hated: a mixture of reductive materialism, religious skepticism or barely hidden atheism, and blatant political corruption that culminated in the Robinocracy (i.e., the twenty year reign of Robert Walpole as Prime Minister). Berkeley's political and theological position as a Tory and a Bishop inevitably dictated a confrontation with the intellectual and political legacy of Locke and Newton.

Consequently much of *Exciting the Industry of Mankind* is concerned with Berkeley's critique of the Lockean theory (and the Newtonian practice) of money. This holds in two ways. First, Locke's theory of money was the most sophisticated version of what Berkeley called "The Prejudice," i.e., the identification of money with precious metals. Berkeley had to attack what he believed was a tendency to fetishize and idolize the precious metals. Locke's theory of meaning, by attributing powers and objectivity to material things independent of spirits, gave powerful intellectual support to this fetishizing attitude while Newton's monetary policy at the British Mint made it literally "pay." He had to subvert Locke's and Newton's authority in general in

order to move his readers to reflect again on The Prejudice and accept the conceptual possibility, at least, of his plan.

Second, Berkeley had to convince his Anglo-Irish flock of the true nature of money and the final end of the economy in order to persuade them not only of the possibility but of the necessity of his proposals. Money was to facilitate, stimulate, and guide human activity within an economy whose ideal end is the accumulation and intensification of activity (industry, public-spirited construction, wise legislation) and not the accumulation of substances or things. Berkeley preached the primacy of activity over matter. Here too Locke appeared as Berkeley's materialist antithesis. Locke argued that what one saw, heard, touched or smelled was caused by largely unobservable atomic processes while the origin and end of society is the preservation of (substantial) property as measured, exchanged and stored by gold and silver coinage.

For Berkeley, gold was not what was to be desired; desire for activity was to be desired. Locke's philosophy and Newton's physics, however, could not possibly unlock the secret of activity, for all their apparent success in manipulating matter and society, since they attributed activity to matter.

Again, it was this dual secret that was at the heart of the Berkeleyan problematic: how to move the apparently inert and how to give vision to the blind? For the Anglo-Irish gentry, blind with passions for pleasure and consumption, were surrounded by a sullen and heavy native Irish population. But self-guided and harmonious activity was the essence of economic life according to Berkeley. Consequently, in order to overcome the schizophrenic economic situation, his philosophy was an ongoing investigation of the conditions that would activate this divided human mass, infected with a self-inflicted blindness and catatonic depression.

Not surprisingly, the design of his monetary system is based upon his research on the process of transforming a once blind being into a truly sighted one (Molyneux's problem), and the cure to catatonic depression through music and dance (the tarantella).[10] The state was to construct the monetary system as a collection of signs which, if followed, would lead to profitable activity. The masses would be encouraged, and even tricked, into picking up on the clues in order to move their limbs and rouse their will. Berkeley recognized that nothing ever happens automatically in an "underdeveloped" economy like eighteenth-century Ireland—where a large mass of the population was but recently

expropriated. The bulk of the people would not be respond to "economic variables" because they would not know their meaning, as a person just given sight would not be able to identify a light patch in a dark background as the moon.[11]

Berkeley's insistence on the interpretive or hermeneutic aspects of economic life is a crucial feature of his monetary writings. It led me to stress another insight of Berkeley's which constitutes his "greatness" for the history of economics: *Primitive accumulation*—the separation of people from their means of subsistence—*is not enough to create a capitalist economy.* A capitalist being (whether worker or employer) must be created as well, and such a creation, Berkeley argued, presupposes the monetarization of the proletariat.[12] Humans cannot innately "tell" money; they must learn it, and the only way they can is through experience with monetary exchange structured by an external planner. For to have a full-blown capitalist system, the worker must not only be forced to work but s/he must be able to "exchange" her/his work. Locke was indifferent to this point and was quite content to see in the proletariat a new form of slave class that should not have money in the first place.[13]

Exciting the Industry of Mankind does not deal directly, however, with the Irish "natives" themselves. They are the objects of Berkeley's debate with the metalists like Locke and Newton while they remain below its horizon. What did the Irish cottiers, the herders and the smugglers think about capitalist development in Ireland? What did *they* want? At best we can surmise their thoughts and desires by examining the fears of figures like Berkeley and construct a negative image. Though we might try to piece together the songs, the broadside poems and "ethnic" practices of the time, we can end, at best, with "mere anthropology." The Irish natives were "playing dead" in our period, between the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 and the Whiteboy uprisings in the 1750s. Thus we cannot see them clearly in their own light or their actions in Ireland itself. But this very death-likeness, this stubborn opacity, was to prove their most profound "action" and greatest power.

Struggle can take infinite forms; it is often at its deepest when it appears as nothing. The failure of Berkeley's monetary and economic schemes was predicated on the profound, inertic struggle of the Irish people—exactly as he feared.

BERKELEY IN NIGERIA

Exciting the Industry of Mankind is not only a description of a now forgotten corner of philosophical and monetary history. I have philosophical and political-economic intentions in writing this book. Philosophically and methodologically, I attempt to show that the form, content and trajectory of texts like *The Querist* can be explained through an "ampliative" approach in contrast to the positivist, structuralist and post-structuralist programs of the last scholarly generation. Politically, I wish to show that the contemporary debates concerning Keynesian policies in the North America and Europe and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank policies in the Third World are by no means novel. They have their roots in the first experiments in capitalist colonialism in Ireland and the Americas centuries ago.

These purposes arose from *Exciting the Industry of Mankind*'s initial "inspiration." I began writing the book in the fall of 1985 while teaching philosophy at the University of Calabar (Nigeria). During that time, I participated in one of the most unprecedented intellectual events of my life: a nationwide debate on whether the Nigerian government should accept an IMF loan and its attached conditions. The debate lasted months. Market women and bankers, taxi drivers and professors discussed the possibilities of economic autarchy versus the neo-liberal virtues of the international market in the halls of policy-making institutes to the benches of palm wine bars. Money, in all its forms, was at the center of the debate, and I learned a lot about it from colleagues at the University (who hailed from all over Africa and Asia) and from the local smugglers in the market who were continually crossing the border to the CFA zone in Cameroon twenty miles to the east.

As I researched eighteenth-century Ireland and the problematic of underdevelopment Berkeley faced, I began to see and feel the forces and crises that shaped *The Querist* moving in Nigeria. I also began to have similar hopes for my book as Berkeley had for his. Perhaps my book could contribute to this vital debate, whose outcome would help determine my fate and the lives of my students in Nigeria. It could at least show my students that philosophy had (and has) something serious to say about "real things" (like money, work and capitalist development) and could respond to their needs and struggles.

These particular hopes ended on May 23, 1986 a few hundred miles northwest of Calabar at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU). In response to a widespread anti-IMF stance among university students and academics, the government launched a violent wave of repression that day to prepare the nation for the acceptance of IMF policies. A "kill and go" team of heavily armed policemen opened fire on a peaceful student demonstration, then the police chased the fleeing students through the campus and into a neighboring village, killing more than twenty students and townspeople and injuring dozens of others. After the ABU massacre, police shooting continued throughout the country's campuses while the government closed the universities and jailed student and academic union leaders. By the end of June, "Calm was restored." Then the government announced that it was going to accept an IMF-designed Structural Adjustment Program which, within a short time, totally devalued Nigerian currency and made any attempt at a national form of development impossible. Indeed, wages collapsed so dramatically that by the end of the first year of the program they had been devalued about 75 percent after a long period of stability. These events and decisions forced me and many other Nigerian academics, both expatriates and citizens, to leave the country.[14]

When Berkeley's monetary proposals met a historical rejection he tried to heal the body instead of the body politic. In the famine years of 1740–41 he turned to the panacea of tar water to cure the diseases of malnutrition ravaging the Catholic population of his bishopric. When my project failed, I had the good fortune of simply teaching philosophy in Maine. The hopes for an immediate political use of *Exciting the Industry of Mankind* in Nigeria were finished, but my view that books like Berkeley's *The Querist* were explainable by a careful analysis of the socioeconomic position of the author was even more confirmed by my own experience. This view, of course, found a chilly reception in the intellectual atmospherics of the late 1980s when Bennetts and Blooms were contending with Derridas and Baudrillards for academic dominance.[15] For, on the one side, my method shows that the "values of Western Civilization" intoned with such haughty servility are often quite simply rents, tithes, debt repayments, and taxes as in the case of Berkeley (and Locke). On the other side, however, I demonstrate that the radical undecidability of interpretation "discovered" by deconstructionists is frequently the product of inattention to detail and context.

Exciting the Industry of Mankind shows how a philosopher tried and failed to change the world through his ideas about money and explains why this was so.

NOTES

1. This Socratic claim was taken by many with a grain of salt, as was Plato's fee-free self-definition. Plato's Academy did not charge mandatory fees but the material conditions that made this possible were treated with suspicion by contemporaries. That garden god, Epicurus, called Plato's cronies "toadies of Dionysus" and ironically dubbed Plato as "the golden one" with good reason. Diogenes Laertius, in his *Life of Plato*, reported that the Syracusean tyrant Dionysus bestowed more than 80 talents to Plato during his stay in Sicily. The stories connecting Socrates' other great follower, Diogenes, with the defacement of the currency are carefully reviewed by Luis E. Navia in Navia (1996: 87–93). Diogenes' father, Hicesias, was a "banker" or an issuer of coins in his native Sinope, in Asia Minor. Among the many variants of the story, either Diogenes and/or Hicesias defaced, counterfeited, or produced defective coins. This was a serious crime and Diogenes was forced to flee Sinope. Either before or after that incident, Diogenes went to the oracle of Delphi or Delos to ask a question about this future, the answer was "Falsify (or, depending on our choice of meaning, counterfeit, alter, or deface) the currency." There have been attempts to try to verify this story via numismatic evidence and there have been efforts to see these stories as Cynical allegories, perhaps devised by Diogenes himself, to give a graphic image of his aim: "the rejection of all established bourgeois norms and the introduction of values based on the pursuit of virtue," Navia (1996: 90).

2. Swift (1963: 30–33) wrote this letter to Lord Carteret in the midst of the "Wood's Half-pence" crisis and Swift described Berkeley in the following way: "He [Berkeley] is an absolute philosopher with respect to Money, Titles or Power; and for 3 years past hath been struck with a Notion of founding an University at Bermudas by Charter from the Crown, & Contribution of those whom he can persuade to them . . . His Heart will break if his Deanery be not soon taken from him or left to your Excellency's disposal. I tryed to discourage Him by urging to Coldness of Courts and Ministers and who will interpret all this visionary or impossible; But all in vain: And therefore I do humbly entreat your Excellency either to use such Persuasions as will keep one of the first Men in this Kingdom for Virtue and Learning, quiet at home, or assist him by your Credit to compass his Romantik Design."

3. Hacking (1975: 35) refers to Berkeley as an "ideaist" but one might more properly call him an "anti-ideaist," as we shall see.

4. Yeats (1938: 267–69). The poem is aptly titled "Blood and the Moon."

5. The very interdisciplinarity of the field makes bibliographic fuzziness inevitable, but some early 1980s works should include books by literary critics like

Heinzelman (1980) and Shell (1982). A more recent contribution to the field is my study of Locke in Caffentzis (1989).

6. Douglas Vickers in Vickers (1959: 141) wrote: "The significance of Berkeley's *Querist* for the development of monetary analysis has been only scantily recognized in the historical literature. A more adequate recognition has had to await the shift of emphasis of macro-economic analysis to the neo-mercantilist positions of the last two decades of the present century. This has made possible the estimate by Johnston, for example, who concludes that 'in his analysis of the nature of money itself, and of the function of good in relation to it, Berkeley . . . takes high rank as one of the most modern and "advanced" of monetary thinkers.'"

7. There has been no full-length monograph on *The Querist* since Leyton (1938) and a set of articles on the economic circumstances of *The Querist's* publication in Johnston (1970).

8. For a lively account of "the Bubble" see Carswell (1961) while Galbraith (1975) has a humorous account of John Law's Parisian escapades. The now definitive study of John Law is Murphy (1997).

9. Craig (1946: 47–48). In this account of the maneuvering around the Irish Mint question, we can see that Newton was an astute political tactician. Consider the following excerpt: "The Board in which Newton was Warden bludgeoned a second appeal [for an Irish Mint] in 1698 in violent and opprobrious terms. Now, 1701, being Master, and having to deal with a third approach, Newton steered for a compromise in language of careful courtesy. How he had studied the political background is shown by a precis in his hand of Molyneux's book [an early defense of Irish independence from English Parliamentary rule]; perhaps for that reason, the disadvantages to England of an Irish Mint are but darkly hinted at as a thing too high for mere Mint judgment. The emphasis is on the importance of uniformity of coin, the costliness and infirmities of small mints. Uniformity he no doubt asked for in good faith, but as the English shilling stood at thirteen pence in Ireland, and the Irish wanted besides to make a profit, it was enough to quench Dublin zeal. At any rate the project died without need of the half measure."

10. There is very little written on Berkeley's interest in music and depression but Brykman (1974) is a start. Berkeley's contribution to the debate on the Molyneux problem is more prominent in the scholarly literature, of course. See Morgan (1972: 59–62) for a historical contextualization of Berkeley's position in the controversy. The review of Atherton (1990) would bring the reader more up to date on the current discussion of Berkeley and the Molyneux problem.

11. The discussion of Irish "underdevelopment" has a long history with Berkeley, Malthus, and Marx as central figures. Indeed, for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century political economists, Ireland was the very model of underdevelopment. Ironically enough, twentieth century theories of underdevelopment devised to explain African and Asian economies are now being reflected back to the Irish situation (past and present). For example, Raymond (1982) attempts to refute the "Sinn Fein"–Marxist interpretation of Irish history by calling in support from "dualist" theories (pioneered to explain Indonesian economic history) and "motivation"-entrepreneur theories developed for the Asian context as well. Raymond writes that Irish underdevelopment was not due to English oppression but on its own inherited pre-capitalist limits: "Ireland was a relatively stabilized society,

historically rooted in a peasant agricultural economy, taking as fixed given horizons and a given hierarchical ranking of statuses based on birth, land and localism. This is an institutional system that tied occupation and property to family units proudly conscious of their distinctive identity over successive generations; and emphasized traditional, personal and communal relationships as against the impersonality of a wide range of capitalist institutions. The whole range of ideas powerfully mobilized sentiments for traditionalism and continuity as against change, mobility and innovation" (p. 664). For more on dualistic economy theory see Paauw and Fei (1973). Of course, dualistic theories simply assume the duality between capitalist and pre-capitalist economic sectors as given, or a matter of choice (as Raymond's quasi-mythic sketch of Irish history quoted above suggests). Marx looked at the duality in other terms, of course, as he wrote to Kugelman (29 Nov. 1869): "In fact, England never has and never can—so long as the present relations last—rule Ireland otherwise than by the most abominable reign of terror and the most reprehensible corruption," McLellan, ed. (1977). For a useful compendium of Marx's and Engels' writings on Ireland see Marx and Engels (1972).

12. This is now becoming increasingly recognized in standard development theory. See, for example, Drake (1980), especially chapter four on "limited purpose" and "partial" monies.

13. For an important account of Locke's "thanatocratic" policies with respect to the English Poor see Linebaugh (1991: ch. 1).

14. For a discussion of the oil politics context of the ABU massacre see my article "Rambo on the Barbary Shore" in Midnight Notes, eds. (1992).

15. For a discussion of the socioeconomic dynamics of the "Great Books" debate of the late 1980s see Federici, ed. (1995).

Chapter 1

Berkeley's Monetary Education

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

George Berkeley published *The Querist* in three yearly installments between 1735 and 1737 in Dublin and London. But this is not quite accurate. For "publication" in the eighteenth-century usually required the author to have a direct working relationship with his/her printer. Berkeley, however, remained at his bishopric in Cloyne in Southern Ireland during that period and could not have been involved in managing the details of publication. His "editors," Samuel Madden in Dublin and Sir John Percival in London, actually transmitted Berkeley's manuscript to the printers and saw it through to publication. We do not have many details concerning the process of production nor any of the correspondence concerning the corrections of the text, if any existed. Consequently, it seems futile to pose all the technical bibliographical questions typically provoked by the publications of important texts—from "Why this printer?" to "Who corrected the galleys?"

This silence is the norm in what remains of Berkeley's sparse and elusive correspondence. Although he had a long life, created a wide circle of friends and often traveled "abroad," his surviving letters have nothing of the thickness and richness of his contemporaries', early and late. Locke's, Newton's, Swift's, and Hume's printed correspondence, for example, are multi-volume affairs, while Berkeley's fits in a rather modest-sized book as befits someone who senses he is suspected and watched.

As a result, perhaps, of this caution, Berkeley's biographies are dry affairs, even though the actual course of his life was full of extraor-

dinary projects and conjunctures. Moreover, his biographers, with the exception of Oliver Goldsmith and some Catholic clergy, have been hagiographers. It seems that Alexander Pope's judgment, "to Berkeley every virtue under heaven," survived, even in periods like our own when the reputation of "virtue" itself has been in peril.

This virtuousness is especially problematic whenever the subject of money is introduced. Virtue and money do not mix well outside of the teller's cage. For money, the great dissolver and homogenizer of values, instinctively antagonizes the ethical hierarchies philosophers of virtue are prone to construct. Consequently, though Berkeley often speaks quite openly about his financial problems in his correspondence, there is little in the biographical literature about his monetary affairs and crises.

How Berkeley, the most immaterial of philosophers, found salvation for his Church and Country in the most decried image of materialism, money, is the core of my story. In this chapter I will write not his biography up until his publication of *The Querist,* but rather his monetary education as taught to him by the major monetary events he experienced.[1]

Berkeley was fifty years old when *The Querist, Part I* was printed. He was born in Kilkenny, Ireland, but his grandfather and father were English. His grandfather was a royalist during the Civil War, and he first came to Ireland after the Restoration as a collector of the port of Belfast, where he supervised the collection of tariff and customs fees. George's father, William, seems to have been born in England but he followed his father to Ireland and also became, in various times and combinations, the collector of a port, a "gentleman farmer," and a commissioned military officer. George was a non-aristocratic, but well placed member of what has been called the "Anglo-Irish Ascendancy."

The political atmosphere of the first years of George's life must have been quite tense. James II's succession to the throne of England after his brother Charles II's death in 1686 initiated a set of events that led to the second English Revolution in a generation and a cruel, genocidal war in Ireland. These events are standardly described in theological terms. James II refused to renounce his Roman Catholicism on taking the English, Scottish, and Irish Crown(s), even though Anglican Protestantism had been established in England and Ireland and Presbyterian Protestantism was the dominant religion in Scotland. He quickly moved to repeal the anti-Catholic laws put into place since the Reformation even though he was technically the head of the Anglican

Church. Little George's father and grandfather undoubtedly had divided loyalties, for they were probably anti-papists and crown officials at the time.

This tension split all the Kingdoms' Protestant subjects and led to an anti-Catholic coup, plotted by members of the English Parliament and others (including John Locke, who was in exile in Holland). The plotters invited the Dutch military man, William of Orange, to invade England and drive James II from the Throne. In late 1688 William led thousands of Dutch troops across the Channel into London. James II did not defend his regime in London, he fled to Ireland and organized an army there which battled both William's invading army and the Anglo-Irish resistance. Terrible massacres occurred in Ireland on each side of the divide, Protestant and Catholic, pro-royalist and anti-royalist during 1688-89. There is no record as to what George's family did at the time, but the assumption must be that Berkeley father joined the Protestant cause. George was a little boy of four when the decisive battle between the armies of James and William took place at the Boyne in 1690. William's forces drove James and his Irish supporters from Ireland and Parliament in an Act of Settlement placed the Triple Crown on William (and his English wife, Mary).

Little George was undoubtedly deeply scarred by the experience of the war and the political environment in Ireland immediately following the Battle of the Boyne continued to be tense and vindictive. Fear of new insurrections by Irish Jacobite Catholics was answered by and was used to justify draconian Penal Laws that stripped Catholics of the most basic civil and economic rights (as well as much of their wealth and land). Insecurity, hostility, and racism reinforced each other in the Anglo-Irish population that constituted barely an eighth of the island's population.

Berkeley entered Trinity College in Dublin in 1700. He studied mathematics, logic, languages (Greek, Latin, French and Hebrew), and philosophy. He chose to climb both the academic and clerical career ladders, by becoming a Fellow of Trinity in 1707 and being ordained a priest in 1710. The decade between his B.A. (1704) and his departure for London (1713) was an extraordinary period of intellectual creativity. He preached sermons on *Passive Obedience*, gave papers before Philosophical Societies ("On Infinites"), invented mathematical games (*De Ludo Algebraico*), and wrote a number of philosophical classics (*Philosophical Commentaries, New Theory of Vision, Principles of*

Human Knowledge, and *Three Dialogues*) rooted in an idea/spirit ontology and directed against freethinkers and atheists.

Berkeley developed his politico-theological constitution in the Tory culture of Trinity College and the High-Church atmosphere of the Church of Ireland. He decided to forward his ecclesiastic career by moving to the center of power, London, in 1713, the last year of Harley's and Henry St. John's Tory regime. Berkeley quickly entered into the highest circles of Tory politics and culture, under the wing of Dean Jonathan Swift, who had gone to London at the beginning of the Harley-St. John regime in 1710 to lobby for the Church of Ireland and stayed on to become one of the Tory party's most effective publicists. To earn a small supplementary income, Berkeley became a essayist for the fashionable *Guardian* (edited by Steele) and he compiled the multi-volume *Ladies Library* using the pseudonym, "A Lady." Berkeley's initial social success in Tory circles, however, was disastrous for his career. For he publicly allied himself with a political faction that not only lost power in 1714, but was identified with the Jacobite rebellion of 1715.

The death of Queen Anne in 1714 was followed by the ascension of Anne's distant relation from Hanover, Prince George, to the thrones of Britain (for England and Scotland had unified in 1707) and Ireland. The succession was the result of a Whig party effort to keep the Pretender, the deposed James II, who still professed Catholicism, from attempting to recover the throne he lost in 1688 by legislating that only an Anglican Protestant can occupy the throne in London. On taking the throne, George I dismissed the Tories and installed a Whig government which was to stay in power for more than a generation (beginning the so-called Whig Supremacy). But James II's forces managed to invade Britain and his supporters in Scotland and England joined them in an armed rebellion—the '15. The rebellion was defeated and many Jacobite Tories were killed, executed or went into exile (including Henry St. John who joined the Pretender's court in France for a while).

Berkeley, though a Tory, was definitely against the Jacobite rebellion, as common sense and self-interest would dictate. For a Catholic monarch would definitively undermine Anglo-Irish rule and the Church of Ireland's establishment rights. He expressed his hostility to the Jacobite cause in many letters and in a pamphlet published in 1715, *Advice to the Tories who have taken the Oaths*. However, a cloud of suspicion surrounded him due to his earlier writings on passive

obedience, a favorite Jacobite theme, and his involvement with the previous, now "traitorous" Tory regime. His advancement in the Anglican Church was blocked by these rumors and suspicions for many years.

In response to this threatening political atmosphere, Berkeley accepted to be "bear leader" for St. George Ashe, the invalid son of the Bishop of Clougher in Ireland, on a four-year Continental tour. He spent this period of self-exile mostly in Italy where he studied at first hand the effects of the *tarantella* in Apulia, the emissions of Vesuvius, the practice of Roman Catholicism in its heartland, the architectural achievements of Palladio, the activities of the Jacobites in Rome, and the impact of an earthquake in Sicily. His charge, St. George Ashe, however, did not regain his health and died a few months after the end of the tour. Berkeley returned to London in the end of 1720 at a momentous time. The South Sea Bubble had crashed on the summer and fall of that year. On his journey back to London he traversed a France which was experiencing the collapse of the Law System. He wrote *De Motu* for submission for a prize essay competition offered by the French Academy on a lay over in Lyons.

Berkeley returned to Dublin in the fall of 1721 and took up his academic duties at Trinity College. His hopes for ecclesiastic advancement were still dim. His next decade was dominated by the Bermuda scheme, a project to bring the sons of British colonists in North America and Indian boys in a multiracial religious college on Bermuda. Just as he was charting a mid-Atlantic escape from the dead-end of his career in Ireland and a catastrophic social environment in Britain, his fortunes took a positive turn. In 1723 he found himself co-executor and legatee of Swift's lover, Hester Van Homrigh ("Vanessa"), who died unexpectedly. Simultaneously, the Wood's Half-pence agitation reached its climax in 1724, and there was an interest to promote Anglo-Irish clerics to high positions in the Church of Ireland to appease Anglo-Irish sentiments aggrieved by Prime Minister Robert Walpole's attempted imposition of a suspicious currency. Consequently, Berkeley was offered one of the most lucrative Deaneries in Ireland in the diocese of Derry.

Though Berkeley came from a monetary family familiar with taxes, tariffs, and rents, he remained remarkably innocent of the "getting and spending" aspects of life until middle age. For between his entrance at Kilkenny College in 1696 until he gave up his fellowship at Trinity

College, along with a number of jobs as secretary, chaplain, and tutor, he did not have a position that involved handling and being responsible for large sums of money until 1724 when he became Dean of Derry. So, in a way, his personal experience with the money form did not begin until his thirty-ninth year. His conceptual involvement with money, however, definitely began with his experience of the 1720 "bubbles" in Paris (Mississippi) and London (South Sea) and the publication of *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* (1721).

Between 1720 and 1735, Berkeley individually had remarkable monetary adventures (involving court battles around "Vanessa's" inheritance, gathering private subscriptions and state funds for his Bermuda college, traveling to New England and organizing large-scale farming enterprises) while he directly experienced the grand monetary events in the North Atlantic World of the first half of the eighteenth century. For the bubbles in London and Paris (1720), the struggle over Wood's Half-pence in Ireland (1722–1725), and the attempt to block the emission of paper currency in Newport, Rhode Island (1731–1732) were decisive in shaping the monetary history of France, Britain, Ireland and the North American colonies. These major events, experienced directly, made a deep impression on a university fellow who, beginning in 1724, was suddenly dealing with the contemporary equivalent of tens of millions of dollars, and negotiating complex financial deals with politicians, merchants and clerics on the highest level of power.

These monetary experiences definitely left their residues in *The Querist*. There are many direct references to them in the text. But they played an even more important constitutive role in Berkeley's quizzical philosophy of money. They were for Berkeley "signs" which opened up to the monetary questions of *The Querist*, whereas for most of his contemporaries they were "facts" that dictated definitive conclusions. These monetary adventures impelled him to become The Querist. In this chapter I shall examine the constitutive role that three separate monetary episodes—the 1720 Bubbles, the 1722-25 Wood's Half-pence affair, and the 1731-32 anti-paper currency campaign in New-port—played in his monetary education.

NOTE

1. The materials for this short biographical introduction come from the Luce (1949) and Berman (1994).

EPISODE 1:
DE MOTU BUBBLIUM, 1720

> And thus by accidental Events, Poverty and Riches are transplanted, and shift their Seat; and a Blast of Wind, that which nothing is more uncertain, drives good Fortune from one Hand to another. And since Casualties dispose of Things at this arbitrary Rate, since the World is but a kind of Lottery, why would we Gamesters be grudged the drawing a Prize?
>
> Jeremy Collier, *An Essay upon Gaming* (1713)

Introduction

Seventeen twenty was an epochal year in universal monetary history. The two original, archetypal financial bubbles—the Mississippi and South Sea Bubbles—popped within months of each other that year. Their popping had immense consequences for the nature of money and capital during the rest of the eighteenth century. George Berkeley directly experienced them both at a decisive point in his own life. He met the Mississippi Bubble as he was returning from a four-year Grand Tour of the Continent with the ailing son of the Bishop of Clougher, George Ashe.[1] Together they had left a London that was celebrating (or mourning) the defeat of the 1715 Jacobite invasion and where anyone suspected of Jacobite sympathies like Berkeley (correctly or not) might find himself in serious trouble. Their travels lead them to Florence, Rome, Naples, Taranto, and Sicily. But in summer of 1720 George Ashe, Berkeley's charge, was not improving in health and Berkeley had orders to return to London. On his way he stopped in Lyons, the second city of eighteenth-century financial France, where he wrote *De Motu* (*Of Motion or the Principle and nature of Motion and the Cause of the Communication of Motion*) for a prize essay competition on motion offered by the French Academy in the year of the Mississippi Bubble.

When he reached London the ruin left by the collapse of the South Sea Bubble met him. He was thirty-five years old, in a hostile, frightened city where he wrote *An Essay Toward Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain.* If he had any hope of not returning to Ireland to the only

job he had available, as Fellow at Trinity College Dublin, the South Sea affair had ended it. Berkeley was clearly conscious of and concerned about his monetary predicament, both individually and collectively.

Undoubtedly, then, these two Bubbles constituted Berkeley's first formative monetary experiences. He attempted in his 1720-1721 writings to answer a question most French and Britons with money to invest (and some without it who did) asked, "Something had gone serious awry, but what?" His response to the question was from the beginning quite different from his contemporaries' and would eventually end in the philosophy of money queried in *The Querist.*

In retrospect, one can see that Berkeley was the philosopher of the Bubbles, even though he had been driven to the margins of Europe while they inflated. For if there ever were examples of the power of the immaterial, of mere expectation, of reading signs as portents, of sensation without foundation, they were to be found in the behavior of the sober capitalists, punctilious bureaucrats, and haughty aristocrats of England and France in 1719 and 1720. Dr. Arbuthnot joked in 1714 about Berkeley's immaterialism to Swift writing that Berkeley had the idea of a fever that he, as his doctor, could not stop him from entertaining.[2] But a mere six years later no one could be so jocular about the power of mere ideas and of the imagination to change the social temperature. The idea of boundless wealth, the relation of stock prices to "insider" knowledge and the power of communication was fixed in the minds of thousands flowing through Exchange Alley and rue Quincampoix, the London and Parisian epicenters of the Bubbles. No Cassandra-like Defoe, who prophesied catastrophe in 1719, could stop the ever surging communication of the stock-jobbers with their clients, until a "shock" started the panic, the bubbles busted, and values crashed across the continent.

The Bubble Conjuncture: The Debt Crisis

What transpired in London and Paris while Berkeley and his charge were busy examining Vesuvius and studying the tarantella in Italy between 1715 and 1720? It is a dramatic story that has often been told in story, song and historical monograph—there is a detailed chronology of the Bubbles in the Appendix at the end of this episode. I will therefore be brief.[3]

John Law, scion of a wealthy Scottish family and the author of an important youthful work of economic theory, killed a man in a duel in London and, condemned to death, fled England for the continent. There he established himself as one of the consummate gamblers of the day, who accumulated an enormous fortune at the gaming tables of the European ruling class. But he had higher, perhaps even visionary, ambitions to transform the monetary systems of Europe by literally demonetarizing specie.

France offered him the opportunity. The Regent gave him permission to open his own private bank (based on his gambling profits) in 1716 which became an instant success. In the following meteoric three years he took control of the French trading companies for the Louisiana territory in North America (hence the "Mississippi Bubble"), Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Then at the end of 1718 he agreed to have his bank nationalized as the Banque Royale, with him as director, and its notes had the backing of the state. In 1719 he merged all the trading companies he controlled into the Compagnie des Indies. The stock price of the company reached it speculative peak in the summer of 1719 at fifty times the price of the initial offering of Louisiana Company stock in 1717, partly fueled by the easy money policy Law endorsed as head of the Banque Royale.

At the beginning of 1720, the preconditions for Law's plan to demonetarize gold were put into place: He was appointed Controller General of France and he merged the Banque Royale and the Compagnie des Indies (which would be like merging the Federal Reserve and the largest industrial corporations in the United States!). He then promulgated his famous anti-specie decrees that made it illegal to hold and exchange gold and silver in France. By May, Law's "System" had crashed, the Compagnie des Indies stock prices were a fraction of their peak and there was an open revolt against the paperization of the currency. Law was dismissed from his position and he had to leave France in December 1720 in disgrace.

The South Sea Bubble was not identified so closely with one individual and a "system." It arose out of the dual nature of the South Sea Company which was a combination trading and finance company that both had the right to sell slaves in Hispanic America (the *asiento*) and to buy the British government's debt. John Blunt, one of its directors, was often placed as the mastermind of the South Sea Company and its fate, since he was seen as operating the key which turned the financial

machine that generated the Bubble. That key was the conversion of national debt into South Sea Company stock, which promised to the holder of the national debt increased profits and higher stock prices. In 1717 the South Sea Company bought about ten million pounds of the national debt and then in 1719 its managers proposed to convert all of the British national debt into South Sea Company stock. In order to make this offer profitable, the price of the stock was manipulated by a number of novel techniques, including providing loans to purchasers of the stock. The Parliament agreed to this conversion in the spring of 1720 and the stock of the company began to rise from 300 to 1050 in August. But beginning in September a panic of selling began that ended in December with South Sea stock exchanging at 155, and the holders of the stock were barred from using their stock to buy back portions of the national debt.

The result of this adventure was the bankruptcy of many in the upper and even middle classes of Britain and Ireland. There followed an investigation that revealed much of the bribery and manipulation that went on in the construction of the scheme. But the impulse to blame the South Sea Bubble on the scheming of a few perfidious men like John Blunt or the Mississippi Bubble on the totalitarian drive of a financial visionary (or crank) like John Law should be resisted. For they both were products of the political, financial, and psychological forces of the time. Politically the context was set by the Treaty of Utrecht, the death of Louis XIV, the defeat of the Jacobite revolt, the absolute decline of Spanish Empire in the Americas and the end of Dutch foreign exploits, which held out the possibility of a new world hegemony peacefully divided between Britain and France. With the slave trade beginning to "take off," the resistance to enclosures in Europe collapsing, and the threat of North American Indian counter-attack abating, the picture looked exceptionally rosy for a burst in investment, trade, colonial conquest and exploitation. The immediate scene was not unlike the post-Cold War political-economic picture, with the G-8 taking the place of the London-Paris axis.

However, who would take the gamble and profit from the global conjuncture? The owners of property who possessed credit and money as in the past, of course. But a transformation in the meaning of *Credit, Ownership*, and *Money* had taken place in the forcing house of a quarter century of unremitting world war (between 1689–1714) which was only beginning to be understood then. Those who had some capital

and who had been kept out of previous "global" money-making adventures were intuiting a new "democracy of profit" on the horizon, similar to the opportunities created by the system of public credit or national debt that arose in the "Glorious Revolution" in England of the 1690s.

Knowledge of the problems caused by this early eighteenth-century system of national debt and credit is a key in understanding Berkeley's *The Querist.* There were many quizzical paradoxes lying in wait in the forest of these financial novelties. Marx sardonically pointed out one, "National debts, i.e., the alienation of the state—whether despotic, constitutional, or republican—marked with its stamp the capitalistic era. The only part of the so-called national wealth that actually enters into the collective possessions of modern peoples is—their national debt."[4] This particular collective possession grew prodigiously in Britain between 1700 and 1720, from about £16.7 million to more than £50 million, i.e., to roughly £9 per capita.[5] The total debt charges as a percent of tax revenues also grew dramatically—from about 30 percent in 1700 to about 60 percent in 1716—*so that the collective tax payers were increasingly meeting the national debt charges and nothing else.* Clearly, a debt/tax crisis of unprecedented proportions loomed in the post-war years. But on the other side, there had been a marked expansion of the number of public creditors—from 10,000 in 1710 to about 30,000 in 1720 (about £1,700 per creditor). A new democracy of creditors was created whose interest was in the continuous existence of the national debt, as confidence in the permanent alienation of the state deepened.[6]

The problem of public credit, for the creditors, however, was not its elimination, but its control. Since the properly controlled "alienation of the state" created a new lever of accumulation, magically transforming "barren money into capital."[7] Such magic wands were not easily found and only the foolish or overly scrupulous would break and bury them. Taxation, instead of merely being a traditional source of revenue for lazy courtiers and ambitious generals, finally became a source of capital. Capitalists *qua* state-creditors would be paid their annual interest charges (if they wished) or they could use their bonds as immediately alienable hard cash (and hence lose nothing by lending to the state). Either way they could access the social surplus appropriated by the state, which further decreased the real wage of the working class. The capitalization of the national debt also increased the typology

of the capitalist class by opening up a new realm of intermediaries from bankers and financiers to stock-jobbers and -swindlers. The democrats of profit were now ready to venture more directly into the exploitation of the early eighteenth-century New World Order opened by the post-war power hierarchy.

Tale of Two Bubbles

Berkeley returned from Italy in 1720 to a social and economic world quite different from the one he left in 1716. The transformations of credit, ownership, and money that were slowly and subtly nourished by the "quarter-century war" suddenly achieved a premature, but phantasmagoric, fluorescence in the four years he was playing "bear leader" to the ailing George Ashe in Italy. Berkeley returned to France and England recognizing that the politics of "passive obedience," of Tory and Whig, of High-Church and Dissent, were *passé*. Religion, Politics, and Morality—the hot topics for a century—had been pushed aside. Money in its infinite variations had moved to the center of polite discourse. Many of the Jacobites (crypto- or open) in Paris were more interested in *when* the stock market would crest than *who* was on the throne of England.

What happened in Exchange Alley and rue Quinquempoix, in London and Paris, in England and France during this period that was so extraordinary? The first thing to understand about the spatio-temporal distribution of events is that they were not independent of each other. Capital and capitalists flowed from one point to another followed by knowledge, rumor and emotion as the Bubbles inflated. Certainly, "the financial panic after the collapse of the South Sea Bubble in England, the insurance bubbles in Holland, and the dissolution of Law's System in France was truly international."[8] Law's attempt to convert French government debt into equity in the Compagnie des Indies (one of the Mississippi Company's many names) in 1719 drew money capital into Paris from all over Europe, especially from Amsterdam and London. The South Sea Company's adventure was stimulated by a desire to attract foreign (especially Dutch) capital that had previously been invested in London stocks and government debt (especially after 1706). Of course, these movements were not autonomous processes; they were driven by stratagems and camoflaged with intrigues. For example, it was rumored that Law, in 1719 attempted to instigate a crash in the

London stock-market by selling £180,000 sterling in British East India stock short while in early April 1720 he helped start the South Sea Bubble by heavy forward buying of South Sea stock in order to carry out "bear" operations in May.[9] The British Ambassador, the Earl of Stair, was so concerned about capital flight from London and Edinburgh to Paris that he secretly urged his government to launch a competitive scheme immediately or face "the ruin of our trade."[10]

Many other aspects of the South Sea Company and Law's System also corresponded. First, whatever the grand schemes their promoters or the *Zeitgeist* had in mind for them, they were primarily mechanisms for carrying out "debt-for-equity" swaps. As we pointed out, at the end of the "quarter century war" both the French and English governments were heavily indebted and a good percentage of their tax income was devoted simply to paying off interest. How was this debt to be reduced without either repudiating it or increasing taxes (especially land taxes) to pay for it? The answer was simple: have an alternative asset available which was more attractive to the creditors, allow them to convert their debt to this asset and, most crucially, pay the holders of this asset much less for taking the debt off the government's hands than the previous debt payments. In our age of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), this is done by transferring national external debt into, say, shares in government-owned companies which are then privatized. The Law System's "Mississippi" stocks and the South Sea Company's own stocks played the same role that late twentieth-century government telephone monopolies play in contemporary SAPs. And the operation, for all the booms and crashes, did just that. At the end of 1720, after the bubbles busted, both the English and French governments had dramatically reduced their "debt burden."

Second, both the South Sea Company and the Mississippi Company could not adequately function as debt-for-equity machines unless there was some long-term substance to their stock offering that could create a "displacement"—i.e., an event that changes horizons, expectations, profit opportunities—to launch a boom.[11] The short-term attraction of state-backing, clever advertising, insider manipulation, and just plain corruption of politicians and "opinion makers" was not enough to bait the switch. Both companies offered the same wicked brew that was known to work; they claimed to make their stock holders immediate benefactors of the slave trade, the increasing exploitation of the Americas' mineral wealth, and an increased share in the Atlantic commodities

market. They, in effect, were marketing the long-term prospects of a new political-economic reality. For the War of Spanish Succession established a major transformation of mercantile power in the Atlantic and an American opening for Britain and France. Spain was definitively eclipsed by the War, which ended with a Bourbon on the throne and the *asiento* (i.e., the right to deal in slaves and break the Spanish trade monopoly in Spanish colonial America) in British South Sea Company pockets.[12] As a sidelight, Dutch capital was ousted from any geo-political projection into this world as well, while the French and British governments had concluded a *détente* in preparation for a new offensive on the Americas.

"Oro," "plata," "esclavos," and "tierra" were the shibboleths of the original period of primitive accumulation in sixteenth-century America. The Spanish state had effectively kept its English and French competitors out of the lucrative parts of the Americas for two centuries (using the papal decree that reserved the western lands for the Spanish and the Portuguese as their legitimation), aside from their marginal adventures on the edges of the specie-poor North American eastern littoral. The Spanish "square" was breaking up, it seemed, on a political-economic level in the early eighteenth century and the South Sea Company and the Mississippi Company were intent on translating the Spanish shibboleths into proper French or English nouns, by leading new projects of exploitation deep into unexploited terrain (in the Louisiana territory, for example) or by penetrating into a South and Central America that had been monopolized by Spanish merchants. The promise of the South Sea Company did not rest simply on the immediate possession of a bureaucratic license to deal in slaves and merchandise, but also on the long-term knowledge that it would be the leader in the transition to a legitimate "opening" of Spanish America. The fact that the *asiento* was interrupted by a short war between Britain and Spain in 1718 was not fatal to the Company's prospects, on the contrary, it might even have enhanced them "in the long-run." These assessments turned out to be wrong, of course, since one of the surprises of eighteenth-century power politics was that Britain lost its major American colonies before Spain did.[13] But "the decline and fall of the Spanish Empire" was the conventional wisdom of the early eighteenth-century politics in London and Paris.

The bewigged and Enlightened neo-conquistadors on both sides of the Channel had a plan for a new democracy of profit (for the already

wealthy and their cronies) and a new tyranny of indentured and chattel servitude of their inferiors. This new capitalist democracy was rooting itself in widespread purchases of the South Sea and Mississippi stock which would finally make the wealth from the Americas immediately available to even the smallest investor, instead of remaining the bailiwick of state bureaucrats or rough plantation owners living in the tropics surrounded by the danger of slave revolts and the ague. But how was the labor necessary to exploit these opportunities to be obtained? One part of the answer was simple: both companies were given the right to trade in African slaves by their respective governments.

Slavery was not enough to solve the eternal "labor problem," there was also a need for European workers as well as African slaves. The companies' projects offered new opportunities for the employment of British and French convicts or others, who the modern economists euphemistically call "underemployed." This part of the plan was most clearly developed in Law's more thorough version. He reorganized the constables of the watch at royal residences into a "semigangster company police called *archers* . . . not unlike Haiti's *tonton macouts*—bandoliers of Mississippi" in 1719 who were to gather, at so many francs per head, the convicts, prostitutes, juvenile delinquents, or anyone else they could press gang into boarding the ships leaving for the Louisiana territory. The archers were ordered to display their press gangs openly to reassure the public that a steady stream of white labor power was flowing to the Company's lands in America. So on the French high roads and the streets of Paris in latter part of 1719 files of chained men, women, and children were being driven to Harve-de-Grace to board the boats just as similar files were heading to Bonny and Isle de Gore two thousand miles to the south. The British version was to pass a law, the Deficiency Law, which required planters to have one white man for every thirty slaves and to increase the rate of transporting of convicts.[14]

A third similarity between the companies was their ability to finance the purchase of their stocks. This was a necessary condition for the working of the debt-for-equity swap. For the stock prices had to rise rapidly to attract the holders of the public debt; this could only happen in a buoyant market filled with enthusiastic buyers awash in credit and money. To guarantee this both Law and the South Sea directors instituted a margin system (or an installment plan) with very easy terms.

For example, the "third money subscription" of South Sea stock on June 17, 1720 required only ten percent down and increments of ten percent at intervals of six months from July 2, 1721 while one could purchase stocks in the Mississippi company in summer of 1719 with only ten percent down and twenty months to pay in equal installments.[15]

They also made sure that money was available for paying the first installment on stock purchases. In the case of Law this was not, administratively, a problem. The Banque Royale and the Mississippi Company (or Compagnie des Indies by that time) were one entity, for all intents and purposes, and the Banque only needed, in preparation for a new issue of stock, to flood Paris, Lyons and the other provincial cities where the Banque had branches with new bank notes of high denomination perfectly suited for buying stocks. Even before the disastrous spring of 1720 Law's bank was issuing notes in order to stimulate stock purchasing. As Hamilton wrote: "To float securities, Law resorted to unbridled inflation. In June-September [1719] L410,00,000 of bank notes—a little over twice the quantity previously outstanding-were issued. . . . From October 24, 1719 to February 6, 1720, the circulation of the Royal Bank increased by L679,790,000." In sum, Law presided over more than the doubling of the volume of currency in France in the four years since the founding of his Banque Generale, most of it occurring in 1719–1720.[16]

The South Sea Company directors had no such control over the British money supply, but they did have the support of the government at the beginning of the Bubble and at other crucial moments. On April 21, 1720 the General Court (or stockholders assembly) had given the directors power to lend money on security of South Sea stock, to keep up prices. On May 20, at a decisive point in inflating the Bubble, the directors agreed to borrow one million pounds from a compliant Treasury and lend it to South Sea stockholders for the purpose of purchasing more stock. The total lending was as frenzied as the rise in prices so that between the spring and fall of 1720 the South Sea lent over £9 million on security of over £2 million of stock to about 2,300 people.[17] These amounts might appear small compared to the effect of Law's bank notes on the French money supply, but they were relatively substantial, especially given the intensity of their issue. Let us remember that the total tax income of the British government in 1720 was about

£6.5 million or about ten percent of the GNP, so that the South Sea loans constituted about fourteen percent of the GNP.[18]

On all these counts we can see the South Sea and Mississippi Bubbles ultimately had the same structure and were driven by similar forces arising from the common historical conjuncture. There were differences of course. The main ones being, perhaps, in the self-consciousness and the practical thoroughness that lay behind the Law System. Blunt and the South Sea directors left no classic theoretical text on money as did Law, nor did they ever have the totality of institutional control over the British economy that Law had over the French. Consequently, when the South Sea Bubble popped, although it was to have profound institutional effects (e.g., the continuation of the Bubble Act through the rest of the eighteenth century and the rise of the Robinocracy), no grand theory was discredited and there were no apparent long-term macro-economic effects on wages and prices. The Mississippi's crash, on the contrary, was to have not only institutional effects (e.g., the French aversion to banks and paper until the Revolution), it was also a factor in the dramatic rise in commodity prices and a collapse in real wages which continued throughout the 1720s and was a stimulus to anti-cartelist thinking in eighteenth-century French political economy.[19]

These differences contributed to the grandest difference of all between Law and Blunt and their projects: Law's intent was to launch a "revolution from above" on bullionist business as usual, for he positively detested the backwardness of the gold-bug (bourgeois or aristocrat) of his day. A central goal of his System was to eliminate the domestic role of gold and silver in Europe largest economy by the end of 1720, first by governmental decrees and later by public approbation . . . if it all worked out. Certainly, the almost magical series of events that led John Law, a fugitive from the Tyburn tree, to become in four years the immediate controller of France's state bank, its international trading companies, its tax revenue, its slave trade, its death squads, and its tobacco monopoly gave Law's System a glamour that was hard to resist. Blunt and Co. seemed merely intent on doing a job for the government—reducing the debt/GNP ratio—and getting well paid for it.

Owning and Hoarding

On returning to the "real world" of the Bubbles in 1720, Berkeley soon realized that a new realm of notions had risen premised on a deep transformation of the notion of Ownership. For the Bubbles would have been impossible, if thousands of people did not believe that ownership of stocks was as sure a possession of wealth and value as was land or specie.

Let us marvel for a moment at this new social continent that revealed itself after 1715. If, in the law of the day, ownership was a relation between a person and a thing, however abstract the person, the thing owned had usually been a tangible entity bounded in space and time. For the aristocrat the thing he owned was his land, for the merchant company it was its commodity stocks, warehouses, slaves, and ships, for the bank it was its specie, for the state it was its territory and population. All owned some-*thing*. By the early eighteenth century new and important objects of ownership emerged that were not "things." They were credit-signs (e.g., private stocks and public bonds) whose value was linked to the intangible Future of the State or of a Joint-stock Company.

Therefore, the possession and control that previously was associated with ownership vanished on two dimensions. First, it vanished into the Future—a notoriously uncontrollable and unpossessable dimension, filled with possibilities, opportunities, catastrophes and indeterminate necessities beyond the will of any temporal being. Second, the State and the Joint-stock Companies transcended, by definition, individual citizens or share holders. At any moment, the State could overwhelm the individual, and even legally annihilate him/her. Similarly, the Joint-stock Company was by definition an institution not to be owned by a single person. Such a Company was an absolute democracy of the money form—one share = one vote—and its value was open to the vagaries of the market for shares.

Although both private stocks and public bonds were crucial for the socialization of capital, individual wealth owners were not dutiful collective capitalists, automatically responding to the needs of general accumulation. Simply because the Clio of Capitalism snapped her fingers, the gentry, merchants, and banker-bureaucrats did not rush to lay their wealth before her. In order to part with the value of their tangible possessions and release it into the circular flow of

commodities, the gravitational force of the hoarding "instinct" had to be overcome. This instinct is a root centripetal impulse in any commercial society which is extremely hard to repress for an abundance of good reasons. Marx, Simmel and Keynes have commented abundantly upon them.[20]

Practically, in an environment where rent, commercial profit, and interest are not even given a full legitimacy (much less some social guarantee), the receivers of such revenue must be prepared to have a stock of wealth available for their own (and their family's) long-term reproduction. For example, rent was rooted on the possession of land, but in many cases this land, whether it be in France, Ireland or England was open to expropriation at the next political or military turn of events. The continual bankruptcies and defaults of the absolute and not-so-absolute states was another reason for the anxiety to open the best purses. This pervasive phenomenon was noted by Braudel:

> I cannot avoid the impression that, even in the eighteenth century and, if anything more then, the money accumulated far exceeded the demand for capital; that England for instance certainly did not summon up all her reserves to finance her industrial revolution, and that much more effort and investment might have been forthcoming than actually appeared . . . that France's moveable wealth far exceeded the needs of industry before the industrial revolution, which explains why episodes such as Law's system occurred.[21]

Ontologically, in a capitalist society, there were even more compelling ties that bound the owner with his/her wealth than in a feudal society. For the essence of capitalism is the accumulation of wealth in its most general form, i.e., as money in the form of specie, and therefore any loss of specie is suspiciously considered a subversion of the social ideal. Avarice and hoarding, formerly medieval sins, became the defining emotional state of the capitalism in its early stages. The economic *means* to wealth finally became a paradoxical social *end*: "Our hoarder is a martyr to exchange value, a holy ascetic seated atop a metal column. He cares for wealth only in its social form, and accordingly hides it away from society."[22] This gravitational power of the hoard is greatest at the dawn of commodity-producing societies and gradually diminishes with the development of capital. But, as Simmel pointed out in his *Philosophy of Money* (1900), it never disappears,

because the very abstractness of money, i.e., its very "remoteness from any specific enjoyment in and for itself," focuses the attention and appreciation of the owner on its "objective delights."[23] It offers one the infinite satisfaction of living in the same house with God.

Gambling and Hoarding

Given these centripetal avaricious forces, how could the ontological hoarding instincts and the practical impulses to caution and safety be overcome? One classic way was regal confiscation, state bankruptcy, or taxation. But in a society that was buying and selling the state, such rough tactics were counter-productive. Instead of a violent seizure or devaluation of the private hoards (whether they be of specie or of the most reliable equivalents, government annuities), these hoards had to be tempted out by some new centrifugal force in economic life.

Avarice was a deadly medieval sin turned capitalist ideal, which in turn became an obstacle to accumulation. Avarice's antidote, however, was a venal medieval sin: gambling.

The desire to "try your luck," to take a risk to win a fortune was a widely noted characteristic of the period. The plays, poems and journalistic writing of the day were filled with gambling tables and ladies, lost fortunes, and duels over card cheating. As the epilogue in Mrs. Centlivre's play, *The Gamester*, published in 1705 queried the audience: "yet, who that's Wise/Wou'd to the Credit of a Faithless Main/Trust his good Dad's hard-gotten hoarded Gain?"[24] Apparently many foolish sons sailed those seas and lost many a hoard in their depths. Gambling, in spite of the centuries-long moralizing and legislating against it, was all the rage among the upper classes in the early eighteenth century, and many were tossed in the dialectical tides between Credit and Hoard, Fortune and Ruin.[25] Anyone with disposable income (and some without) was (were) sorely tempted to the ubiquitous tables. As the prurient late nineteenth-century Ashton points out, "Gaming was dreadfully prevalent in 1718, which might be demonstrated by the effect of one night's search by the Leet Jury of Westminster, who presented no less than thirty-five houses to the Justices for prosecutions."[26]

This gambling pandemic provided the necessary centrifugal force to disgorge the hoards and the occasion for a true training in the wily abstractness of value for a patriarchal capitalist class still stodgily

rooted in land, livestock and specie. A few nights in the Gambling Houses of London would thoroughly educate one in the glories of risk taking, intra-class swindling, and competition. Most importantly, it taught the need to give up control of wealth in order to get more. This passion for the gamble was an essential part in Law's and the South Sea Company's schemes, systems, or bubbles that were to so drastically change the course of monetary history and Berkeley's life. Their success turned on convincing thousands of wealthy people to give up ownership of a part of the government debt (largely in the form of relatively secure annuities) in order to speculate on the price of stocks.

But this use of gambling as a way to "expropriate the expropriators" was quite problematic in two interrelated ways: (a) the century-long attack on proletariat's gambling and its attitude to luck, fortune and revolution created a huge body of anti-gambling literature, legislation, and judicial decisions that could hardly be ignored and not be reflexively applied by the ruling classes of England and France; (b) the sense of internal control and calculability (the famous attributes of capitalist "instrumental rationality") was put into peril by introducing chance and its conceptual cousins in that period, Luck and Fate, into the heart of the accumulation process.

The Reformation of Manners Reformed

Popular gambling had been one of the prime targets of a sustained campaign carried on by the Churches (Protestant and Catholic) and their supporters in the Reformation of Manners movement in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This campaign was an important component in the original accumulation of the English proletariat, for the belief in lucky days, in the power of Fortune, in the ontology of charms, spells and "fairy gold" had to be broken in order to inaugurate a class of beings who would see their labor power as the only wealth-generating power available to them.

But if the gambling was to become the lever that was to break the hoarding instinct of the rich, then the Reformation of Manners movement had to be reoriented.

The initial (anti-proletarian) phase of the Reformation of Manners in England began with a clerical characterization of gambling as a sinful invocation of God's aid (through the turn of a card or a throw of the dice) to make one rich.[27] The Reformation's (and Counter-Reforma-

tion's) revocation of miracles and the demonizing of magic made anathemas of the typical gambler's library of astrology texts and dream books as well as his/her closet filled with charms and tarot decks. The repression culminated at the end of the Cromwellian regime in a 1657 law that gave anyone who lost money in gaming the right to sue the winner for the recovery of twice the sum.[28] This law, not surprisingly, did not survive the Restoration's anti-Puritanical broom.

But the next phase of the Reformation of Manners began in earnest after the Williamite *coup d'etat*. Peter Burke contrasted this period with the previous one:

> In England in the 1690s, societies were founded for what was called the "reformation of manners." These societies promoted measures against fairs, gambling, masquerades, plays, taverns, whores, and "obscene ballads." The concern of the reformers for the "profanation of the Lord's Day" links them to an earlier generation of Puritans, but the movement was essentially concerned with morals rather than theology, with "license" rather than "superstition." The ethic of respectability is more visible than before. . . . A striking feature of this second phase of reform was the increasing part played in it by the laity. . . . In England, many laymen, from William III down to rural Justices of the Peace, took part, along with the clergy, in the movement of the reformation of manners, joining the local societies founded for the purpose or enforcing the ideals of the reformers on the Bench.[29]

Again gambling was one of the central anathemas of the Glorious Revolution's "rising bourgeoisie" and, for the first time, it was declared unlawful. The English government banned public and private lotteries in 1699. (It reversed itself in 1709 and relaunched the annual Parliamentary bill for a public lottery to finance the exchequer, in the face of habitual sermonizing from the back-benches, for more than a century). There was also a set of laws that attempted to protect the rich from gambling away "good Dad's hard-gotten hoarded Gain" (beginning in a 1664 Restoration law that banned gambling debts larger than £100 incurred "at any one Time or meeting"). Yet the main legislative and juridical thrust was against the gaming (along with the drinking, rioting and whoring) of the poor.

But at the very moment of the triumph of the Reformation of Manners in the early eighteenth century, the main instrument of governmental policy became the stimulation of the very passion for wealth without work amongst the rich that was the object of a literal witch-hunt against the poor. This policy was bound to create some cognitive dissonance in the "spokesmen of the ruling class," even though it would not be the first time that behavior prohibited to the poor became the public prize of the rich. If gambling truly undermined the "work ethic" or, more accurately, the "property ethic," then the appeal to the gambling passion was bound to create scrupulous doubts in the most enthusiastic supporters of the annuities-for-stocks exchanges in London and Paris.

Between Probabilistic and Magical Enchantment

The other ideological problem of the period of original "Casino Capitalism" was the contradiction between the post-Settlement "Whig" project of creating a rational, contractual society that regularly reproduced class differences and the ontology of Fate, Fortune, Luck, and Chance that gambling evoked. Let us not forget that the familiar poker deck, whose mysteries are now revealed in every elementary course in finite mathematics, was cloned from the Tarot deck; the former being but the latter stripped of its major arcana. And slightly before this time, one of the great images in the Tarot's arcana, the Wheel of Fortune, was hung from tavern signposts to indicate the imminence of revolution. To turn such a fickle force into a pillar of the state and capital through the creation of speculative stocks, insurance schemes, and lotteries was a politically risky maneuver indeed. It was a stochastic "revolution from above" which could not, by the definitions of the day, be easily controlled and which evoked much anxiety and double-dealing.

Present day economists can look back and anachronistically ridicule the early eighteenth century conflation of gambling, speculation, and insurance, but there was no conceptual structure that could convincingly have made a categorical distinction among them.[30] True, the "mathematical technology" for transforming chance from *luck* to *probability* was just being developed, but the time-lag in its application to social and economic theory and practice was remarkably long.[31]

The date of the Pascal/Fermat correspondence, which is often considered the standard originary event of the theory of probability, was 1654 and it was quickly followed by a series of steps taken by the eminent figures of the "century of genius" leading to the definitive statement of the field, Jakob Bernoulli's *Ars conjectandi* (1713).[32] The resistance to applying this theory to the set of aleatory institutions and contracts that were proliferating in the early eighteenth century was remarkable. One might attribute the neglect the "ars" suffered at the gambling tables as a product of "popular errors" and "superstitions" (in the post-1650 meaning of the term).[33]

But one cannot neglect the fact that government bureaucrats and substantial capitalists who designed state lotteries, marketed state debt annuities, and issued insurance policies did not use the probabilists' work to calculate risks.[34] For example, a simple probabilistic rule-of-thumb would have made it reasonable for annuities to be priced by the age of the buyer and his/her life expectancy. Such data were available—e.g., in Edmund Halley's 1693 memoir on mortality in Bresalau or even Graunt's *Natural and Political Observations* (1669)—for all their limitations. But apparently the English government sold its annuities at flat prices irrespective of the age of the buyer and outrageously biased in his or her favor. Similarly, prizes in the national lotteries were not usually allotted according to criteria developed by mathematicians of the respective national academies of science. Finally, insurance companies, if they were not just plain frauds or bubbles, fixed fire and freight insurance premiums more by guesswork than by mathematical tables, while life insurance, banned throughout most of Europe at this time, was little more than a set of off-the-cuff wagers.[35] And unless they persistently failed to generate income, the practice of annuity, lottery, and insurance policy design did not employ the probabilists' calculus.

The notions of Fate, Fortune, and Luck still held sway before the cosmos of mechanical determinism, numerical probability, and expected utility. The Tarot deck had not yet been stripped of its arcana and transmuted into the dutiful servant of the "long run." However much the eighteenth-century probabilists claimed to have captured human rationality in mathematical form, the actual gambling, investing, speculating, or insuring behavior of English and French humanity was recalcitrant to their enlightened advice. The mixed state of the psycho-

social situation is perfectly satirized in this street ballad about the South Sea system:

> Tis said that Alchemists of old,
> Could turn a brazen kettle,
> Or leaden Cistern into Gold,
> That noble, tempting Mettle:
> But, if it here may be allowed
> To bring in great with small things
> Our cunning South Sea, like a God,
> Turns nothing into all things.[36]

Or again, in Swift's *The Bubble,* the mixed and crossed states of magical illusion and cynical manipulation are summoned up to describe the scene in 1720 London:

> Ye wise Philosophers explain
> What Magick makes our Money rise
> When dropt into the Southern Maine,
> Or do these Juglers cheat our Eyes? . . .
> A Shilling in the Bath You fling,
> The Silver takes a nobler Hue,
> By Magick Virtue in the Spring,
> And seems a Guinnea to your View: . . .
> Mean time secure on Garrway Clifts
> A savage Race by Shipwrecks fed,
> Ly waiting for the foundred Skiffs,
> And strip the bodies of the Dead. . . .
> The Nation too too late will find,
> Computing all their Cost and Trouble,
> Directors Promises but Wind,
> South-Sea at best a mighty Bubble.[37]

The logic of magic—"Virtue"—and the commodity—"Computing"—were co-present and hence equally suspicious of the other. This contradiction of mutually annihilating enchantments was recognized by everyone in London, from the street singer to the Westminister backbencher to the Anglican clergyman. Surely, the lag between theoretical reason and institutional practice posed serious problems for the

bureaucrats and financiers who were in charge of the "financial revolution" in England and France. For the autonomy of the statistical could not be trusted, since neither the rich nor the poor were operating according to the supposed rational logic of probability. But neither could the authorities rely on the Renaissance politics of the princely magus.[38] Indeed, if the bureaucrats trusted either, the very schemes used to release the large mass of capital required for imperial world war would probably not have worked!

But then how could the King or his Regent control the uncontrollable, and reason with the unreasonable? How could mercantile state systems, so used to the practice of centralized economic planning, launch themselves on such a precarious path without some assurance of final authority? An answer to these contradictions and queries emerged from the very gambling tables that posed them. For even the probabilists knew that their logic did not apply to a loaded die, while those with Lady Luck on their side could beat the craftiest card-sharp. In between the enchanted "superstitious" world of magic, luck, and fate and the equally enchanted "rational" world of commodities, value, and an average rate of profit lies an interregnum: *the swindle*. If one lives in a magical world, the threat of fraud is automatically countered by the logic of the system (even though the cheat be flagrant from an "objective" viewpoint), and similarly, if one lives in a commodity world this threat is equally blunted. In the interregnum between the eras of Magic and the Commodity, however, the swindle becomes a necessity and a threat. John Law and John Blunt (the fraudulent centers of their different systems in Paris and London respectively) were neither Merlins nor Greenspans, because they could not protect themselves when the crash came with the defenses of either Court Magicians or Directors of the Federal Reserve.

The Gamester was certainly an ideal type of the period and a regular rogues gallery of specimens of the type were to be found in the literature of the day.[39] But the very use of swindlers at the heart of the state, was obviously problematic both in contractual Whig England and absolutist France. Since the swindle broke both the social and the divine trust, the revelation of the swindle would have threatened revolutionary consequences. Though the swindle solves the problem of controlling what is supposed to be an uncontrollable aleatory process, it breaks both the magicians' charmed spell and the probabilists' legal bond when revealed. One need only study the peculiar purging that occurred when

the Bubbles crashed to see the double, often contradictory, *mea culpas* uttered by all the "insiders" on both sides of the Channel. On the one side, there were the restrictions and almost ritualistic taboos on joint-stock companies and monetary experiments; on the other side, prosecutions for the wrong doers, who could not see that they had done any wrong!

Money, the Many Splendored Thing

The monetary substitutes, ideal forms and credit instruments exchanging with each other and being exchanged in the early eighteenth century were not individually new. Bills of exchange and checks were used by Babylonian merchants two millennia before Christ; paper money was an old Chinese invention extensively employed between the ninth and fourteenth centuries after Christ; money of account or "imaginary" money was common in European states since the sixteenth century.[40] But in the years immediately preceding the Bubbles, these instruments, variations, and intermediaries of money and credit had accumulated to such a point that quantity became quality. The vacuous area of economic life between commodity and commodity had taken on, apparently, a life or its own. The money form appeared to be in revolt against the Aristotelian curse of barrenness. It seemed at the time to be monstrously generating itself out of nothing while its paper representatives were boldly usurping its ancient metallic body. Multiple transformations in time and the imagination were at work with the independence of disease processes taking over the body economic-politic. That is why on one side of the Channel the fictional reflection of this period was of a plague, in Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), and on the other, that of a mythic balloon seller who convinced a nation to exchange its "worthless (gold and silver) metal" for the wealth of the realm of imagination, in Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (especially Letter 142).

The Bubbles defined an aborted phase in the history of money. The monetary Carnival of 1719 and 1720, where the proliferating forms of money and credit fell into a orgy of intercourse, ended in a grim Lent which was to last until the French Revolution. All the newly concocted certainties concerning the money form exploded when the Bubbles did and a quasi-religious fear of banks, stock companies, and monetary experiments took hold of the bourgeoisie of both countries. In

retrospect, this development was not surprising, for many of the resistances to the viral multiplication of monetary forms had been swept away during the "twenty-five year war" (from 1690 to 1715) while the famous "material conditions" that could sustain the monetary florescence were not yet in place.

An example of this breakdown in resistance to the new monetary forms can be seen in the overturning of Chief Justice Sir John Holt's declaration in 1700 that promissory notes were not negotiable, i.e., if someone promises to pay John Smith £10, Smith had no right to transfer this right to payment to another person. This decision struck at the paper heart of mercantile life in London, for increasingly "paper" was being negotiated many times removed from, and without the knowledge of, the original parties who contracted the paper. Holt defended this decision by claiming that the "promise" implied in a "promissory note" was legally valid only between identifiable individuals, and not between an individual and an abstract, interchangeable bearer.[41] It was legally irrelevant that this was standard merchant and banker practice. "Lombard Street can not legislate for Westminister," Holt declared. But he forgot that in the midst of the Williamite wars Lombard Street was repaved and ran right through the Parliament (especially since the founding of the Bank of England). Its spokesmen in Parliament speedily overturned Holt's decision and declared all notes payable to A simply, or A or order, or A or bearer. The old legal conception of contracts as relations between identifiable and mutually cognizant legal persons (be they individuals, firms or states) was declared *passé*.

There was a similar collapse of resistance to the new strains of the money form in France during the "twenty-five years war." The French had definitely been specie-lovers and suspicious of the monetary alchemists of Holland and Italy throughout the early period of capitalist development, but in the midst of Louis XIV's wars an ominous transformation took place: the introduction of the *billet de monnaie*. In 1693 the restamping of old coins into new was being hindered by military (and perhaps "economic" considerations), so in the interval between handing in the old coins and receiving the new, merchants were given written receipts—*billets de monnaie*—valid for periods of up to a month. These notes entered into circulation, of course. The billets were issued again in September 1701 as receipts. But on October 25, 1701 the billets were issued as bonds bearing four percent interest,

thus piercing the barrier between money substitutes and credit instruments. In the following five years the *billet de monnaie* became a new circulating medium expanding to 180 million livres (during a period when the money stock was approximately 500 million livres). There was a precipitous devaluation of the billets in 1706 to 50 percent of par value, however. By 1709 in the face of a total repudiation of the billet, the government ordered 72 million livres of *billets de monnaie* to be withdrawn from circulation and to be repaid in new coin. But even though with this crisis the barrier of resistance had definitively been breached, the French monetary antibodies had been worn down. As Frank Spooner suggests, "It seems that the history of the *billets de monnaie* sets [Law's] theories in relief and thus forms a prelude to his exploits under the regency (1715)."[42]

Chief Justice Holt's failure in 1700 to impose a distinction between particular promises and generalized obligations and the French monarchy's decision in 1701 to erase the border between a money substitute and a credit instrument were signs that the major conservative institutions (the courts, parliament, and crown) which formerly had dichotomized Money and Credit were experiencing a failure of nerve. Their actions were immediately the products of the necessities of war, but they laid the basis for a shift from John Locke's anxiety about semantic criminals' monetary projects to John Law's and John Blunt's embrace of these projects and innovations.[43] John Locke, in the first phase of the "twenty-five year war," was nominally the victor of the "recoinage debate" (1696) over those who argued that the function of money was to stimulate new enterprise and not simply to measure past labor. Locke insisted, on the contrary, that money was essentially a representation of a natural kind (silver or gold) and its quantity. He demanded that worn or clipped coins should be replaced by newly minted coins true to their self-proclaimed value, and even though such a course might lead to economic depression. Locke won the particular philosophical battle over "recoinage" in 1696, but the course of the actual war forced the English state to venture into ever more anti-Lockean monetary experiments in the subsequent years of war and post-war "adjustment."

John Law and John Blunt were the exemplary monetary experimenters of this period. However, scholarly consensus has absolved Law for the consequences of his ventures while Blunt has been made the object of its scorn since 1720. Certainly, when the comparison between

the two was made at the time Law replied, "[Blunt and other the South Sea directors] were working *against* England; I was working *for* France."[44] And indeed, when the two Bubbles are compared the key word in the scholarly discussion of Law is "mistake" while that for Blunt is "fraud." Law's "mistakes" (both theoretical and tactical), after almost three centuries of analysis, presumably lay in his systematic neglect of the distinction between money (as well as its substitutes and its ideal forms) and credit (with its multifarious expressions and forms). This "confusion" is perhaps that of a "crank," depending on your monetary philosophy, but it is understandable and excusable enough.[45]

Blunt's "frauds," however, are usually seen to have unraveled, with ironic justice, because he and the other South Sea directors tried to differentiate his fraud from the increasing competition of other frauds (or bubblettes) that were spawning in 1720 London by trying to outlaw them through the passage of the Bubble Act. In so doing, investors were presumably forced to sell their South Sea stock to cover their losses when the questionable companies went out of business. These hurried sales lead to the price crash of South Sea stock.

But can we, who are allowing similar institutions and events to pass in late twentieth-century casino capitalism, distribute the laurels of morality so differentially . . . here a crook and there a flawed genius?[46] Braudel has some good words of advice here: "Any active economy will in fact break away from its monetary language and innovate by reason of its activity: all such innovations are valuable as indications of the state of the economy concerned. Law's System and the contemporary English scandal of the South Sea Bubble were something quite different from post-war financial expedients, unscrupulous speculation, or share-outs between pressure groups."[47] Blunt and Law had before them a field of forms and realities of exchange that had already deconstructed the dichotomies that we anachronistically impose on them. They simply chose to act on the new facts of monetary life.

A major ontological transformation was emerging out of monetary experience in the early eighteenth century that Law and Blunt tried to mobilize. We should be sympathetic to these men, since we are also experiencing a similar transformation. After all, the sudden emergence of a trillion dollar per day international monetary exchange market and the interest in financial "derivatives" of all sorts in the 1990s parallels the developments of the Bubbles in the teens of the eighteenth century.

Though the hierarchy of gold, silver and copper was still at the center of the monetary field, it too was undergoing a monumental change due to the influx of gold from newly discovered Brazilian mines.[48] This rapid change subverted the self-certainty in the metallic heart of money, perturbing again that age-old deconstructive query, "What is the proper gold/silver ratio?" But the main source of activity was on the periphery where a revolutionary coup was being plotted by an immense and motley mob of new monetary forms. The transience, novelty, and interchangeability of this mob make any taxonomy intrinsically futile. For the world of the eighteenth century money ranged from goldsmiths' notes, to *billets de monnaie*, to lottery tickets, to monies of account, to fiat currency. It cannot be reduced to one formula as Foucault, Rotman, and other contemporary philosophers of money contend.[49]

This confused scene of monetary innovation can be described as an aspect of a larger sociological transformation, of course. Simmel's conception of money as the great driving force of mediation leading to the primary features of modern life and Elias' view of the process of civilization as an increasing distantiation of the individual from the raw material of the world come instantly to mind. Certainly, many events of this period (apocryphal or not) would seem to provide lively examples for these sociologist's pages. For example, on November 12, 1719 Law rode through the rue Quincampoix and the crowd cheered his carriage while he threw gold sovereigns from the window. As the people scrambled to pick up the gold pieces from the street, some of Law's accomplices poured water, slops, or shit on them (depending on the telling of the tale) from the roof of a neighboring house.[50] This fable-in-action surely expresses Law's increasing contempt for the actual thing, which is still soiled with the "blood and dirt" of the slave-mines of Brazil, and his desire for an autonomous, scriptural sort of wealth many times removed from the "real" thing.[51] This piece of performance art or Freudian therapy, however, was not able to convince the soiled 18th century money grubbers of the dispensability of filthy lucre.

The zone of mediation opened up by the monetary instruments of the Bubbles, however, is a complex space with many potentially conflicting dimensions and categories.[52] The logical and formal sophistication necessary to theorize the new terrain was not available at the time. Neither Aristotle's syllogistic nor Newton's fluxions provided the tools for even formally mapping the domains. So Philosophy (Moral and

Metaphysical) had to do, with its limited, oft-criticized, but indispensable resources. The problems dealt with under the rubric of materialism, abstraction, time, imagination, will, and personal identity by eighteenth-century philosophers were frequently contributions to monetary theory and practice, as we shall see when we examine Berkeley's life-long polemic with Locke in Chapter 3.

However, there was one fact about money that obscured this complexity and helped block conceptual vertigo. Once one enters into the ontology of commodity values, everything literally has a price-tag, *even the price-tag itself!* Consequently, the immense variety of monetary substitutes, credit instruments, monetary substitutes *qua* credit instruments, credit instruments *qua* monetary substitutes, and so on *ad infinitum et ad nauseum* were mutually exchangeable as were the fields of bullion, national money, imaginary money, and fiat money. They all could be "reduced" to each other. Thus John Smith's promissory note pledging to pay Adam Morton fifty pounds sterling in one year could be exchanged for a tenth of a lottery ticket which could be exchanged for a Dutch bank note which could be exchanged for thirty gold guineas which could be exchanged for one quarter of a South Sea stock, etc. All these exchanges could be priced in the field of currency values one chose. The simplifying power of numerical value flattens all the ontological differentiations with a sweep of a mighty wand called "discounting." Chance, time, ideality, and substitution are all potential sources of exchange error, i.e., they can create a difference between the intended or hoped for result and the actual outcome, but once there is a price on the errors, then they all can happily be compared and equated as easily as lemons, shirts, bicycles, and chairs.

Money and Libertinism

In a world of money, money is not only the universal equivalent, it must become self-reflexive. If everything has a price, then money and the money exchanger also must have a price. This Godelian aspect of money not only tends to obscure its separation from wealth, however defined, it also breeds certain attitudes associated with the libertine: cynicism and blaséness. These were widely noted at the time as essential components of the social atmosphere surrounding the Bubbles. Berkeley combated these libertine attitudes with his most heated rhetoric. A decade after the Bubbles, he perceived a relationship

between the libertinism and monetary catastrophe in Ireland. But he also saw libertinism as a *cause* of the Bubbles as we shall see in our examination of his *An Essay on the Ruin of Great Britain* below.

Georg Simmel's neo-Kantian explanation of the rise of cynical and blasé attitudes during a period when the money form is taking over society can help us see more clearly the connection between the Bubbles and libertinism that Berkeley noted. Simmel argued that values in a society dominated by money are relentlessly "reduced" and "flattened" by the ubiquitous possibilities of exchange. Everything has a price, so nothing is priceless and "beyond compare." He writes of cynicism:

> The nurseries of cynicism are therefore those places with huge turnovers, exemplified in stock exchange dealings, where money is available in huge quantities and changes owners easily. The more money becomes the sole center of interest, the more one discovers that honour and conviction, talent and virtue, beauty and the salvation of the soul are exchanged against money and so the more a mocking and frivolous attitude will develop in relation to these higher values that are for sale for the same kind of value as groceries, and that also command a "market price."[53]

Of course, what comes immediately to our mind are the first great stock markets in London and Paris during the Bubbles, which not only formed the original boom-crash cycle but also, if Simmel is correct, the renowned cynicism of brokers since then.

The blasé attitude is even one step beyond cynicism, for it derives no pleasure from "debasing" the higher values. It simply experiences the equivalence of everything and this leveling leads to a loss of attraction and desire that can be fatal, individually and socially. Hence the desperate search for "stimulation" in impressions, relations and information to escape the "dull gray hue" of equivalence.

These onto-psychological consequences of living in a monetary culture can also help explain another widely-noted aspect of the period of the Bubbles that Berkeley found so execrable: the explosion of the "libido" in the upper classes of England and France as manifested in the enlarging market for expensive pornographic images and texts, in the cult of libertine sexual excess, and in the aristocracy's flaunting of adulterous liaisons.[54] This libidinal excrescence is often attributed to the

unblocking of inhibitions due to a generalized "decline of religion" or a "collapse of the Puritan ascetic morality."[55]

But this sexual liberation was quite class specific. Just as with gambling, so with sexuality, this was a period of intense class-duplicity. At the very moment when the "pillars of the community" in the Reformation of Manners movement were castigating the sexuality of the urban and rural poor, closing down baths and public stews, the aristocratic and upper-class bourgeois beaus were discovering their transgressive sexuality.[56] Thus the inhibitions on the libido survived the "decline of religion" and Puritanism . . . for those with less than £100 annual income.

The flattening, grayness and boredom of life in a thoroughly monetarized existence is another source of libertinism. For libertinism is not so much a spontaneous Nietzschean "assertion of life" now released from the fetters of Puritan or Jesuitical prohibitions, but a "rage against [life's] inadequacies, an incessant (and obsessive) attack upon Dull-ness."[57] The desire for stimulation and the excitement of excess, of course, could only be satisfied by the expansion of the very monetary dominance that created the desire. Dullness can only be cured by ultimately generating more of the same with ever higher costs (from more pornographic material to the expansion of the market of sexual partners).

As Simmel concluded so blasély: "A money culture signifies such an enslavement of life in its means, that release from its weariness is also evidently sought in a mere means which conceals its final significance in the fact of 'stimulation' as such."[58] So that, in the end, the only stimulation left was the sexual excitement of money intercoursing with itself.

De Motu *and* An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain: *Berkeley's First Lesson in Money*

Berkeley's stayed in Lyons for part of the fall of 1720 and arrived in London in the winter-spring of 1721. Both cities were feeling the shock of the Bubbles' bursting and there was an extensive literature of analysis, recrimination and defense pouring from the presses in France and England. The Whig-Hanoverite control of the British state was so shaken by the South Sea crash that many contemporaries thought a well-prepared assault by the Jacobites would have easily deposed King

George. The Jacobites, however, were equally destablized by the Mississippi crash and the Regent—the Pretender's only serious potential ally—was more concerned about the survival of his own hold on state power than in any foreign adventure.

It was in this atmosphere of universal perturbation that Berkeley wrote and published two short works in different genres which apparently had nothing to do with each other. The first was an essay submitted to the French Academy that year for a prize competition on the principles and communication of motion. Berkeley's essay did not win the competition, but he published it in 1721 in London. The second was an essay written in a popular manner about an immensely popular topic, for his *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* is to be found beside 148 other essays, satires, exposes, rants, poems, open letters, Parliamentary committee reports, legal briefs about or stemming from the South Sea imbroglio published in 1721 alone to be found in Sperling's *Bibliography* of that Bubble.[59]

Do they have anything to do with each other? *De Motu* was a lapidary philosophical critique of the Newtonian "research program" and the *Essay* was a peculiar combination of a prophetic rant, an old-fashioned sermon and a program for social and economic reconstruction delivered with occasional apocalyptic flashes in a self-deprecating depressed tone. What connected the objects of these works, Newton with Blunt (and Law), aside from a rough contemporaniety in publication and the widely noted story that Newton instructed his deputy, Fauquiere, to invest £650 a year of his annuities in a new issue of South Sea stock near the peak of the boom on July 23 thereby "loosing" £20,000?[60] There is, however, a common concern in both texts that links them to the context described above and to each other: the word "principle" (or "principium" in the Latin text of *De Motu*).

"Principle" is used at the end of *An Essay* in two summative sentences that were meant to justify the Savanarola-like program of "general correctives" Berkeley proposed for post-Bubble Britain. After all, this presumably mild-mannered cleric suggested the death penalty for atheists and libertines (under the rubric of "Religion"), workhouses for the poor (under "Industry"), burning for luxuriously dressed women (under "Frugality), and pressuring the rich to give "voluntary gifts" of money to help pay the national debt (under "Public Spirit"). This "bold" program of "reform," as it would be called nowadays, was presented in a strange way. On the one side, it is justified with an apocalyptic aura—

"One may nevertheless venture to affirm that the present hath brought forth new and portentous villainies, not be paralleled in our own or any other history. We have been long preparing for some great catastrophe"—where the 1720 plague in Marseilles is used as a chastening rod for "our Gaming, our Operas, our Masquerades."[61] On the other, the program is presented as a series of "hints . . . thrown together from a zeal for the public good."[62] Thus the text is bristling with death and violence while its motivations are suggestive and hermetic. "Principle" carries much of the weight of this stylistic ambivalence, for he concludes: "The South Sea Affair, how sensible soever, is not the original evil, or the great source of our misfortunes; it is but the natural effect of those principles which have been propagated with great industry . . . In short, other nations have been wicked, but we are the first who have been wicked upon principle."[63]

The word is crucial in understanding the text and it is taken as unproblematic. But is it? Not if Berkeley's previous philosophic ontology and his innovations in *De Motu* are read onto it. Berkeley's early ontology was exhausted by (inert, passive) ideas and (productive, active) spirits, but principles had a problematic status. Were they ideas or were they spirits? Berkeley's major youthful work included "principles" in its title and the term is often used in the text, but it did not seem to fit in either category. Principles were not "just" ideas (since they seemed to have an active character), nor were they spirits (since they were not independent of spirits). In *De Motu* Berkeley's develops his previously confused thinking about "principles" into a critique of Newton's *Principia* which makes it clear that Newton had not understood the title of his own *magnus opus*, since he conflated the three different senses of "principium":

> It will be of great importance to consider what properly a principle is, and how that term is to be understood by philosophers. The true, efficient and conserving cause of all things by supreme right is called their fount and principle. Yet it is proper to describe as 'principles' of experimental philosophy the foundations upon which rests, or the springs from which flows, not the existence, but our knowledge of corporeal things: I mean, the sense and experience. Similarly in mechanical philosophy those are to be called principles, in which the whole discipline is grounded and contained, those primary laws of motions which have been proved by experiments, elaborated by

reason and rendered universal. These laws of motion are conveniently called principles, since from them are derived both general mechanical theorems and particular explanations of the phenomena.[64]

This definitive paragraph lays out the grid for a critique of Newtonianism. The three understandings of "principle" differ as to their objects and their mode:

Understanding	Mode	Object
(A)	properly is	true, efficient and conserving cause
(B)	described as	sense and experience
(C)	called	laws of motion

Berkeley's aim in *De Motu* is to dissolve Newton's confusion of laws of motion, Pantocratic interventions and empirical methodologies in the *Principia*. For Newton, especially in the General Scholium of the second edition of his *Principia* in 1713, seems to have introduced God into the cosmos as a perfect mechanic, a policeman and spy, and the immaterial extended substance of absolute space. Berkeley, who in his own *Principles* (1710) created a new intimate relationship between God and human minds, appreciated the Newtonian anti-Deistic placing of an activist God into the universe. But he saw that the roles Newton assigned to God conflicted and the result was an invitation to a thoroughly anti-Christian theology and practice, confirming the rumors of Newton's anti-Trinitarian and monophysite secret heresies.

Berkeley had very modest overt polemical aims in *De Motu*, given the rising power of Newtonianism in France and the fact that Newton was still a central ideological figure in the ruling Whig junta in London. So Berkeley presented his critique as a simple matter of conceptual surveying: "Allot to each science its own province; assign its bounds; accurately distinguish the principles and objects belonging to each."[65] Yet the "alloter," the "boundary assignor," and the "distinguisher," inevitably transcends the allotments, the boundaries and the distinctions. So his modest proposal actually led to a hubristic attack on the core of Newton's *Principia* (and, perhaps, to the loss of the prize and the

attention it would have won him in the year of the Law System's collapse).[66]

Berkeley's use of the term "principle" in *An Essay* was quite "overdetermined." Its role, especially given that text's explicit self-censorship, is worth examining as a continuation of *De Motu*. For Berkeley argued that the South Sea affair was a "natural effect" of "those principles," but he does not explicitly identify the referent of "those." "Those principles" are not determined by "sense or experience," nor are they determined by the mechanics of civil States. For the former can only give one evidence of pain and the latter can only lead to dealing with civil States as if they were "natural products [which have] their several periods of growth, perfection, and decay." Neither principles of type (B) nor principles of type (C) could lead one to the "general correctives" necessary; principles of type (A) are needed. This point is clarified in the next use of "principle": "other nations have been wicked, but we are the first who have been wicked on principle." What is it to be "wicked on principle"? This is to make wickedness not an external attribute or a structural flaw, but to make it "a true, efficient, and conserving cause" of action.

In other words, Berkeley asked his readers to see in the South Sea affair not the sensible aspects (e.g., the price collapses and bribes) nor the mechanical ones (e.g., the increase in the money supply), but rather what would have been called in the sixteenth century demonic agencies at work. However, *An Essay* is not a product of the Reformation, and devil-talk had largely subsided by 1721.[67] Berkeley replaced it with "human folly" in his ungrammatical penultimate paragraph: "or whether it be an effect, as seems more probable, of human folly that, as industry produces wealth, so wealth should produce vice, and vice ruin."[68] Berkeley was responding to the "get rich quick," gamester capitalism of early eighteenth-century Britain very much like the peasants of Colombia, described by Michael Taussig in *The Devil and the Commodity Form in South America*, responded to their colleagues who "sell [their] souls to the devil, so that [they] can get money without working."[69] He cannot openly employ their magical ontology, but he shares their suspicion and anxiety about the transition to another level of commodity fetishism. He, like Swift and Pope, had to develop new discourse of evil.

There is, however, a palpable temptation in *An Essay* to demonize money and money-makers, and call for the most violent action against

the libertinage that the monetary society propagates. This temptation was held in abeyance by theological and monetary scruples. His theological scruples emanated from his previous work on spirits in *Principles* (1710) and *Dialogues* (1713). He recognized finite human spirits and God in those works, but he had little to say of the range of intermediary powers, traditionally called "angels and devils." There seems to be little room in his ontology for these other spirits: all our sensory ideas are given to us by God and our ideas of imagination are our own products. An unperceived spirit that has no effect on one's experience can exist, it would not be a logical absurdity as an unperceived idea would be; but it is not clear what such a spirit might have to do with angels and devils. Consequently, if there is evil it must emanate from an active being, either God or human. Since God can not do evil, wickedness must be a human principle. Thus his ontology directed him to a discourse of folly and pathology instead of to a revitalization of the ontology of the witch hunt.[70]

Berkeley's monetary scruples point to the future of his thought, especially *The Querist*. For he finds nothing intrinsically wrong with the form of money or credit. The problem is conditional: "Money is so far useful to the public as it promoteth industry, and credit having the same effect is of the same value with money; but money or credit circulating through a nation from hand to hand, without producing labour and industry in the inhabitants, is direct gaming."[71] Berkeley makes no *a priori* judgment about the possibility of distinguishing money's usefulness and direct gaming. He was no anti-money radical like Thomas More dreaming of a utopia where the gold is only used to make chamber pots, as his other remarks concerning taxation and moneyed men indicate. His problem was to discover a principle of money that would not be wicked. Berkeley suggested that it cannot be done mechanically nor empirically, but it must lie in an understanding of a "true, efficient, and conserving cause" of money. His experiences in the following decade were to provide him with this new source.

Appendix: The Chronology of the Bubbles

By 1735 Berkeley was quite knowledgeable of the pace of events in the Law System, as he makes clear in his own quizzical chronology in a continuous series of queries in the *Querist*, Part II. From Query 67 to

Query 109 the reader is presented with the minutiae of Law System down to where the copper plates for printing the bank notes were kept (Query 75) and the time of the joining of the Bank and the Company of the Indies (Query 90). The Querist is reticent about the South Sea Bubble for a variety of reasons, but its story and the moral he drew from it forms a crucial subtext in *The Querist*. For both Bubbles provided powerful *prima facie* evidence against his project (the formation of a national bank in Ireland and the issuing of paper money), consequently he had to have an even more powerful response. He clearly studied them thoroughly in the intervening years. What he knew of the Bubbles in detail in 1720/21 is a matter of conjecture, however, because his writings of the time, especially *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*, referred to them in very general terms. Whatever his immediate knowledge of the story at the time, the Bubbles constituted the experiential basis of his monetary education.

The key events of the two Bubbles will be presented here synchronically, since one of their novel aspects was that they were experienced co-presently by the players: each move in Paris had a gravitational influence on London and vice versa. The sense of acting simultaneously in an bifurcated way (both here and there) was becoming a widely noted experience in the market interrelationships that were only then beginning to be communicated through price quotations in the nascent business press such as *The Course of the Exchange* (London) and in the novels of the period. If there was a Newtonian phenomenological experience in the early eighteenth century it was this mathematically defined "action at a distance."[72] Let us begin the description of the gravitational fields of the two Bubbles in 1716 and end with December 1720 when Berkeley returns to London via Lyons (carefully skirting the plague zone emanating from Marseilles):

1716

Paris. (May) John Law beings the operation of his Banque Generale largely with his own capital. It is run conservatively, with a high specie to bank-note ratio.

London. The South Sea Company, founded in 1710, and in possession of the *asiento* (i.e., the right to sell slaves in and to send two of

merchandise boats a year to Spanish America) had already converted £10,000,000 of government debt into its stocks.

1717

Paris. (August) Law purchases the Compagnie d'Occident with the rights to exploit the French Louisiana territories for twenty-five years.

London. Interest on the South Sea Company's possession of the national debt fell from 6 percent to 5 percent.

1718

Paris. (July) Law successfully bid for and won the control of the lucrative tobacco monopoly lease from the government.
(Dec.) The Banque Royale was formed from the nationalization of the Banque Generale; the banks notes had the backing of the king (through his Regent). The Compagnie du Senegal (the French slave trading company) was added to the System.

London. Britain is at war with Spain and the Spanish government stops the South Sea Company's slave and mercantile trade with its American colonies for the duration of the war

1719

Paris. (May) The Compagnie des Indies et de la China (the major French trading company with Asia and the Pacific) was put under Law's control.
(July) The Compagnie des Indies was formed, i.e., the Compagnie d' Occident and the Compagnie des Indies et de la China were merged, and placed under Law's control as was the Compagnie d' Afrique. The Mint rights were lodged with Law.
(Aug.) Law took over the general farm of indirect taxes.
(Oct.) The Compagnie des Indies refunded the remaining public debt of 1,500 livres at 3 percent.
(Dec.) The Compagnie des Indies' stock reached its speculative peak: fifty times its initial price in August 1717.

London. (Nov.) Blunt presented a plan to Parliament for converting the whole British national debt into South Sea stock. There was a drain of British capital to Paris.

1720 (Annus mirabilis)

January-February. Paris: Law was appointed Controller General of France after he converted to Catholicism.

- A rapid series of specie devaluations was followed by a set of edicts that decreed: (1) no one could wear diamonds or other precious stones without permission; (2) no goldsmith could make or sell gold-plated objects, and no one could import them; (3) paper currency was the almost exclusive form of money, no payment in excess of 100 livres in coin being allowed; (4) no one could keep more than 500 livres of gold or silver. Police raided homes and even churches throughout France to seize coin hordes.
- Banque Royale was formally joined with the Compagnie des Indies.

London: A bidding war between the South Sea Company and the Bank of England took place. South Sea's first offer was to pay the government £3 million for the privilege of converting national debt into private equity. The Bank answered by a £5.5 million offer. The South Sea's directors top that and bid more than £7 million to win the deal.

March-April. Paris. Law offered to peg Compagnie des Indies stock at 9,000 livres. About 2 billion livres of stock were redeemed.

- A harsher anti-specie edict was proclaimed decreeing that gold could not be used in payment of debts after May 1 nor silver after August 1.

London. The South Sea Bill authorizing the South Sea Company to carry out the conversion of national debt was passed by Parliament and given the Royal Assent on April 7.

April 14: The first "money subscription," stock issued at 300 on easy terms.

April 28: The first subscription of the irredeemable annuities; stock issued at 375. 63 percent of the irredeemables were subscribed.

April 29: The second "money subscription," stock issued at 400 at even easier terms.
May-June. Paris. May 21: An edict decreed that the value of paper money was to be diminished by 50 percent over a six month period and the value of the shares in the Compagnie des Indies would be pegged down from 9,000 to 5,000 livres during the same period. The System was beginning to crash.
May 27: The May 21 edict was withdrawn and Law is dismissed as controller general of France.

London. June 11: The Bubble Act received the Royal Assent; it required Parliamentary oversight over corporate charters and any attempt to operate in areas not mentioned by the charter was criminalized.
June 24: South Sea stock reaches a peak of 1050.
June 27: Third "money subscription," stock issued at 1000 at even easier terms.

July-August. Paris. On August 15 the Regent decreed that 1,000 and 10,000 livre bank notes were inconvertible and could only be used to pay taxes or buy government bonds at 2.5 percent interest. The Regency begins to liquidate the System.

London. July 14: First subscription of redeemables at 800.
August 4: Second subscription for both redeemables and irredeemables issued at 800.
Aug. 17-18: The Treasury Solicitor issues writs of *scire facias* against the English Copper Company, the Royal Lutestring Company, the York Buildings Company and the Welsh Copper Company in accordance with the Bubble Act.
Aug. 24: Fourth "money subscription" for South Sea stock, issued at 1000 with relatively stiffer terms of purchase.
August 31: South Sea directors announced a 50 percent dividend. The downward movement of South Sea stock prices began.

September-December. Paris. Nov. 1: An edict decreed that all paper money would be withdrawn from circulation and could only be used for conversion into almost worthless state bonds. Shares of the Mississippi were quoted at 2,000, which, in the inflated currency of the day, was almost zero. Rumors of a *visa*, i.e., a financial inquisition of all

interested parties, to be run by Law's enemies, the Paris brothers of "Anti-System" fame, were circulating.
Dec. 14: Law leaves France with his son for permanent exile.
London. Sept.: A selling panic grips Exchange-Alley and South Sea stock quoted at 775 on Sept. 1 is at 290 on Oct. 1, by December 15 it is at 155.
Sept. 23: The Bank of England first accepted and then later refused to rescue the South Sea stock.
Sept. 24: The South Sea Company's bank, the Sword Blade Bank, fails.
Dec. 20: The Parliament refused to allow the national debt holders who converted to South Sea stock to reconvert back to government annuities. It also launched an investigation into the affair that was to take much of the following year to conclude.

NOTES

1. A fine volume that weaves together the experiences of two dozen "Milordos and Bear Leaders," i.e., young rich men and their tutors, on their itineraries through France and Italy see Hudson (1993). Hudson claims that Berkeley was an early "discoverer" of the ancient temples at Paestum (p. 215), which would put Berkeley within miles of the hometown of that forerunner of conceptual ontology, Parmenides. Hudson, however, does not use the very interesting journal Berkeley kept as bear leader in the "wilds" of Sicily and Tarento.

2. John Arbuthnot wrote to Swift on October 19, 1714: "Poor Philosopher Berkley; has now the idea of health, which was very hard to produce in him, for he had an idea of a strange feaver upon him so strong that it was very had to destroy it by introducing a contrary one," Swift (1963ii: 137).

3. For a definitive account of the machinations of the "Law System" and the peculiarly "modern" personality behind its screen see Murphy (1997). For the South Sea Company's vicissitudes see Carswell (1960). The literary aspect of the Bubbles is increasingly attracting attention since the major literary figures of the day—Pope, Swift, and Montesquieu—took a hand in satirizing it. Defoe, in contrast, wrote of it in his prophet's mantle: "I appeal to all the world, whether any man that is entrusted with other men's money (whether publik or private is not the question) ought to be seen in Exchange Alley . . . let you citizens of London have a care of a bear-skin Court, and a stock-jobbing ministry, when Exchange Alley shall be transposed to the Exchequer, and the statesmen shall make a property of the brokers," Defoe (1979: 273–75).

4. Marx (1909i: 827).

5. See Brewer (1990: 114) for the debt figures and Wilson (1965: 365, for the population figure.

6. Brewer (1990: 117 and 126).

7. Marx (1909i: 827).

8. Schubert (1988: 303). For a blow-by-blow description of the Bubbles see the Appendix to this Episode.

9. The first story is told in Minton (1975: 183–84), although I do not see a reference to it in the standard texts concerning the South Sea Bubble. The second is by Carswell (1960: 132).

10. Carswell (1960: 95). Stair and Law were fellow Scots and Law tried to "turn" Stair often with offers of Mississippi stock as he did other Scottish investors who joined the other 30,000 foreigners in the speculating mob on rue Quincampoix.

11. For a discussion of the phenomenological structure of financial crises like the 1720 Bubbles see Kindleberger (1989). He discusses the notion of "displacement" on pp. 46–49 in the context of Hyman Minsky's model of crises. There is a huge literature on the very possibility of "bubbles" in markets where rationality reigns. For a short bibliography see Weller (1987). The theoretical existence of so-called "rational bubbles" in rational-expectation models was demonstrated in Blanchard and Watson (1982). But whether there have ever been any such creatures and, in particular, whether the 1720 Bubbles were rational, irrational, or even bubbles is still a matter of debate among rational-expectation theorists, for example, see Garber (1990). For a critique of the rational-expectation approach to Bubbles, see Appendix A of Kindleberger (1989) and well as the debate in Kindleberger and Laffargue (1982).

12. The apparent demise of the Spanish colonial empire is described in Lynch (1989). He writes: "The history of the colonial monopoly between 1714 and 1750 is a history of steady erosion, inadequate defense, and futile debate, in spite of which the Indies remained an asset to Spain"(p. 144). A very useful discussion of the South Sea Company's operations in the slave trade to Spanish America can be found in Palmer (1981). The effective period of the Company's involvement is from 1714, when the Spain granted the *asiento* to Britain, to 1739, the beginning of the War of Jenkin's Ear. Palmer estimates that in that twenty-five year period the South Sea Company delivered 74,760 slaves to Spanish America from Africa (with no estimate of the losses of life en route), cf. Palmer (1981: 110).

13. A taste of the problem of dislodging Spain from its colonies was what happened to the Scotch Darien project in 1695. It brought a good part of the investment funds of Scottish capitalists as well as hundreds of settlers to bear on a project of controlling the area which is now known as Panama (the Isthmus of Darien). The project was attacked by the Spanish fleet and the few survivors managed only with great difficulty to return to Scotland.

14. Minton (1975: 149). The Duke of Saint-Simon's discussion of the carrying off of "a quantity of public creatures" is in Saint-Simon (1910: 1175–76). For a discussion of the Deficiency Law see Williams (1984: 106–7).

15. Sperling (1962: 32) on the first reference, and Minton (1975: 122–23) on the second.

16. Hamilton (1936: 59–60). For a discussion of the Law System's money creation (and specie-defetishization) capacities see Murphy (1997: 213–30).

17. Dickson (1967: 141–45). Dickson states that average loan was £4,900, but that would mean that £11,270,000 were lent.

18. Calculated using Brewer (1990: 89–91).

19. For wages and prices see Hamilton (1936). Hamilton calculates that prices rose by 88.4 percent between May 1716 and May 1720 while real wages dropped by about 25 percent in the same period. Given the experience of Law's System, it is not surprising that Cantillon and Quesney become the important economic thinkers in the generation that followed.
20. Marx (1970: 125–37); Simmel (1978: 238–47); Keynes (1936).
21. Braudel (1982: 398–99).
22. Marx (1970: 134).
23. Simmel (1978: 241).
24. Quoted on p. 51 of Ashton (1969), original published in 1898. John Law's gambling career is brilliantly analyzed by Antoin Murphy in Murphy (1997: 34–44). He writes: "Another element in Law's gambling persona that is worth investigating is the contrast of the dual personality that he presented, on the one hand the gambler or rake and on the other the serious economic thinker. How can one reconcile these seemingly different personalities? They may be reconciled by carefully examining the role of Law the gambler. Professional gamblers know that it pays to show another face, to feed one's opponents with a different image than the real self" (p. 39).
25. Cf. Ashton (1969: 53–56). Gambling and amorous adventures seemed to be ways for a wealthy woman of the eighteenth century to exercise power outside of the home, since politics, the church, and mercantile enterprise were largely banned. Also, the feminine and feminizing character of financial capital, which was typically seen as metonymous with gambling, is discussed in a fine article by Ingrassia (1995). Ingrassia points out that women played a major part in the actual business of buying and selling of stocks, lottery tickets and insurance policies (p. 201). Moreover, Credit, Stock-jobbing and Speculation were described with feminine imagery in the literature of the period, from satirical street ballads to the epistles of Pope. The operative contrast was between feminine credit (ruled by fancy, fiction, and luxury) versus the serious business of land and mercantile exchange which is "solid, rational, or honest." In this distinction, one can find the generative kernel of much "country" discourse.
26. Ashton (1969: 56).
27. Cf. Thomas (1971: 120–23).
28. Brenner and Brenner (1990: 62).
29. Burke (1978: 240). Similar points could be made of seventeenth century France and the Company of the Holy Sacrament.
30. Brenner and Brenner (1990: 103–12). Indeed, one might well see that the way in which the "superstitions" concerning probabilities were only eliminated by the introduction of other magics of the commodity form. So the end of "luck" and "divine grace" under the scrutiny of the mathematics of expected utility is managed by a new magic of autonomous commodities and invisible hands.
31. One might argue that it took almost three centuries, if Keynes and von Neumann are considered the initiators of "the probabilistic revolution" in economic theory.
32. An excellent study of the history of probability and its application in the eighteenth century is Daston (1988); the new trend in studies that link the history of

probability with social institutions and processes (*á la Foucault*) can be traced to Hacking (1975a); another important book in this field is Shapiro (1983).

33. There was a transformation of the meaning of "superstition" in this period Before 1650 it meant "false religion," but after 1650 it referred to "irrational fears," according to Burke (1978: 241).

34. Cf. Daston (1978: 138–87).

35. Daston (1978: 139).

36. Ashton (1969: 252).

37. Swift (1966: 248–59).

38. For an interesting discussion of the politics of magic in the Renaissance see Couliano (1987).

39. See Murphy (1997: 34–44) for an account of John Law as a gambler. He writes: "Though Law made a fortune out of gambling it is inaccurate to describe him as a gambler in the traditional sense of the term. His gambling activities involved his use of his mathematical skills to calculate rapidly the most advantageous gambling odds allied to his adoption of the key position at the gaming tables, that of banker" (p. 37). For a description of other Gamesters of the early eighteenth century see Lucas (1971).

40. See Braudel (1981), especially Chapter 7.

41. See Rotman (1987) and Caffentzis (1995b: 20–21).

42. For a magisterial presentation of French monetary history see Spooner (1972), the quotation and the discussion of the *billets de monnaie* is on p. 203. Another short, institutionally contextualized presentation of the *billet de monnaie* story is to be found in van der Wee (1977: 378).

43. See Caffentzis (1989: 120–21).

44. See Minton (1975: 186).

45. For an analysis of Law as a monetary crank, although an "ingenious" one, see the rather cranky Rist (1966).

46. After all, the South Sea Company and the Western Company were founded on the African slave trade and the promise to further exploit and expropriate the indigenous Americans. Similarly they pinned their success on making the rest of the bourgeoisie of France and England individual collaborators in the slavery/genocide project, instead of not so innocent by-standers. For an interesting discussion of the similarities of the past and present see Strange (1986).

47. Braudel (1981: 439–40).

48. See the beautiful maps that illustrate the end of the reign of silver in the French mints in the period between 1701 and 1725 in Spooner (1972: 206–7 and 243–45); for the international picture that led to the formation of the "gold standard" in this period see Villar (1976).

49. See the development of Foucault's early archeology in Foucault (1970) and Rotman's development of Foucault's effort in Rotman (1987). This period of fantastic formal monetary creativity has not been carefully mapped. This is not surprising, given the complexity of the task, which cannot be described as a simple transition from substance to function in the economic world. An attempt to provide such a map would require a set of categories that can be deployed to differentiate the nodal points of the field. This system of categories can be described in the following Table I:

Categories	A	B	C	D
formally	algebraic	differential systems	elementary logic	Godelian systems
semantically	substitution	deferral	abstraction	self-reference
psychologically	replacement (association)	temporal-aleatory displacement (uncertainty)	idealization	self-assertion

All the so-called money substitutes would seem to fit in category A, the instruments of credit in category B, the field of imaginary monies of account in category C, and field of inconvertible fiat monies in category D.

50. Minton (1975: 141–42).

51. Parallel to this is the definitive decline of those portraits of merchants with coffers of coin that were so popular in the seventeenth century.

52. Referring to footnote 49, we should note that algebraic variables and differential operators, though similar in their conceptual distance from the fields they range over or map, are, formally speaking, separate species. Just as representing differs from promising or betting, variables differ from operators. Imaginary money of account, which is notionally translatable but never identical to any actual sum of gold, silver and copper metal (either as coin or bullion), has an autonomy that representatives or deferred promises do not. Finally, a self-defined, reflexive field of fiat values, though translatable into metallic or imaginary money fields is never identical to either. This is a period, therefore, when two fields of values as well as a vast expansion of types of variables and operators over these fields come into being. The logical heterogeneity of monetary fields, variables, operators opened up (formally and practically) possibilities of infinite recursion and application. Thus, a monetary substitute could be the object of a promise or a bet, and it could range over values in a field of metal, imaginary, or fiat money; but this promise or bet can become a monetary substitute ranging over a field of values different from the field of the original monetary substitute, etc. Moreover, the existence of two or more fields of monetary values creates the possibilities of new spaces of correlations between values in the fields. The formal complexity of the monetary world had just become truly prodigious. If the contemporary reader feels a slight pang of nausea contemplating it, after nearly three centuries of living in a world of monetary spaces replicating themselves to infinity with apparently autonomous vigor, then one can imagine the emotions of those who had just sailed out into these perplexing seas.

53. Simmel (1978: 256).

54. For a discussion of the up-scale pornography market see Foxon (1965); a more extensive discussion of enlightenment pornography and libertinism can be found in Wagner (1988); for the cult of libertine excess see Turner (1989); for an overview of upper-class adultery and other aspects of sexual life in the period see Stone (1977), especially the section "New Practices: the Rise of Libertinism," pp. 529–42.

55. See Turner (1989: 106) for the former, or Stone (1977: 543) for the second explanation.
56. For a contemporary commentary on this duplicitous attitude Bernard Mandeville's *A Modest Defense of Public Stews* (London 1725).
57. Turner (1989: 106).
58. Simmel (1978: 257).
59. Sperling (1962: 67–76).
60. Craig (1946: 112). Sir John writes in defense of Newton: "the transaction was merely a transfer from one South Sea stock to another of similar standing, and that the 'loss' of £20,000 was the profit which might have been taken on the original investment by selling out at the top of the market. Catherine was a hard woman."
61. *An Essay*, pp. 330, 336. Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* was also inspired by the Bubbles and the Marseilles plague while Law claimed that "credit would have been reestablished [in May 1720] if the plague had not occurred." Minton and other students of Law's System agree that the plague had a crucial impact on Law's System: "During the four years Law was active in France, trade with Africa increased sevenfold. The closing down of Marseilles and other ports of entry in southern France in 1720–21 was not what Law [in the previous quote] was referring to directly; it was the loss of confidence that followed the news that Marseilles was being ravaged by disease." Minton (1975: 212–13). Law certainly was of this opinion. According to Murphy, Law "wrote in a short memoir in 1723, "*Effets que la peste arrivee en Provence en 1720 a pu causer sur le credit*," that the plague played a key role in destroying the System in that it caused the public to switch its demand away from paper money to specie because the latter was regarded as a better means of payment for the purchase of goods and necessities in a plague-stricken environment," Murphy (1997: 288).
62. *An Essay*, p. 337.
63. *An Essay*, pp. 336–37.
64. *DM* 36
65. *DM* 72.
66. Berkeley argues that it is in Newton's conception of absolute space that the confusion of principles climaxes. Moreover, Berkeley's attack on absolute space was an unequivocal signal to a Newtonian—who might dismiss Berkeley's "instrumentalist" interpretations of mechanics and even his ultimately propagandistic use of Cartesian dualism—that Berkeley was still dangerous.

The three different understandings of "principle" enter into the Newtonian notion of absolute space, for it is space that exists after the annihilation of all bodies (and hence beyond immediate sense and experience) but which is still the place of God (who must be somewhere, according to Newton) and the perfect stage for the application of the laws of motion (the working of the perfect mechanic). However, Newton claimed to give to sense and experience a way of verifying the existence of this absolute space through his famous "bucket experiment." Berkeley demolished the "idea of absolute space" by pointing out that any attempt to conceive it is literally self-deceptive: "We are sometimes deceived by the fact that when we imagine the removal of all other bodies, yet we suppose our own body to remain" [DM, para. 55]. Just as in the "master argument" in the *Dialogues*, Berkeley

claimed that a metaphysical alienation of the self is at the root of materialist philosophies. For imagining this absolute zero-body space involves the secret positing of the bodily image of the imaginer in this nothing to make something out of it. That is, Newton confused principle (1) with principle (3) in attempting to imagine this zero realm. In his attempt to give absolute space the support of principle (2), he failed to recognize some simple facts about the System of the World that he is quite conscious of in other part of the *Principia*, viz., the water in the revolving bucket does not move in truly circular motion (since it shares in the motion of the earth) and that the motion of the water rising to the sides of the bucket is far from circular motion.

A good discussion of the critique of absolute space in *De Motu* is Brook (1973: 125–45).

67. The 1736 statute which repealed the legal framework of the witch hunt in England was still in the future, but Berkeley had considerable difficulties formulating a new discourse on evil or a discourse on a new evil. As Russell writes in Russell (1980: 123): "Belief in diabolic Satanic witchcraft declined rapidly in the eighteenth century, virtually disappearing save in legend, literature, and jest."

68. *An Essay*, p. 337.

69. See Tausig (1980: 96 and *passim*).

70. A classic discussion on the discourse of folly and mental pathology in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries see Foucault (1965).

71. *An Essay*, p. 323.

72. Benedict Anderson in Anderson (1983) argues that it is this experience of co-presence defined by the modern novel that a new national community was formed. Perhaps he should have included the stock price and foreign exchange pages in the fledgling business press along with the novel.

EPISODE 2:
COPPER AND CONSENT

Money, the great *Divider* of the world, hath
by a strange Revolution, been the great *Uniter*
of a most *Divided* people.
Jonathan Swift, *Drapier's Letters 1724-1725*

Overture

On 9 September 1724 in Dublin Berkeley wrote in a postscript to a letter to Percival, his aristocratic mentor in London: "Yesterday Wood's effigy was carried in procession by the mob through most of the streets of this town in order to be hanged or burnt, but it is given out by them that the Lord Mayor hath reprieved him till Wednesday. It is hardly possible to express the indignation which all ranks of men shew on this occasion."[1] A few days later a second and larger mob had repeated the demonstration. On both occasions, however, the Lord Mayor had no difficulty in dispersing the mob or securing the effigy.[2] In the same month "a ship carrying seven casks of the new half-pence arrived in Cork harbour. 'The whole country took all the boats and lighters they could get and went with a resolution to burn the ship and its cargo.' In the end, the ship was permitted to unload its other goods and sail away."[3]

Berkeley was living in Ireland between 1722 and 1725 when the said William Wood and his half-pence coins were inciting public protests and making Irish monetary history. Indeed, Berkeley ascension to one of the most lucrative posts in the Church of Ireland, the Deanery of Derry, in the midst of the crisis, after spending so many years in a political shadow, might very well be attributed to this very crisis.[4] For Berkeley seemed to get his career breaks whenever Whig regimes were in trouble. Moreover, most of the people involved in Berkeley's life and who would be crucial to the fate of his Bermuda college adventure (which he first conceived of in 1722)—Dean Swift, Lord Lt. Carteret, Prime Minister Walpole—were crucially involved in the struggle over what was essentially a matter of the dominant form of money in Ireland. Swift was to become the notorious "M. B. Drapier" in this affair and, under this pseudonym, was to author the series of pamphlets that would generate mass support for the resistance of the Irish House of Commons and Lords and the Archbishop of Dublin to Wood's patent.

Carteret's diplomatic handling of the matter would give him a new stature among the period's crisis managers while Walpole's new administration, which took power after the South Sea Bubble affair, would nearly be sunk by this "Irish hurricane."[5] Consequently, though the above postscript was the only direct statement about the three year affair in Berkeley's letters, it clearly affected him (as it did almost everyone in Dublin and in government circles in London). It was the next major monetary crisis he directly experienced after the Bubbles of 1720. What impact did it have on his monetary education?

In order to assess this impact we must rehearse a story that used to be a textbook drama of Irish nationalist history, but which might be forgotten now, even in the regions where it transpired. It opened in 1722, just as the South Sea Bubble's fallout was beginning to be cleaned (or covered) up by Walpole's new government. There was apparently another small change crisis in Ireland. "The need for money had grown so acute in Ireland that numbers of manufacturers were obliged to pay their men with tallies or card tokens signed on the back for exchange into money at a later date."[6] In recognition of the shortage, "a memorial was presented to the Lords of the Treasury complaining of the base quality of the copper coinage then circulating."[7] In response, William Wood, a frequent seller of copper to the London Mint, received a patent for mining copper and producing coins for Ireland on 12 July 1722. Wood reportedly bought the patent from King George's mistress, the Duchess of Kendal, for £10,000. His firm was to mint £100,800 Irish, over a period of fourteen years and the patent's main socio-physical restriction was that no more than 30 pence of coins should be made out of one pound of copper (although copper was worth about 12 pence per pound).[8] Sir Isaac Newton "drafted the specifications and safeguards against abuse in the original contract." He tried to get the contract for coining the Wood's copper blanks for the Mint in London, but his request was refused by Walpole. However, "the supervision of the quality and quantity of the coinage throughout was in [Newton's] hands" even though "the coining did not take place in the Tower of London, but at Bristol."[9] At the end of this act, Walpole looked on the scene with a smile, since this operation was meant to further ingratiate him with the King and further integrate and subordinate the Irish economy to his authority through invisible monetary threads, while using the aging Newton's prestige as his screen.

The only catch was that the patent did not make Wood's half-pences (and farthings) legal tender, nor did it "oblige [Wood] or his agents to convert the coin on demand into legal tender currency."[10] This was to prove the fatal flaw of the scheme as the plot slowly unfolded in the summer of 1722. As the coins were being minted, tested and shipped to Ireland from Bristol, many on the highest levels of the Anglo-Irish ruling class became suspicious of this regal "gift horse" and saw in it their own undoing. Letters, memoranda and reports began to circulate within Dublin and between Dublin and London. Archbishop King of Dublin sent to Lord Lieutenant Grafton's office a series of letters, beginning in 21 July 1722, complaining of the increased possibility of forgery of the new coins and suspicion that "the would drive gold and silver out of the country."[11] The Irish Commissioners of the Revenue sent a letter to Grafton on 7 August 1722 critical of the project.

By the following autumn, the accusations against the patent and Wood's intentions were exploding as the coins were about to arrive. On 23 September 1723 the Irish House of Commons found "ourselves Indispensibly Oblig'd Humbly to Represent to Your Majesty our Unanimous Opinion, That the Importing and Uttering of Copper Farthings and Half-Pence, by Virtue of the Patent lately Granted to William Wood, Esq; under the Great Seal of Great-Britain, will be highly Prejudicial to Your Majesty's Revenue, Destructive of the Trade and Commerce of the Nation, and of the most Dangerous Consequence to the Properties of the Subject" and it resolved that "the loss to the nation by uttering of this coin would amount to 150 per cent."[12] On 17 December 1723 the Irish Parliament petitioned the King not to allow the Irish Commissioners of Revenue to "receive or utter" any of Wood's coins.

All the major arguments against Wood's project were common coin in Dublin. Their range was impressive. First, there was the simple compositional point that if the total currency of Ireland in 1722 was reckoned to be £400,000 then introducing £100,800 in small (non-legal tender) change even over a decade would be excessive. For the addition of Wood's coins to the existing copper currency of about £15,000 would make 23 percent of the total Irish coinage copper. Archbishop King, applying a common sense version of Gresham's law, argued that such a large increase in less valuable coins would drive out gold and silver.

Second, there was no attempt to consult the Irish Parliament as to the conditions of the patent. "The *Declaratory Act of 1719* and the omission to consult the Irish executive officers in the matter of [Wood's] patent were undoubtedly construed as marking the fixed determination of the English to disregard [their] constitutional liberties" *and* their pockets.[13] This non-consultation made the Anglo-Irish ruling class, already sensitive to its loss of autonomy vis-a-vis the English Parliament, anxious about its ability to control one of the most important aspects of its life, the monetary form of its rent and tithes. For, on the one side, if the landlords and clergy received their income in non-legal tender coins, then could they be sure they could exchange them for gold and silver in Dublin, London or the continent? On the other side, if the internal money supply was dominated by such coins, as it would be by the early 1730s if Wood's farthings and half-pences pass, how could they refuse to accept them?

Third, there was a widespread belief that the Wood affair was a simple fraud concocted at the highest levels of Court to bilk the Anglo-Irish out of hundreds of thousands of pounds. For, as was mentioned above, a pound of copper was worth 12 pence, but Wood was allowed to make 30 pence of coins out of it. On the basis of this straightforward fact, a variety of profit calculations were derived dependent either upon the inventiveness of the calculator or the estimated cynicism of Wood and Co. or both. Some, like the Irish Parliament in the above mentioned resolution, simply divided 30 pence by 12 pence and got 150 percent profit. Others, more sensationalistic or cynical, deducted the bribes to the King's mistress, to Walpole, to the Mint's supervisor (and, perhaps, to Newton himself) along with the expenses of coining and transport, but then added the supposition that the copper Wood used would be adulterated, the coins would be underweight and there would be many counterfeits produced or sanctioned by Wood and Co. to come up with profit estimates as high as 500 percent.

It was at this point that Walpole made his interventions in 1724 to save Wood's brass. Walpole asked Newton, the aging Master of the Mint, with two associates to Assay Wood's Copper Coinage. On April 27, 1724 they found Wood's coinage acceptable, even overweight:

> We found, that 60 weighed 14 Ounces Troy, and 18 Penny weight, which is about a quarter of an Ounce, above 1 Pound weight Averdupois, and that 30 Farthings weighed 3 Ounces, and 3 quarters of

> an Ounce Troy, and 46 Grains, which is also above the weight required by his Patent. We found also, that both half-pences and Farthings, when heated red hot, spread thin under the Hammer without cracking.[14]

Then Walpole urged Wood to make a retreat and the latter made the following offer to the Irish Parliament:

> First, that whereas I have already Coined £17000 Worth, and have Copper prepare'd to make it up £40000 I will be content to Coin no more unless the Exigencies of Trade require it, th' my Patent empowers me to Coin a far greater Quantity.[15]

Walpole appeared on 24 July 1724 arranged a Privy Council meeting "in relation to Mr. Wood's Half-Pence and Farthings, &c." The Privy Council called the witnesses from the Irish Parliament to testify . . . but none came. "As this Proceeding seem'd very extraordinary that, in a Matter that had raised so great and universal a Clamour in Ireland, no one Person could be prevailed upon to come over from Ireland, in support of the United Sense of both houses of Parliament of Ireland That no Papers, no Materials, no Evidence whatsoever of the Mischiefs arising from this Patent, or of the notorious Frauds and Deceit committed in the Execution of it, could now be had, to give your Majesty Satisfaction herein."[16] Then the Privy Council answered all the allegations of Fraud (using the Newton assay) and of misinformation to the King about the need for small change in Ireland—"Evidence was given, That considerable Manufacturers have been obliged to give Tallies, or Tokens in Cards to their Workmen for want of small Money, signed upon the Back, to be afterwards exchanged for larger money; That a premium was often given to obtain small Money for necessary occasions; Several Letters from Ireland to Correspondents in England were read, complaining of the want of Copper Money, and expressing the great Demand there was for this Money."[17]

At the end of the session, the Privy Council concluded:

> it not appearing to their Lordships that Mr. Wood has done or committed any Act or Deed, that may tend to invalidate, or make void his Letters Patent, or to forfeit the Privileges and Advantages granted to him by your Majesty; It is but just and reasonable, that

> your Majesty should immediately send orders to your Commissioners of the Revenue, and all other your Officers in Ireland, to revoke all Orders, Directions, Significations, or Intimations whatsoever, that may have been given by them, or any of them, to hinder or obstruct the receiving and uttering this Copper Money.[18]

After this three-part assault, Walpole in effect had answered all the objections to the coinage: there was no fraud, copper will constitute only twelve percent of the Irish money supply, and the Irish complaints have been officially heard. What more could any reasonable being want?

In response to Walpole's campaign, the hero of the drama, M.B., a plain-spoken Drapier, who claimed to play the Irish David against the brass-clad Goliath Wood, appeared in the form of fliers and pamphlets passing from hand to hand in a battle of paper and copper. There was great apprehension in the Dublin crowd. It knew that the British government clearly had no intention of taking Wood's patent back, as news of the Privy Council's July meeting leaked back to Ireland. Walpole's tactics of concession and attack seemed to have confused the Irish resistance. What more could be done? In March 1724 a new strategy was suggested—a variant of the passive obedience strategy of the old Tories, i.e., what the native Irish would in the nineteenth century call a "boycott"—in a pamphlet written by Dean Swift under the pseudonym "M. B. Drapier."[19] In *A Letter to the Shop Keepers, Tradesmen, Farmers, and Common-People of Ireland Concerning the Brass Half-Pence Coined by Mr. Woods, With a Design to have them Pass in this Kingdom*, Swift not only returned to and extremized the old arguments against Wood's patent, he also provided a lawyer's brief on the current laws concerning the acceptance of coin and other money (near or far), and he concluded by showing that the beggar would be as harmed by Wood's coins as the rich and by urging that "One and All: Refuse this Filthy Trash. It is no treason to rebel against Mr. Wood. His Majesty in his Patent obliges no body to take these Half-pence. Our Gracious Prince hath no such ill Advisers about him; or if he had, yet you see the Laws have not left it in the King's Power, to force us to take any Coin but what is Lawful, of right Standard, Gold and Silver. Therefore you have nothing to fear."[20] Two thousand copies of the first letter were distributed throughout the country in a month—the equiva-

lent for the contemporary United States might be something like one million copies.

But rumors were spreading that the already arrived coins would be moved from the warehouses to pay the army and more would be coming soon. In early August 1724 the second *Drapier's Letter* appeared rebutting Wood's proposals "for Preventing any future Objections or Apprehensions" and in late August a third letter attacked the Privy Council's Report. The street crowd, the *mobile vulgarus* or mob, was forming with a knowledge that some counter-power was needed to prove that anyone who might take the coins under pressure from the Walpole government would face serious consequences. The first demonstration on September 7 dragged Wood's effigy through the streets of Dublin. We spied Berkeley spying this demonstration above, wondering what it omened. The next demonstration a few days later led to Wood's "hanging" and the arrest of some of the mob. The streets were clearly signaling that the holders of Wood's coins might face the same treatment as its author, in effigy, received.

Swift presented the interclass character of the mob in *A full and true Account of the solemn Procession to the Gallows, at the Execution of William Wood.* It begins with the mob surrounding a house where Wood was rumored to be staying. They shout the characteristic shibboleths of their trade, e.g.,

> the Parliament Man, "Expell him the House"—
> the Cook, "I'll Baste him"—
> the Whig, "Down with him," and Tory, "Up with him"—
> the Whore, "Pox rot him"—
> the Curate, "I'll make the Devil come out of him,"
> and the Popish Priest, "I'll send him to the Devil"—
> the Cobbler, "I'll make an end of him"—
> the Gamester, "I'll make his bones rattle"—

and ends with the hangman, "I'll throttle him." Swift's full list of characters includes the panoply of Dublin's hierarchy of labor. The mob is soon convinced that Wood was not in the house and it decides to hang an effigy of him instead. The rest of the skit is a mock description of the hanging or a description of the mock hanging. When Wood was cut down "the body was carried through the whole City to gather Contributions for his Wake . . . which was carried out in an Ale-house

of Distinction." The drunken crowd then decided to burn Wood the next day, "but burning not having been any Part of the Sentence; Authority thought fit to interpose, and the Corps was rescued by the Civil Power."

The humor ended in October. Swift was searching for a way to amplify the level of conceptual threat as the mob had done on the physical level in September. In the next *Drapier's Letter*, addressed "To the whole People of Ireland" and dated October 13 1724, he decided to go for the ideological and practical jugular. As for practice, M. B., with his Drapier's eye, noted that the Lord Lt. could not easily bribe members of the Irish Parliament (as was usually done in England) to vote for Wood, simply because most of the lucrative Irish posts had been given to Englishmen already. He named names and quoted the extravagant salaries for officer holders, who lived largely in England, to conclude that Ireland is indeed the source of enormous wealth for the English government. Wood's brass coins would threaten this Irish "golden egg." Indeed, if Wood's project went through, Ireland would be so impoverished the absentee office holders would have to return to Ireland "where we should live together merry and sociable as Beggars; only with this one Abatement, that we should neither have Meat to feed, nor Manufactuers to Cloaths us; unless we could be content to Prance about in Coats of Mail; or eat Brass as Ostritches do Iron."[21]

Ideologically, the Drapier then took a dangerous flight or "digression" into the realm of political theory, attempting to turn Whig principles against the Whig government of Walpole "in order to refresh and continue that Spirit [of Liberty] so seasonably raised amongst you."[22] He pointed out that during the realm of Henry VIII, the Irish parliament agreed to have the same king as the English, it did not elect to be dependent on the English government, for sameness is symmetrical, dependency is not. Moreover this was a contractual decision made on the Lockean grounds of "Law, Reason, or common sense" and rooted in the Whig principle: "all government, without the Consent of the Governed, is the very Definition of Slavery."[23] Implicitly suggesting that if the contract is violated, the Irish would be justified in rejecting its previous commitment to a common King with England. For support, he referred, in passing, to precedents in the Whig tradition in Ireland (Molyneux's *The Case of Ireland*) and in England ("the best Whigs").[24] The Drapier ended his recitative with a remembrance of Liberty—at least the Liberty of Complaining—by reminding the people of Ireland

that "The Remedy is wholly in your hands . . . you ARE and OUGHT to be as FREE a People as your Brethren in *England.*"

The crowd again gathered and was whispering when suddenly on October 27, 1724 a "Proclamation offering three Hundred Pounds to discover the Author [of the Drapier's Letters], so as he be Apprehended and Convicted thereof." It charged that in the Forth Drapier's Letter there were "several Seditious and Scandalous Paragraphs . . . tending to Alienate the Affections of [the King's] good Subjects of England and Ireland . . . and to promote Sedition among the people" was announced. Everyone on the street knew who M. B. really was, but no one would exchange this knowledge for money. The crowd then ominously moved on to the court where the printer Mr. Harding was being tried for printing the seditious letter. But on November 21, 1724, the Grand Jury refused to convict Harding, especially after receiving a paper from an anonymous source with "Seasonable Advice to the Grand-Jury, concerning the Bill preparing against the Printer of the Drapier's Letter to The Whole People of Ireland" sent a few days before. The mob greeted the news with "loud Huzza's" even though the Chief Justice Whitshed dismissed the Grand Jury and went about picking another, which only refused to convict Harding again.

The denouement of the affair was played out in 1725 in the Dublin Castle and Parliament, while Wood's half-pences remained in warehouses on both sides of the Irish Sea. Carteret, the newly appointed Lord Lt., tried slowly to have Wood's patent withdrawn (after the inability of the government to break the passive resistance to Wood's coins, as indicated by the Grand Jury's rebellion in the Harding case and the continued hostility of the Lord Justices) without damaging the King).[25] Walpole had sent his political enemy, Carteret, over to Ireland to be caught on the horns of a political dilemma, "[Carteret] will be under a necessity of either helping us through in this affair [by getting Wood's half-pence to pass in Ireland], which I think it will be impossible for him to think of, after the part he has already acted, or of losing himself with the King [by calling for the withdrawal of the patent], when he shall see that he falls in entirely with the Irish politics, and the independency that is so much aimed at."[26]

Up until that time Walpole had not thought that "the Irish Hurricane" could blow down his administration in London. But the King depended on substantial revenues from Ireland which the Irish Parliament determined by passing a biannual bill of supply or Money

Bill. Its passage had largely been a matter of course, but the Parliament could express its indignation by refusing to vote such a bill in, as it had done in 1692 to indicate its rage over the Treaty of Limerick.[27] The clamor against Wood's patent and the refusal of the Walpole administration to withdraw it could lead to another Money Bill crisis which might end in the King asking for Walpole's resignation. Swift had already formulated this tactic in the summer of 1725 in *An Humble Address to Parliament*, a pamphlet he was preparing to distribute on the first day of Parliament.[28] But the Drapier was not alone in that insight. Carteret and other defenders of the "English interest" in Ireland added their voices to the chorus of anxiety directed at Walpole, who could ill afford not to respond. Consequently the pressure was shifting from Dublin to London as the time for opening the Irish Parliament approached. On August 19, 1725 the Lords Justices of England informed Carteret that Wood's patent had been surrendered to the King, with the full expectation that the Irish Parliament will "make suitable returns of Duty and Gratitude" to the King.[29]

The Reviews

So ended the Wood's Half-Penny Affair. All throughout the fall of 1725 the Drapier became "the Darling of the populace; his image and Superscription on a great many Sign-Posts in [Dublin] and other great towns."[30]

Politically, the Wood's Half-pence Affair has been taken as a crucial event in many different historical narratives for centuries. Lecky in 1893, for example, in charting the growth of a nationalist ideology saw the affair as "occupying so conspicuous a place in Irish history" since it was one of the first opportunities that Irish public opinion was united across political, religious, and class divisions against a perceived act of English "tyranny."[31] Connelly in 1992, while rejecting the Leckyan nationalist narrative and taking a Clarkean "ancien regime" perspective on eighteenth-century Ireland, also saw the affair as "a turning point in Anglo-Irish relations," since there were no more cases of the "provocative use of power" by the English parliament after it.[32] But through all the changes in methodological fashion, the crisis has remain a mainstay in Irish political history and has generated many interpretational debates.[33] Economically, however, the half-pence did not seem to generate much interest except as being one further example of the

"Irish nationalist" claim that England's restrictions on Irish enterprise was the source of Irish underdevelopment. L. M. Cullen built his scholarly career on refuting this nationalist ideology rooted in the 1720s constitutional debates and later flowering into a doctrine of the political sources of Irish underdevelopment in the late nineteenth century. Consequently, he dismissed Swift's critique of Wood's patent as pure propaganda, and he seemed to be supported by subsequent monetary history.[34] After all, the copper coinage issued in 1736 through 1755 was produced in the Tower Mint in London and then, after a break of seven years, other copper coins were issued regularly throughout the eighteenth century without much controversy because they were deprived of the "nationalist" political context.[35]

Berkeley's Situated Knowledge

What then could Berkeley have learned about the money form from his direct experience of the half-pence crisis besides the reasoning of his most intimate supporters and employers in Ireland and England? One obvious thing he learned was that Wood's Anglo-Irish antagonists like Dean Swift and Archbishop King suffered from a profound monetary schizophrenia. They shared all the Lockean bullionist pieties of their opponents in the Walpole government. For example, they accepted the notion of a hierarchy of metals: from the lowly Copper to the lofty Gold. Indeed, one of their principal objections to the patent was that Ireland would be devalued because so much of its coinage would be of the basest monetary metal, copper. This could have had a powerful propagandistic impact because the Anglo-Irish not only believed in this hierarchy, but they believed that the English believed in it too. Swift framed the whole affair as an elaborate attempt to degrade and humiliate Ireland for the benefit of the Court and its cronies.

Further, the bullionist principle—a coin's monetary substance must equal its exchange value—was the basic axiom of crisis' discourse. Swift & Co. were claiming that Wood was blatantly violating this principle and that the Walpole regime was "screening" this violation. Walpole & Co. trotted out Newton (the British symbol of scientific objectivity) in order to demonstrate that this revered principle was honored by Wood's coins. But neither side questioned the axiom that structured their debate.

However, the actual exchanges on the streets, shops, and markets of Ireland continually transgressed this bullionist axiomatics. Tokens of every sort with little or no "intrinsic value" were being used before, during, and after the crisis. Undoubtedly, the "collection" taken for Wood's effigy's "wake" was largely in the form of these tokens. "The withdrawal of Wood's half pennies and farthings in 1724 left a void in Ireland's small change, which the British government made no attempt to fill. Not surprisingly a number of Irish tokens began to appear in circulation and were generally accepted. These may be said to have begun in 1728 in Dublin. They remained in use until 1736 when the new copper half pennies and farthings of George II appeared."[36] Indeed, between 1702 and 1736 there were no issues of small change coins, but somehow with a variety of expedients—tokens, card money, tickets, etc.—the economic dance went on, however haltingly, and the very spokesmen of bullionist morality schizophrenically violated it many times a day. Consequently, one of major themes of *The Querist*, "as Coin [is] a Ticket conveying Power," was not a theoretical insight of a future monetary state but a foregrounding of a widespread contemporary practice.

Berkeley also may have learned that not only paper currency, involving huge volumes of high value bills as in the 1720 Bubbles, can cause economic crises. Small coins of negligible value can cause them as well.[37] Moreover, this small change can generate paradoxes and contradictions that entangled the most sophisticated. For example, money appears to be the very model and stimulant of liberty and self-activity. For with it the millions of micro-impulses of everyday life can be transmitted, transacted, and accumulated. But at the same time, the ability to control the conditions of monetary transaction, especially its quantity and exchangeability, can become a vehicle for an almost absolute tyranny in a monetary society. In the half-pence crisis the debate around dependency, which had been fought on a Parliamentary level, entered into the internal circulation of the Irish body politic. So an original principle of liberty, money, could become a most effective tool of tyranny.

A similar paradox could be seen in the very name of the affair—"the half-pence crisis"—which focuses, with mocking self-reference, on the confusion of small monetary with great revolutionary change. It undoubtedly was the wonder of the age how such a "ridiculously little" trigger could explode a major confrontation of two allied governments

for three years with potentially catastrophic results (including the sinking of the Walpole regime). Swift's perspectival changes in Books I and II of *Gulliver's Travels* are as relevant in understanding the crisis, as is the direct reference to it in Book III, which describes how the residents of Lindaloin (Dublin) successfully resisted the Laputan King's demands and his threat to crush them by landing his floating island on the city.

Finally, the most important lesson in the Wood's Half-pence Affair for Berkeley was the changing role of money in social life. All previous social crises in Ireland had clear religious and/or political causes and led to social divisions girdled by trenches of blood; this was the first crisis that had the money form at the center and ended with a higher level of unity in the country. As Berkeley noted in his letter to the leader of the "Irish interest" in the English Parliament, Percival: "It is hardly possible to express the indignation which all ranks of men shew on this occasion." Berkeley was not alone in warning English officialdom in this newly found solidarity. This powerful amalgamation of interest was noted by Primate Boulter with apprehension—"bringing on intimacies between Papists and Jacobites, and the Whigs, who before had no correspondence with them"—by Archbishop King with wonder—"I never saw the Kingdom so universally averse to anything as they are to these from *the herb Women to the Nobles*"—and with glee by Swift in the epigraph of this Episode. The crisis over the money form of Ireland also generated a new type of political activism which transformed older strategies like the Tory's passive obedience to economic boycotts and which turned to the use of the urban mob. Money could, apparently, move mountains by bringing together eternally irreconcilable sectors of the population and getting them to move together against appreciable threats. Undoubtedly the expropriative impact of the Penal Laws had finally monetarized Ireland, so that all ranks, including herb women, would be willing to risk their safety by joining the boycott of Wood's coins. Though the monetary ideology that gave a cover to this movement was schizophrenically incompatible with the monetary needs of Ireland, as Berkeley later saw them, he could immediately see that struggle over the apparently abstract form of money could leverage effective political action.

NOTES

1. *Letters*, p. 135.
2. Goodwin (1936: 665).
3. Connolly (1992: 101).
4. The Deanery of Derry had the second largest Dean's income in Ireland, after that of Down. It was one of the three truly lucrative deaneries on the Island and the bishopric (considered to be the wealthiest) was continuously held by Englishmen during the later half of the eighteenth century. For further details see Akenson (1971: 39–45).
5. Goodwin (1936: 656n).
6. Josset (1971: 154).
7. Lecky (1893: 451).
8. Swift and Lecky have the figure £108,000, which is incorrect, according to Goodwin (1936: 125).
9. Craig (1946: 116).
10. Goodwin (1936: 653).
11. Goodwin (1936: 650–51).
12. Appendix B in Swift (1941: 177).
13. Goodwin (1936: 687).
14. Report of Newton's Assay of Wood's Coinage, Appendix C, Swift (1941: 187).
15. Appendix C, Swift (1941: 189).
16. From Appendix C, "Report of the Privy Council Committee," Swift (1941: 193); for an explanation of this "extraordinary" non-compliance see Goodwin (1936: 660–61), although Godwin's account is both too bureaucratic and tautological to be completely satisfactory. One need not have been a Walpole to believe that there were "secret springs and supports" for this resistance.
17. "Report of the Privy Council Committee," in Swift (1941: 200).
18. "Report of the Privy Council Committee," in Swift (1941: 202).
19. The term justly enough has an Irish origin, although it is an anachronisms in this context. It comes from the name of Captain Boycott, a land agent ostracized by his neighbors during the Land League agitations in Ireland in 1880.
20. Swift (1941: 11).
21. Swift (1941: 59).
22. Swift (1941: 63).
23. Swift (1941: 61).
24. For an edited version of Molyneux's Case, see Probyn (1979).
25. Goodwin (1936: 666).
26. From a letter from Walpole to Newcastle on 1 Sept. 1724, quoted in Hayton (1984: 107–8).
27. Cf. Johnston (1974: 62) for the 1692 incident and Chap. 3 for an overview of the parliamentary and administrative structure of eighteenth-century Ireland. For a more sociological introductory analysis of this structure see Dickson (1987: 71–79).
28. Swift (1941: 124): "Grievances have always preceded Supplies."

29. Of course, Wood received £3000 per annum for eight years for his surrender of the patent according to Lecky (1893: 455). What happened to the coins themselves? "The coins were withdrawn and sent to America, where they circulated with the Rosa Americana half-pence—also a production of Wood." Josset (1971: 344).

30. From a letter from Bishop Nicolson to Archbishop Wake October 12, 1725 quoted in Swift (1941: xxxi).

31. Lecky (1893: 488).

32. Connelly (1992: 108).

33. For example, did the half-pence crisis bring the "Undertaker System" into existence? It was originally suggested by Goodwin (1936: 674) and the first full-length investigation of the connection was J. L. McCracken's M.A. thesis in 1941, "The Undertakers in Ireland and their Relations with the Lords Lieutenant 1724-1771," according to Hayton (1984: 234). Hayton argues against this thesis in Hayton (1979) and is supported by Dickson (1987: 70–71).

34. See L. M. Cullen's classic refutation in Cullen (1972), he mentions and dismisses the Wood crisis on p. 36.

35. For the details on the issues of copper currency in Ireland in the eighteenth century see Josset (1971: 161-162, 348–49).

36. Jossett (1971: 345).

37. The Wood's Half-pence Affair certainly had a major impact on Irish monetary thought in the following decade. No Anglo-Irish writer could forget that the quantity of money is not the only important variable for a well-functioning economy. A proper ratio of the variety of coins, especially the amount of the smallest unit, is crucial as well. For example, Sir John Browne writing five years after the Affair in *A scheme of the Money Matters of Ireland* (Dublin, 1729) noted that "lessor Coins are . . . like the more liquid particles of the Blood, without which, the whole Mass would be in danger of stagnating" (p. 14).

EPISODE 3: SLAVES, PAPER, AND BAPTISM

Berkeley returned to Dublin in the fall of 1721 and took up his academic duties at Trinity College after almost eight years of adventures in Tory politics and tourism in Catholic Europe. But his hopes for ecclesiastic advancement were still dim, given his association with Henry St. John's circle when he first arrived in London in 1713. St. John was still considered a Jacobite renegade and was living in exile in France at the time.

In response to this *cul de sac*, Berkeley's devoted his next decade to "the Bermuda scheme," i.e., the creation of a college for educating American Indians together with the sons of British planters which he privately projected in 1722. Ironically, just as he was charting a mid-Atlantic, multicultural experiment as an escape from the dead-end of his career in Ireland and a catastrophic social/political environment in Britain he wrote about in his *Essay*, his fortunes took a positive turn. In 1723 he found himself co-executor and legatee of Swift's lover, Hester Van Homrigh ("Vanessa"), who died unexpectedly. Simultaneously, as the Wood's Half-pence agitation was reaching its climax in 1724, the Anglican leadership began to promote Anglo-Irish clerics to high positions in the Church of Ireland to appease Irish sentiments aggrieved by Walpole's attempted imposition of a suspicious currency. Consequently, as was mentioned above, Berkeley was offered one of the most lucrative Deaneries in Ireland in the diocese of Derry.

But instead of choosing a restful absentee life in Dublin or London, Berkeley used his new wealth and power to forward his multi-cultural Bermuda college scheme. After traveling to Derry to arrange for the forwarding of his rents and tithes, he abandoned Ireland for London where he campaigned and lobbied for his mid-Atlantic college. By 1726, after intense lobbying of Parliament and the Court, he received a charter, a promise of land in Bermuda for the college, and a grant of £20,000 to be paid from the proceeds of the sale of Crown Lands on St. Christopher's. Berkeley then brought together a "core team" of adventurous academics from Trinity College (Dublin) who would be the initial faculty of his St. Paul's College in Bermuda. Berkeley had poured in much of his own money as well as funds from the subscribers of the project (who spanned the range of London politics of the late 1720s from the ever deceptive Walpole to a Bolingbroke [Henry St.

John] who had just returned from exile). All was set for the venture by 1727, and then nothing happened.

Doubts and suspicions about the scheme and about Berkeley's intentions began to grow in London. The Treasury grant was not paid, but then again, it was not rescinded. Berkeley decided to break the suspense in 1728 by chartering a boat to bring himself, his new wife Anne, and his "core team" to Newport, Rhode Island. There was much confusion then (and now) about the meaning of this move. Why did he go to Newport instead of Bermuda? Why did he not wait for the grant or decide to go ahead with his existing resources? Why did his team abandon him on arriving in Newport? Finally, why did he think he could more decisively influence a volatile Parliament, a conniving Walpole, a suspicious Anglican hierarchy three thousand miles away than on their door step in Westminster?[1]

On arriving in Newport in January 1729 he purchased a ninety-six acre farm and built an elegant, mini-Palladian house with the declared intention of using it as a supply base for the College in the Bermudas. He actively entered into the intellectual and religious life of the town by giving sermons in Trinity Church and participating in the local philosophical club. He enjoyed his "temporary" sojourn so much that the more he heard of the difficulties of living in Bermuda, the more he thought of placing the college in Newport or the New England colonies. Moreover, a wave of slave rebellions circulated throughout the British American colonies in 1730, including Bermuda, and dampened much of the Anglican Church's zeal for baptizing slaves, one of the aims of St. Paul's College. In early 1731 Berkeley received word that Walpole would not pay the grant for the college. He returned in defeat to London with his wife and son in September, leaving most of his "team" in the colonies. Berkeley also left a legacy to what was to become Yale University that included his house, farm, and library. But he received much knowledge in return and his monetary education was certainly forwarded.

London and Dublin were, not surprisingly, the locales of the Anglo-Irish Berkeley's first lessons in the nature of the money form, but perhaps the most important time and place for the development of his monetary knowledge was Newport, Rhode Island, during his sojourn there. For he saw in Newport a society which had transcended the metallic gravity of coinage to survive and even flourish. Moreover, in the last months of his stay in Newport, a major controversy concerning

the issuing of paper currency by the colony's government exploded. Though Berkeley was in touch with people on both sides of the issue, he remained neutral at the time. But after a four years of reflection, he projected, in The *Querist,* a system of paper currency for Ireland which was very similar to one he found in Rhode Island. Berkeley thus directly confronted the current of contemporary conservative metallist opinion.

After the failed experiments in the creation of paper currencies and other forms of non-specie vehicles of exchange in the monetary centers of the Atlantic world in 1720, a wave of financial reaction followed throughout Europe. The frenzy around Wood's Half-pence was an Anglo-Irish echo of a generalized anxiety concerning the money form. But in the North American British colonies monetary innovation was accepted practice and metropolitan scruples were either ignored or repressed. Barter, "book-keeping barter," over-valued coins and paper currency formed a complex network of exchange throughout the colonies which were rooted in a pre-colonial social world.[2] Money in New England was a Creole language mixing indigenous gift exchange, with the transitional "wampumpeage," with the latest European forms of monetary creation.[3]

Newport at the time of Berkeley's arrival was becoming the center of paper money "emissions," the slave trade, and of religious tolerance (as well as, ironically enough, establishmentarianist Anglicanism) in the British North American colonies. New social contradictions and experiments were percolating in its streets, slave quarters, and churches. Marcus Rediker provided a good introduction to this fragrant brew in his description of docking in Newport about a decade after Berkeley did:

> Docking at Peleg Sanford's or Clark's on the Cove and making their way through the small dramshops, warehouses, boarding houses, and streets that "still resemble a barnyard," seamen explored the town notorious for its slave trade, privateering, and smuggling. Newport's merchants traded with the logwood cutters at Campeche, the Dutch in Surinam and Curacao, and other Caribbean colonies [in violation of the Navigation acts]. The legality of their ventures never concerned them overmuch. Newport's customs officials and naval officers dared not "exercise their office for fear of the fury and unruliness" of a threatening mob, but they received sufficient gifts

and bribes—always cheaper than the customs fees—to make the dare unlikely in the first place. A small town with one main street and 6,200 people in 1742, Newport prospered as a provincial port.[4]

Tradition has it that news of Berkeley's arrival came in the midst of a holiday service and "The church was dismissed with the blessing, and Mr. Honyman [the rector of Trinity Church], with the wardens, vestry, church and congregation, male and female, repaired immediately to the ferry wharf, where they arrived a little before the Dean, his family, and friends."[5] Given Rediker's description of the harbor, it is easy to understand Honyman's haste to meet one of the first Anglican Church dignitaries to travel to the North American colonies. Berkeley might well have needed help in finding his way through the "notorious" Newport waterfront. But there was another reason why Honyman might have been anxious to greet him. Berkeley was a Dean of the Anglican Episcopal Church and any such high church official might have met hostility and protests at the time in New England.

A Dean, after all, was only one rank below a Bishop in the Anglican hierarchy. But for all the entreaties of colonial Anglican clergy from 1702 to the American Revolution, the Church of England never dared to send a bishop to the American colonies even though it was "established" in six of the thirteen original colonies. This was especially embarrassing for a church that called itself "Episcopalian," i.e., a church governed by "episcopi" or bishops.[6] What blocked the satisfaction of the colonial Episcopalians reasonable demand for a bishop? The answer is simple: the colonial religious dissenters' fears, threats and political maneuvering. For the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers from Maine to Georgia were frightened that the arrival of a bishop would lead to the establishment of the Church of England throughout the colonies. Establishment, they thought, would inevitably mean that they would have to pay tithes to an alien church and live under serious political and social disabilities as their brethren did in England. Berkeley, who was something of a stealth Bishop, might well have disturbed the peace of Newport's and New England's numerous dissenters.

Dissenters on both sides of the Atlantic countered any hint that the Church of England was moving to send a bishop to the Americas with a barrage of threatening pamphlets and sermons in the colonies and serious political pressure in London. These fears were so well known

they even generated their own brand of political humor. For example, an engraving entitled "An Attempt to Land a Bishop in America (1769)," was published a generation after Berkeley's arrival in 1769 as response to another Anglican campaign to establish an Episcopacy in America. It shows:

> While a frightened bishop ascends the shrouds, praying with clasped hands: "Lord, now lettest thou servant depart in peace," two irate bully-boys push [the ship] away from a Boston quay with a boat hook. . . . Ashore a turbulent "mob" is assembling: one man flourishes a flag with a liberty cap and motto: "Liberty and Freedom of Conscience;" two others wave copies of Locke and Sydney on Government. . . . In the foreground a monkey is about to throw a cap at the bishop.[7]

This scene was never played out simply because the English state and church never sent an Anglican Bishop to Boston or anywhere else in the American colonies. After all, America was three thousand miles away and the mostly Whig English governments of the eighteenth century were not willing to bear the political or military costs of imposing religious conformity on the colonists.[8]

Thus Berkeley's arrival was fraught with political-theological meaning that was not lost on either guest or host. Even though Newport was known for its religious toleration, Honyman might well have wondered whether the limits to tolerance would be tested, especially if there was fear that this very toleration would be threatened by the Berkeley's arrival.

Within a short time, the Dean realized that he had come to what was probably the most representative government of male property-holders in the world and one of the most legally autonomous (or "charter") colonies of the British Empire. While Britain and Ireland had Septennial elections, in Rhode Island the governor, his deputy, the treasurer and secretary, and members of the council were popularly elected each year, the assembly also made annual choice of some three hundred subordinate executive and judicial officers, including the judges; election of deputies to a general assembly took place twice a year. The legislature, constituted by assembly, council, and governor, were obviously highly responsive to the electorate's pressure, but it was not easily checked by the imperial bureaucrats in London since Rhode Island was technically a

charter colony, hence there was very little that London could legally do to impose its will.[9]

Berkeley disembarked in Rhode Island in the midst of new social, economic, and religious controversies ignited by the take-off of the slave trade, the issuing of large quantities of "fiat" paper money, and the anxiety over the increasing power of Anglicanism in New England. The circle of merchants, colonial intellectuals and clergy that formed around Berkeley during his time in Newport discussed and debated slavery, religion, and money with great energy. For they played a major role in each of these interrelated trends and their discussions provided Berkeley with a range of American experiences that he was not likely to confront in the dining rooms and studies of London and Dublin.

Berkeley's deep interest in religion and, increasingly, monetary affairs was clear, but his involvement with the issue of slavery was not tangential either. The state of colonial slavery was essential to his project of founding a college in the Bermudas for young American Indians and the sons of plantation owners in the British colonies. One of the main reasons for educating the sons of planters was to convince them that they should assist in, or at least allow, the conversion of "negroes of our plantations." For Berkeley argued that Christianization would both justify the African slave trade and would make slaves more obedient and productive. As he wrote in his *Proposal*, the African slaves in the British colonies:

> to the infamy of England and scandal of the world, continue heathen under Christian masters, and in Christian countries. Which would never be, if our planters were rightly instructed and made sensible, that they disappointed their own baptism by denying it to those who belong to them: that it would be of advantage to their affairs, to have slaves who should "obey in all things their masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as fearing God:" that gospel liberty consists with temporal servitude; and that their slaves would only become better slaves by being Christian.[10]

Berkeley's whole-hearted support for slavery and the slave trade has been defended by a number of contemporary commentators. For example, Edwin Gaustad incorrectly claimed that Berkeley's effort to promote and legalize the baptizing of slaves went some way to

"humanizing" Africans in a period when the abolitionist movement was far away below the horizon.[11] Although there was a substantial slave population (about ten percent) and most white Rhode Islanders had accepted slavery and the slave trade during Newport's rise in the 1720s, "ironically, they did so as the Quakers among them, most numerous in the towns with the highest proportion of black people, went through their first internal controversies over the morality of slavery and agreed to a few points, such as a religious duty to shun the trade."[12] Indeed, the Rhode Island Quakers began to discuss the question of slavery as early as 1676 when William Edmunson, a Quaker leader, visited Newport and referred to the recent passage of a law forbidding the enslavement of Indians when he queried: "And many of you count it unlawful to make slaves of Indians: and if so, then why the Negroe?"[13] George Keith, along with many other Quakers in the Northeast colonies, agitated against slavery in the late seventeenth century. In 1693 he preached and published the controversial "An Exhortation and Caution to Friends concerning buying and keeping of Negroes."[14] "A traveling English Friend speaking against slavery and the slave trade brought debate to its first climax in 1717, leaving the Aquidneck [Rhode Island] meetings unconvinced and the mainland meetings willing to condemn only the importation of slaves."[15]

By the time Berkeley arrived in Newport the problem of the abolition of the slave trade or slavery or both was clearly on the top of many a dinner party's conversation agenda, given the numerical importance of Quakers in Newport, the number of slaves in the town (fourteen percent of the population), and a growing interest in investing in the "notorious triangle." The merchant class needed a new ideology for the slave trade, and Berkeley definitely came with it, to help guide the moral sensibility of the Anglican elite of Rhode Island through a treacherous conceptual channel. For, by making a program of baptism legitimate, he gave the slave trade a new justification, viz., if the slavers take Africans from an unchristianized continent and bring them into the hands of masters who will baptize the slaves and teach them true Christianity, then a good end would triumph out of an evil means. For though slavery and the slave trade might be temporally bad, an eternal good would come out of it. Berkeley's was a new collective version of Pascal's wager and a perfectly theodicic (i.e., good arising from evil) solution to the ideological needs of the slaving segment of the Newport elite.

Berkeley's arrival also coincided with the deepening involvement of the Newport merchants in the African slave trade. Only the most wealthy among them could be involved and reap the profits, since "the slave trade was a speculative and costly commerce, and this limited active participation in the traffic to Rhode Island's more prosperous merchants. Although men of modest means might purchase a share of a voyage, they were rarely eager or able to advance the large amounts of capital that the trade entailed. Consequently, the slave trade, like other foreign commerce, was dominated by the colony's leading merchant families."[16] Though this elite's religious composition was complex, it was increasingly Anglican. For the Anglican Church "quickly attracted the rich and powerful in conspicuous numbers. It could also count on the few royally appointed officials and often on those merchants in Newport who tried to enter direct trade with Britain or the country well-to-do who adopted as much as they could of the ways of English rural gentry."[17]

This elite was by and large for hard money, or specie, as well. Slaving required a large initial (and risky) capital investment, and slavers as a class prized immediate payment in as hard a currency as possible—since labor power is a most volatile commodity that can revolt, commit suicide or murder, or even fall ill. Moreover, slaving was an inherently international enterprise.[18] The last thing the slave merchants wanted was to bring hard currency back from West Africa and the Caribbean and be forced to trade it for paper bills of credit at home.[19] The monetary demands of the slave trade inevitably led to a split among the Rhode Island merchants and landowners. The merchants who were most involved with domestic trade were supporters of paper money while the international merchants were increasingly proponents of specie.

Consequently, when the Society for the Promotion of Knowledge and Virtue was founded under Berkeley's influence and occasional presence in 1730 it would not be surprising that questions involving slavery and money would be on the agenda during his stay in Newport.[20] "The founders included two young lawyers, two schoolmasters, two merchants, and two ministers—of these, half were in Honeyman's [Anglican] flock, the others being Congregationalists or Baptists."[21] They worked in the following way: the club met every Monday evening in the members' homes *seriatim* and "some useful question in Divinity, Morality, Philosophy, History, &c." was posed,

the only limit on the questions was that "nothing shall every be proposed or debated which is a distinguishing religious tenet of any one member." The moderator kept a book with questions "and solutions or answers" and another for fines and forfeits that were due. These fines and forfeits were the result of non-attendance, lateness, unwillingness to respond to the question, etc. There were also rules of secrecy, the major one being that "no member shall divulge the opinion or arguments of any particular member as to any subject debated in the Society, on penalty of perpetual exclusion."[22]

Since there was no religious prohibition on participating in the slave trade or owning slaves (for the Quakers had not yet formally prohibited them) the club's ban on the discussion of religious axioms would not have been violated in 1730, and certainly even that ban was not stringently imposed. The appropriate form of money for the colony also would have been on the agenda as well, as "conversation at meetings of the society, one guest reported in 1744, dwelt heavily on business conditions," and the monetary controversy was quite hot during the first year of the club's existence.[23] The presence of merchants involved in the slave trade like Henry Collins (slave ship owner in 1755) and Peter Bours, of legal figures like the Attorney General of Rhode Island Daniel Updike and Judge Edward Scott would indicate that there would be an interest in finding out what the others in the club thought about two of the burning issues of the day. With such querists, not all the questions asked in the forty or fifty weeks of Berkeley's remaining stay in Newport would have been on the fine points of immaterialism or the proofs of the existence of God.

On the slavery question Berkeley need not have worried about a forfeit. He had ready answers provided in his 1725 version of the *Proposal for the Better Supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations*, which brought him to Newport in the first place. The meetings of the club might have been the reason why he appealed to the King's attorney and solicitor general in London for a formal opinion on the eligibility of slaves for baptism. Perhaps, "Is a slave who is baptized automatically a free being?" was a formal question posed at a club meeting.

It would certainly have been on the mind of the Newport merchants who were beginning to sink more of their capital in the profitable but risky slave trade. Of the 931 Rhode Island slaving voyages between 1725–1807 only 11 took place between 1725–1731—slaving was an

"emerging industry" in Newport at the time and undoubtedly all the risks and benefits were being discussed with great avidity. The Christianization of slaves was a risk. As a West Indies planter and critic of Berkeley's *Proposal* pointed out, if there was but "one Example of [slaves'] Manumission upon Baptism" or even a serious effort in that direction, the growing slave trade would be annihilated.[24]

His was not an idle concern. Up through the 1660s in Virginia, for example, proof of baptism was grounds for African and Indian slaves to sue for freedom, often successfully. Though the Virginia Assembly blocked this loophole in 1667 by passing an act stipulating that baptism would not affect the bondage of either Africans or Indians, a Christianized slave continued to be a deconstructive element in a system equating Christianity and emancipation. This anomaly provoked the masters' anxiety which, feeding upon itself, generated a complex of laws that by the early eighteenth century, created a veritable racist state imposing a "rough congruity of Christianity, whiteness, and freedom and of heathenism, non-whiteness, and slavery."[25] But laws can never completely repress logic. The contradictory impulses emanating from the nexus of Christianity and slavery continued to undermine this racist state however determined it was to legislate the contradiction out of existence.

One can see what was at the heart of the planers' anxiety, whatever the legal superstructure they used to displace it. Chattel slavery itself presents a series of contradictions in a capitalist society. The slave is defined by his/her fundamental inability to exchange his/her labor power autonomously, but at the same time, the slave is valued because s/he produces value. Only the master has the right to exchange the slave's bodily and mental powers for money (or any other "universal commodity" like rum), but only the slave produces the money that buys the slave. The slave appears to be a dead, inert mass in the world of exchange; but his/her activity creates the basic elements of the masters' world of exchange.

This inherent tension in chattel slavery between value-creating activity and valueless death is exacerbated by an eighteenth-century colonial Christianity increasingly obsessed with adult baptism, conversion, and spiritual rebirth in general.[26] Tension met obsession in the issue of the baptism of slaves. For adult baptism is an act of changing spiritual masters patterned on wage labor, for one autonomously withdraws allegiance from old gods and transforms it to a new one.

Slave baptism, therefore, publicly recognizes and valorizes the slaves' capacity to exchange themselves in the realm of the spirit. But if slaves can self-transubstantiate their spirits, then is the power to liberate their bodies far behind?

Berkeley's solution to the problematic relation of baptism with slavery, however, was quite consistent with his theodicic ethics and Tory politics, which will be examined in Chapter 5. It must have been quite useful to those merchants who were thinking of entering the slave trade, increasingly facing the querying look of anti-slavery Quakers on the streets of Newport, and wondering whether Christianization automatically leads to manumission, to be armed with the latest metaphysical defense from London. In response to their needs and questions, Berkeley preached a sermon on the baptism of slaves in Trinity Church Newport on the first Sunday of October 1729 where, according to his notes, he made the following points:

> 1. Our Savior commandeth his disciples to go & baptize all nations. The Eunuch of Ethiopia. 2. 1. ob. Christianity maketh no alteration in civil rights, servants in the new testament signifying slaves, v.g. Onesimus. hence objects from loss of property answered. 3. 2d. ob: that baptism makes slaves worse. Resp: This proceeds from an infidel mind, contrary shewn. what they charge on Baptism to be charged on their own unchristian life & neglect of instruction. 4. Duty in masters to instruct & baptize their families. but neglect of their own baptism.[27]

Berkeley argued in many of his works that temporal obedience and even outward slavery is quite compatible with and even required by eternal salvation.[28] For the African slave who accepts baptism, the enslavement would become another example of the adage, "Events are not in our power; but it always is, to make good use of the worst," spoken by Dion, Berkeley's mouthpiece in *Alciphron*, the book Berkeley wrote while in Newport.[29] Although Lockeans, but not Locke himself, found themselves in a philosophical quandary as the abolitionist debate intensified in the eighteenth century, Berkeley had no such logical difficulties, nor did his church.[30]

His arguments for the baptizing of slaves was consistent with the mission of the Church of England's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). It did not intend to attack the slave

system, but it planned to provide a mediation between slave and master (as the Catholic Church did in the Hispanic colonies). Berkeley's Bermuda efforts were part of a campaign the SPG initiated in 1727 with the distribution of ten thousand copies of a letter by the Bishop of London in the colonies. The letter urged masters to regard their slaves not as "labouring beasts, but as men slaves and women slaves who have the same frame and facilities with yourselves and souls capable of being made eternally happy and reason and understanding to receive instruction." Enslaving beings with souls and minds was not a sin for the good Bishop. After all, many of the SPG ministers, like Berkeley, were slave holders and the SPG itself owned slaves (who were identified by the letters S-O-C-I-E-T-Y branded on their chest).[31]

But Berkeley and the SPG did face resistance. The majority of the British colonial planters resented any attempt to threaten the legal definition of slaves as rightless chattel and viewed with suspicion the SPG's desire to mediate the absolute master-slave relation.[32] Moreover, there was a widespread conviction in the British colonial slaveocracy that Christianized slaves were prone to revolt. Elias Neau, a founder of the SPG, for example, was blamed for the bloody New York slave revolt of 1712 and these accusations were not dying down.[33] Indeed, Berkeley crossed the Atlantic at the very moment when there was "a dangerous spirit of liberty" spreading throughout the British and French Caribbean and North American littoral. Barely a year after stepping on to Newport soil, major slave conspiracies unfolded (and sometimes ignited) in Virginia, South Carolina, Louisiana (New Orleans) *and Bermuda.*[34] Berkeley, being very sensitive to news about Bermuda, might well have taken the rebellions and conspiracies as a sign of the unpropitious times for his project. They may have even played a role comparable to the famous "final word" from Walpole that killed Parliamentary funding of Berkeley's Bermuda college and eventually forced Berkeley to return to London empty-handed.

Berkeley certainly did not originate the "Christianization of slaves" controversy that George Whitefield was to ignite a decade later, but the association of baptism and freedom haunted Berkeley's missionary efforts and perhaps put a practical obstacle to his hopes to create some alternative plan for this college, once the grant from Parliament was blocked. At the same time, let us remember that the logical defense of "fantastical" positions was Berkeley's métier, and he did not refrain from defending his views concerning slave baptism on returning to

London in a sermon at the SPG headquarters in 1732.[35]

But the question, "Should bills of credit be currency?" was not so easily answered by the well traveled Dean who had, as we have seen in the previous two episodes, experienced a couple of monetary catastrophes a decade before. By 1730 Dean Berkeley would have gotten a good introduction to the debate between those who would have answered "Yea" or "Nea" to the query. For a major confrontation between those who were for expanding the amount of fiat money in the colony and those who, like Peter Bours, wanted to end the emitting of paper money was brewing. It broke open the following year, during the last months and weeks of Berkeley's stay, and there is every reason to believe that some session of the Society for the Promotion of Knowledge and Virtue was devoted to it. Berkeley certainly would have heard all sides of the debate around his own dining table. Moreover, it would have been Berkeley's duty, as a large land owner, an investor in the colony, and as the prospective President of a college whose mainland provisioning would be located there, to be well informed about the matter.

Let me sketch the background of the debate over fiat currency or "paper money" in colonies for the reader. This debate did not concern the use of paper instruments and "representations" for financial dealing on the part of firms and private banks. Much of the business in England, Scotland and Ireland throughout the eighteenth century, as we saw in the previous episodes, was transacted in the form of promissory notes, goldsmiths' receipts, and bank notes.

> Banking in Great Britain in the first half of the eighteenth century was viewed as a business enterprise similar to other private ventures in regard to the possibilities of success and failure. . . . Firms issuing currency in the process of making loans did so at their own risk. Likewise, those members of the general public who were willing to accept private monies in business transactions and hold them in lieu of specie did so at their own risk. Paper money was never legal tender.[36]

But there was great hostility in the center of the imperial British merchant class toward fiat currency—i.e., the issuing by the government of currency not back by specie reserves which could be used for tax payments or even be legislated to be legal tender. After a couple of

experiments in Europe (in the Restoration regime of Charles II and the Law system discussed in Episode 1), the (a priori Lockean) suspicion against paper currency turned into a legislated ban for almost a century.

The British colonies in North America were clearly out of step, for they "were among the first organized political entities to embrace that form of money (fiat money) and to persist in its use."[37] And if colonial fiat money was considered perverse by many in London and Massachusetts, Rhode Island was a veritable monetary "whore of Babylon." This image from Revelations would have been appropriate, if some contemporaries were to be believed. For example, Dr. Douglass of Boston in 1742 wrote: "The men in power [in Rhode Island] were dependent on the people, who were 'cunning, deceitful, and selfish' and lived 'almost entirely by unfair and illicit trading.' Moreover, their judicial oath or affirmation did 'not invoke the judgments of the omniscient God.'"[38] Although "variations existed in the backing for the bills, the length of issue, the method of retirement, interest-rate features, and legal-tender provisions," the standard way fiat money was issued in Rhode Island and many other states was the following: after the Act for emitting, say, £40,000 was passed by the General Assembly, then individuals could go to the government loan office which would have on hand £40,000 of paper bills of credit with many different denominations.[39] The mortgagee would get a bill of credit worth at most half of the value of his land (in effect, he took out a mortgage), "the borrower would pay interest at 5 percent and had to sign bonds for each of the first five years' interest payments. The loan might be repaid after five years or renewed for five more."[40] The debtor could use the public bills of credit to pay taxes or buy goods from any merchant who would be willing to accept the bills. Thus they circulated not only in Rhode Island, but also in Massachusetts and Connecticut, increasing these colonies' money supply. The Rhode Island bills were especially valued since 81 percent of the bills issued were under five shillings and they helped lower the transaction costs in the regional economy.[41]

It all looked satisfactory. If a holder of the bills did not pay interest or principal, then the loan office officials could simply foreclose on his property and retrieve the loss. Since land prices were never depressed in this period and since the loan was never more than the price of land, the loan office could recover its due to the penny . . . theoretically. But there were a number of problems with this scenario in Rhode Island which earned it such a scandalous place in American monetary history.

First, the bank for 1715 did not have a clear retirement date, i.e., a time when all the emitted bills would be taken back by the government and destroyed. It was assumed that eventually all the interest and principal would be paid off and the bills would simply be taken out of circulation. Moreover, although many holders of the bills did not keep up with payments, the prescribed foreclosures were not carried through. For example, in 1728 the 1715 "bank's" borrowers were given thirteen years to pay (instead of the ten originally agreed to). Obviously, many had not fulfilled their obligations, but they were leniently handled by the General Assembly. The debtors who were late in their payments were allowed another ten years to clear their 1715 loan with no additional interest charges.[42] Apparently, there were no foreclosures in this whole period of successive banks (1715–1743), and "the Assembly never even specified how it might be done until 1754."[43] Second, the paper money notes depreciated—by 1723 the 1715 notes had depreciated 45 percent—and many were hesitant to hold them (indeed, the legal tender provision had to be repealed in 1716). Third, new banks were emitted without the government retiring old banks. Consequently, old depreciated money could be used to pay new liabilities.

This laxness and sense of bad infinity in the behavior of the colonial government was the source of criticism from within Rhode Island, in Massachusetts, among the merchants in London and eventually in the British government's Board of Trade. For Newport was not only a vertex in a notorious slave trade triangle, but it was the "white hole" of Atlantic commerce, always ready for a more daring emission of currency that never came back.[44] According to the Bostonian, Dr. Douglass: "This poor colony," containing no more than "20,000 men, women, and children, whites, Indians, and Negroes," had £400,000 in paper money outstanding; "and of this about three quarters is in the possession of people of neighboring colonies."

The average indebtedness is £20 per capita. Was this scandalously high? Yes. For comparison consider the fact that in this period in Britain, arguably the wealthiest country in Europe, the public debt was approximately £50 million and the population was approximately six million with a debt ratio of a little more than £8 per capita.[45] We have rehearsed some of the objections of the local merchants with an eye on international trade, but Massachusetts merchants were even more concerned about Rhode Island's status as a monetary rascal. For Rhode Island currency became an important component in the New England

monetary market, but the lack of rules for retirement made it possible for the Rhode Island Assembly to pass new "banks" and pass off the depreciation to the out-of-state holders of the bills. Merchants in London looked at Rhode Island with anxiety, because there was a fear that the monetarily adventurous Assembly might again rule that their depreciated bills of credit (with respect to sterling) would be legal tender and all the commercial debts owed to them by Rhode Islanders would be settled at almost half price.[46] Finally, the Board of Trade often looked across the Atlantic to Newport with full knowledge that British laws were being openly violated there. (This was especially true of the Bubble Act discussed in Episode 1.)

The debate over paper money was intensifying in Rhode Island in the early 1730s, however, because of the evident success of the previous issues. As Berkeley noted in a letter to a friend on April 24, 1729: "The town of Newport contains about six thousand souls, and is the most thriving flourishing place in all America for its bigness. It is very pretty, and pleasantly situated. I was never more agreeably surprised than at first sight of the town and its harbour."[47] The majority attributed this "flourishing" to the daring emission of paper currency, for the pace of emissions increased dramatically in the 1730s.[48]

The anti-paper dissidents argued, however, in their *Address and Petition from the Governor and inhabitants of Rhode Island to King George 2nd* (1731) that the "success" would have to be paid for in two ways. First, since the mechanism of retirement for the previously emitted bills was literally non-existent, "the credit of said bills have been so sunk in value, and the price of every thing bought with them, so raised, as must destroy the trade and ruin this colony, if not timely prevented." The planned addition of £60,000 worth of new bills to an already ruinous total would be devastating, they claimed. Second, the new emissions (and indeed the previous ones) would violate three separate actions of the British government: (A) the 1704 "Act for ascertaining the rates of foreign coins, in Her Majesty's plantations in America," (B) a 1720 royal order that required all colonial laws issuing bills of credit must get royal assent, (C) recent instructions to the Governor of Massachusetts that required the province "should not have out in bills of credit at one time more than the sum of £30,000." The implication being that any colony so flagrantly violating royal prerogative would (and should) suffer serious political consequences.[49]

The dissidents, though a minority, were a powerful group. At their head was the then Governor Jenckes and some others who were central in Berkeley's circle as well. For though "towns with commercial ambitions—Westerly, Warwick, and East Greenwich—called for a new bank," a Rhode Island historian, Sydney V. James, writes, "a coterie of opponents coagulated in Newport. This group included the customs collector, attorney Nathaniel Newdigate, and an assortment of merchants, several of them Anglicans and probably several with aspirations to open direct trade with Britain."[50]

James should have added, "with aspirations for involvement in the slave trade as well." Certainly most of the signatories of the Address and Petition were eventually to be involved directly or indirectly in the slave trade (and in the Philosophical Club that Berkeley presumably inspired). Abraham Redwood, though a Quaker, had plantations in Antigua and financed slave voyages.[51] Daniel Ayrault was one of "the Huguenot Ayraults fleeing hostile neighbors in East Greenwich to money and Anglicanism in Newport."[52] The Ayraults were also involved in the slave trade as can be seen by the miserable letter sent by Capt. John Cahoone from Anamabo in West Africa to an Ayrault moaning about the disastrous competition of "us Rum men" for "our Case is Despart."[53] William Ellery, a Congregationalist, was deeply involved in the slave trade by the 1740s.[54] Simon Pease (one of the signatories of the Memorial against the paper money act) sold "a Negro man named Phillip aged Fourteen years or there about" for £80 to Berkeley.[55] Nathaniel Tillinghast was also involved organizing the production of rum for the trade in 1754.[56]

Indeed if we compare the list of those who signed the anti-paper money letter to the Board of Trade and compare it with the admittedly gappy list of Rhode Island owners of slaving voyages in thirty years after the letter (as compiled by Coughtry) we get the following result: Peter Bours (voyages in 1733 and 1/15/1735), Abraham Redwood (6/8/1739), Phillip Tillinghast (1/7/1746), William Ellery (1/4/49 and 1/7/1746), Walter Challoner (1753 and 6/16/49), D. Ayrault (1756 and 1959), Simon Pease Jr. (1756 and 1759), while the Brown family had a notorious involvement in the notorious trade (36 references to the Brown family in Coughtry's book). Norton was "a mariner" and there is a record of Norton as slave ship captain leaving Newport on 1/18/1735. In other words, out of the nineteen signatories it is easily verified that ten had direct ownership or family relations with owners of

slaving voyages in the ensuring thirty years, and one was probably a slave ship captain.[57] Putting them together with Kay, the collector, and Newdigate, the attorney, we clearly have the elements of an explanation.[58]

The dissidents inevitably had the Dean's ear, since both Nathanial Kay and Peter Bours, signatories of the *Address*, were prominent members of Trinity Church and Bours was a founding member of the Philosophical Society. But Berkeley apparently did not speak out openly on the matter of currency until his return to Ireland. In a private meeting of the Society, perhaps he would have had to forfeit one shilling when his turn came to give his opinion on the paper money controversy, as the rules of Society for the Promotion of Knowledge and Virtue required.[59]

For the view of money he previously developed in *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* could be appealed to by both sides of the debate. In 1721 he wrote: "Money is so far useful to the public as it promoteth industry, and credit having the same effect is of the same value with money; but money or credit circulating through a nation from hand to hand, without producing labour and industry in the inhabitants, is direct gaming."[60] The proponents of the bill of credit could point to the bustling town and say that paper currency was clearly useful. Indeed, the contentious 1731 emission provided bounties on hemp, flax, whale oil, and codfish. But then in that same *Essay* he wrote: "all projects for growing rich by sudden and extraordinary methods, as they operate violently on the passions of men, and encourage them to despise the slow moderate gains that are to be made by an honest industry, must be ruinous to the public, and even the winners themselves will at length be involved in the public ruin."[61] And the opponents of paper currency could point to the planned depreciation, the financial chicanery, the cronyism, the graft, and the "get-rich-quick" mentality that united the peaks of colonial government with the "low life" along the wharves in this policy which would certainly lead to economic and political ruin of the colony. In the short period Berkeley had been in Newport, Massachusetts' currency had been depreciated by 13 percent, partly due to the previous Rhode Island emissions, with much greater depreciations on the way.[62]

Whether he considered the matter in a meeting of the Society is moot, but Berkeley's position on the money question would have been sought by others and would have been on his own mind, especially in

his last days in Rhode Island in August and September 1731. For as he was organizing the transfer of Whitehall to the College at Newhaven, packing his books (and entrusting some to Nathaniel Kay), making his accounts, collecting debts and paying out creditors, the question of money would have been prominent. For example, how was he to rid himself of the Rhode Island bills in his possession and get sterling? Where and from whom? Moreover, the Rhode Island Assembly passed a new Emission Act in June 1731 which was opposed by Jenckes, Kay, and the other "hard money" men of the colony. The pro-paper deputy governor, John Wanton, called a special session in August 3, 1731 to chastise the Governor for his dissent (which the Proceedings of the General Assembly claimed occurred after the rising of previous session of the Assembly). Moreover, the *Address* was dismissed by the Assembly, according to the anti-emission party, "in this torn and tattered manner, which we humbly conceiving to be exceeding injurious to His Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects." For the dissidents were considered to be traitors who threatened to undermine the Charter of the colony's hard fought for autonomy by appealing to the Board of Trade and the King directly and suggesting that the Colony's laws should be vetted by the Privy Council (like the Irish Parliament's.)[63]

Newport was clearly a hot place to be in August 1731 for a monetary thinker and certainly when Berkeley went to Boston between September 9th and the 21st many would have been vitally interested in the details of the legislative battle. The affair did not end in Newport, of course. Jenckes' letter and Nathaniel Kay's and others' *Address and Memorial to the King and the Board of Trade* crossed the Atlantic to London at about the same time Berkeley and his family did. Berkeley would have been interested and surprised, perhaps, at the denouement of the confrontation of Newport's monetary philosophies in London. Apparently, after some movement of papers from the Board of Trade to the King, the documents were referred to the attorney and solicitor general and they came down decisively on the side of the paper money faction in the summer of 1732. Their Report concluded that the Governor did not have any veto power in the Rhode Island Assembly and, more crucially, "whether His Majesty hath any power to repeal or make void the above mentioned act of Assembly, we humbly conceive, that no provision being made for the purpose, the crown hath no discretionary power of repealing laws made in this province; but the validity thereof, depends upon their not being contrary, but as near as

may be, agreeable to the laws of England, regard being had to the nature and constitution of the place and the people."[64]

Berkeley also would have learned of the consequences of the controversy in Rhode Island. Jenckes and the "hard money" party were ousted from government in the next election. Perhaps he even heard that some of the opponents of the bank of 1731 immediately took out loans from it.[65] But the most important thing he learned was that a paper (or fiat) money economy was possible, for all the obvious dangers. If his knowledge of what was transpiring in New England had been limited to the gossip of London merchants and bureaucrats, then he would have, perhaps, continued in discounting this possibility. As he was to almost lyricly query in the first part of *The Querist* in 1735 about Newport:

> I. 286. Whether, whatever Inconveniences [Rhode Island, C.G.C.] People may have incurred, from not observing either Rules or Bounds in their Paper-money, yet it be not certain that they are in a more flourishing Condition, have larger and better built Towns, more Plenty, more Industry, more Arts and civility, and a more extensive Commerce, than when they had Gold and silver current among them?

Thus the experience of failure in creating his utopia of knowledge and virtue in Bermuda ended in conceiving of another utopia, this time of money and in Ireland.

Berkeley's monetary experiences in London, Paris, Dublin, and Newport, articulated with the tools of his philosophical system, directed him in *The Querist* to defetishize specie and unveil a secret activity lurking in money's form. The operation here was inverse to one he had made with respect to slavery. For the chattel slave appeared to be inert and self-identical, but in reality, Berkeley argued, s/he has an inner capacity for self-movement revealed by the conversion process finalized by baptism. Similarly but inversely, specie appears to have an intrinsic worth and self-motion, but in reality, Berkeley argued, specie *as money* is purely transparent—its value and motion are reflections of the spirits that value and move it. Paper money is important, therefore, not so much for its technical superiority to specie, but rather because it reveals to money exchangers that the source of money's motion is their spirits,

i.e., *they must act on money to make it money and not wait to be acted on by it.*

NOTES

1. The reasons for his departing from London were complex. A. A. Luce comments on them in his *The Life of George Berkeley* (London: Nelson, 1949), p. 136. Apparently, one of the provisions of the Bermuda patent was that he had to vacate his Deanery within a year after going to the island. Benjamin Rand, in Rand (1932: 15), concluded that "it would have been inprovident to have taken such a risk until it became certain that the government grant would be paid."

2. For a discussion of "book-keeping barter" and other important details of Atlantic monetary conditions in this period see McCusker (1978), especially pp. 117–31 on New England.

3. For a discussion of "wampumpeage" in Rhode Island see Potter (1865). By 1662 there was a collapse in the wampumpeage-coin exchange rate in 1662 and the shells were no longer used for tax payments.

4. Rediker (1987: 66).

5. Updike (1907: 156).

6. For a thorough discussion of the Anglican church in colonial America see Woolverton (1984). He is especially good on the activities of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG).

7. The engraving is reproduced as the frontispiece of Bridenbaugh (1962). The description of the engraving is to be found on p. x. The story behind the engraving is worth telling since it reveals the strong, vituperous emotions surrounding the Anglican Church's efforts to create an Episcopacy in America. On January 9, 1751, Bishop Secker sent a long letter to Horatio Walpole recommending a plan to send bishops to the colonies as part of his unrelenting, but ever thwarted campaign to Anglicanize America. Secker died on August 3, 1768 leaving £1,000 to help establish a colonial bishop. He also left instructions to have his letter published. It was widely reprinted in the colonies and created a storm of "noise and clamour" about a threatened episcopacy. This controversy was an immediate religious cause of the Revolution and the post-revolutionary demand for the separation of church and state, according to Bridenbaugh (1962: 98n, 270, 290).

8. The colonists' episcopophobia is nicely summarized by D.H. Yoder: "They feared that their Lordships would come endowed, as in England, with political as well as spiritual authority. New Englanders lost valuable sleep envisioning bishops' palaces arising on the sacred Yankee soil, Church courts to try Congregational 'heretics' (thus reversing an old New England custom), a greedy clergy with control over marriages and wills, and even mitred bishops dominating the colonial assemblies." Quoted in Neill (1958: 224–25).

9. Christie (1966: 14–15).

10. *A Proposal*, p. 214.

11. Gaustad (1979: 71).

12. James (1975: 163–64).

13. Kiven (1973: 16). Kiven notes that as early as 1652 a statute was passed in Providence and Warwick to prevent the introduction of slavery, but it was largely ignored.

14. For the text of Keith's "An Exortation" and other, mostly Quaker, pre-1729 anti-slavery tracts see Bruns, ed. (1977: 3–31).

15. James (1975: 219).

16. Coughtry (1981: 45).

17. James (1975: 226).

18. Jay Coughtry deals with the distributional and financial aspects of the Rhode Island slave trade in Chapter 6 of Coughtry (1981), "The West Indian Connection: Marketing Slaves in the New World." The slavers were always anxious to get "hard cash," but in most cases they had to accept "short-sighted" bills of exchange (of three-, six-, or nine-month length), or even colonial currency. But the volatility of the money form was matched by volatility of slaves. The following 1707 case is worth considering: "Whereas, the body of a negro man which was a late slave to Mr. Thos. Mumford, of Kingstown [Rhode Island], and [who had] committed the horrid and barbarous murder upon the wife of the said Mumford, about two weeks since, as is justly concluded, was found dead upon the shore of Little Compton, in the province of the Massachusetts Bay, which said negro, it is believed and judged, after he had committed said murder, threw himself into the sea and drowned himself, by reason he would not be taken alive and the said negro's body being now brought into the harbor of Newport: It is ordered by this Assembly, that his head, legs, and arms be cut from his body, and hung up in some public place, near the town, to public view and his body to be burnt to ashes, that it may, if [it] please God, be something a terror to others from perpetrating of the like barbarity for the future." Bartlett (1859: 27).

19. Jay Coughtry notes that in West Africa Newport-transported New England rum was by mid-century the equivalent of hard currency: "Rum also became the only item, with the exception of gold, that could be used alone to purchase large quantities of slaves; and, like gold, rum achieved currency status on the coast. Not simply traded alone or in combinations with other goods, rum became a standard by which other items were measured. Slave prices were commonly quoted in gallons, as were a dozen lesser products. Its value, which naturally fluctuated according to supply, was carefully watched, and, when necessary, regulated. Conferences, fixing the price of rum vis-a-vis slaves or gold, were common from mid-century on, and often involved two or three governors from the forts, and two dozen captains," Coughtry (1981: 111).

20. On Berkeley's connection with the Society, see Gaustad (1979: 17).

21. James (1975: 193).

22. These rules are to be found in the introduction of Callender (1843: 13–18).

23. James (1975: 238).

24. Quoted in Gaustad (1979: 93).

25. For a discussion of the creation of a racist state from the administration of slavery in Virginia, see Morgan (1975: 327–37). This racist compounding of slavery was not countered by the Anglican Church which was Virginia's established church. As Woolverton sadly points out in Woolverton (1984: 70), "As it was, Christian protection, guidance, and freedom from slavery itself were not causes

which attracted [Anglican] ministers, subservient as they were in Virginia to political and mercantile leadership. Colonies more purely motivated by religion—Catholic, Quaker, and Puritan—would question the treatment of black slaves and even the institution of slavery itself. Episcopalians did not, and the few who did were given short shrift."

26. The "Great Awakening" exploded on the colonial scene with the arrival of George Whitefield in 1739. By early 1742, "the revival was in full swing. . . . Charles Brockwell spoke of the 'convulsions into which the whole Country is thrown by a set of Enthusiasts . . . [who] stole about harangueing the admiring Vulgar in extempore nonsense.' To make matters worse, 'Men, Women, Children, Servants & Nigros are now become (as they phrase it) Exhorters,'" Woolverton (1984: 192). At the core of Whitefield's "Great Awakening" theology was a conception of conversion that was "sudden, convulsive, and exempt from human calculation." This view clashed with the Anglican hierarchy's that saw conversion as "a gradual and co-operative Work of the Holy Spirit, joining in our Understandings, and leading us on by Reason and Persuasion, from one Degree to another, of Faith, good Dispositions, Acts, and Habits of Piety," Woolverton (1984: 193–94).

27. Luce and Jessop, eds. (1955vii: 69). References to Onesimus and the Ethiopian Eunuch were standard in Christian discussions of slavery and conversion. Onesimus was the subject of Paul's *Epistle to Philemon*. Apparently Onesimus (whose name means "profitable" or "useful"), had robbed his master, Philemon, a Christian, and left his home. But he went to Paul and asked for help in mediating with his master. Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon with an epistle after he converted him. Paul asked Philemon to receive his slave back and not punish him: "If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me. But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides" (verses 17–19). Berkeley uses this story to support his claim that Christianity is perfectly compatible with slavery. But it might very well send shivers up the spines of plantation owners, for Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus "no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord" (verse 16).

The Ethiopian Eunuch was arguably the first gentile converted to Christianity (Acts 8: 26–40). He traditionally symbolized the readiness of the gentile world for conversion, because in the story, "the Ethiopian takes an active role in his own conversion. He invites Philip [the Christian deacon] to join him in his chariot; he asks Philip for interpretation of the scroll he has been reading; he actively seeks baptism; and he goes on his way rejoicing," Gaventa (1992: 667). The fact that he was an African made the reference even more appropriate for Berkeley's sermon.

28. For example, he argues for the compatibility of slavery and Christianity in *Passive Obedience* and in *The Querist*.

29. *AL*, i, 1.

30. For an extensive discussion of Locke's view of African slavery see Caffentzis (1989: 193–202).

31. On the SPG's branding of its slaves see Bruns (1977: 14). The quotation from Bishop Gibson's letter is from Greene (1968: 270).

32. At the same time Berkeley was preaching in favor of slave baptism at Trinity Church in Newport, "in 1730, a missionary at Bristol, [Rhode Island] Rev. John Usher, wrote to the SPG that several negroes had made applications to him for baptism. He was not permitted to comply with their request, their masters forbidding that he do so," Bates (1921: 3–4). But eventually the SPG did make headway in Rhode Island and by 1743 Rev. Honeyman reported that he had more than "100 Negroes who constantly attended the public worship" while in 1741, an other friend of Berkeley's, Dr. McSparran, reported that he had a class of fifty to sixty Negroes, as noted in Greene (1968: 273).

33. McManus (1966: 70–75); Piersen (1988: 71).

34. Gasper (1981: 79–81); Rediker (unpublished manuscript).

35. George Berkeley, "Anniversary Sermon before the SPG," in Luce and Jessop, eds (1955vii: 114–28).

36. Perkins (1994: 35).

37. Perkins (1994: 30).

38. Dr. Douglass's words were quoted in Hammond (1957: 22).

39. Perkins (1988: 170).

40. James (1975: 172).

41. Perkins (1988: 181–82).

42. Potter (1865: 102).

43. James (1975: 184).

44. There were eight "banks" instituted: 1715–£40,000; 1721–£40,000; 1728–£40,000; 1731–£60,000; 1733–£104,000; 1738–£100,000; 1740–£20,000; 1743–£40,000.

45. Hammond (1957: 22) for Douglass; Brewer (1990: 115); the population approximation is from Owen (1974: 125).

46. Perkins (1988: 177–78) for the fluctuating reactions of the British merchants towards colonial paper money policies.

47. From the 1820 *Works of George Berkeley*, p. xxxvii.

48. Cf. Governor Ward's panegyric-eulogy on "old tenor" paper currency made to the Board of Trade on January 9, 1740 is discussed in Hammond (1957: 19–21) and James (1975: 178–80).

49. The Address can be found in Bartlett (1859: 459–61).

50. James (1975: 176).

51. Cf., the letters to Redwood from Antigua in the late 1720 and 1730s in Massachusetts Historical Society (1919: 1–27) are full of slave transactions; see also Coughtry (1981: 50, 80) (where we find him selling a slaver in 1744 for 1000 pounds).

52. James (1975: 237).

53. Massachusetts Historical Society (1919: 46–47).

54. Cf. Coughtry (1981: 52, 87).

55. Gaustad (1979: 94).

56. Coughtry (1981: 86).

57. Cf. Coughtry's valuable Appendix in Coughtry (1981: 239–85), "Rhode Island Slaving Voyages 1709–1807. For Norton see Bartlett (1859: 199–200). Sydney V. James writes of Bours in James (1975: 191), "Bours . . . for years was a leader of the [Anglican] church, the cultural enterprises of Newport and the General

Assembly, where he was often the speaker of the House of Deputies although he was an outspoken foe of paper currency."

58. The remaining names are the Almy's (3), John Freebody, John Lawrence, Edward Searegreas. Job Almy was a "captain" Bartlett (1859: 200) and he appears often in the *Records*, as does Christopher, Christopher Jr. and William Almy, but the others only show up as names.

59. Callender (1843: 15).

60. *Essay*, p. 323.

61. *Essay*, p. 323.

62. As Hammond summarized the case made against the Rhode Islanders during Parliamentary debates: "Rhode Islanders . . . authorized issues of paper money, borrowed it, purchased goods and other property, depreciated it with successive issues, used it when depreciated to repay their indebtedness, and realized egregious profits." They operated something like a monetary perpetual motion machine, see Hammond (1957: 25). The depreciation of Massachusetts currency with respect to sterling can be seen in this table from McCusker (1978):

Year	**Average exchange rate of pounds in Mass. currency and £100 sterling**
1718	210
1725	300
1729	310
1731	350
1735	425
1740	525
1745	750
1749	1,050

Bostonians blamed much of this depreciation on the "irresponsible" Rhode Islanders.

63. Bartlett (1859: 456–61).

64. Quoted in Bartlett (1859: 461). For some of the behind the scenes jockeying concerning the *Address* and its impact in London see the letters of Richard Partidge, Rhode Island's agent in London, to Deputy-Governor Wanton in February and March of 1732. Partridge was definitely worried that the controversy would open up an opportunity for London to change the Charter. "I wish the Gentlemen (many of whom are my Friends too) would duly [appreciate] the evil Tendency and bad Consequences of this their Undertaking and were thoroughly Sensible of the valuable Privileges they enjoy above many provinces in our Plantations." Kimbal, ed. (1902: 20–28). Why Partridge was writing to Wanton instead of to the lame duck Governor Jenckes is another matter.

65. James (1975: 178).

Chapter 2

The Problematic of *The Querist*: Cynical Content and the Agistment Tithe Crisis:

THE QUERIST: MARKS OF FAILURE

Fail, fail again, fail better.
Samuel Beckett, *The Unnameable*

The Querist is Berkeley's main text in the field of political economy. It brilliantly previsions a new form of money, class relations, and banking, but it was an immediate political failure. Unlike the failure of his *Proposal* to found a College on Bermuda, he did not spend a decade struggling against its dismissal by the Anglo-Irish and English ruling circles. Immediately after the publication of *The Querist*'s third and final part of in 1737, Berkeley wrote some letters and an article in defense of the National Bank scheme *The Querist*'s pamphlets suggested, hoping to stir a debate in the Irish Parliament. He personally went to Dublin in the winter/spring of 1738 to lead a campaign for his Bank proposal in Parliament, but it was not even formally proposed as a bill. Aside from this single episode of absentee residence away from Cloyne, he made no "heroic" efforts for *The Querist*'s sake. By the winter of 1739–40, he had apparently renounced any attempt to influence Ireland's political economy, and turned to a new scheme that saw him in the role of tar-water shaman for a suffering humanity.

This transformation of Berkeley's interest from the body politic to the human body was due to his belief that *The Querist*'s institutional proposals were utter failures. The spectacular shipwreck of his peda-

gogical utopia in the Bermudas was weakly echoed by the almost unnoticed demise of his "Hyperborean utopia" of money. We can read the evidence of this sense of failure in the self-lacerated absences of the 1750 London edition of *The Querist.* Berkeley was generally very careful with the reprinting of his work; he often added significant passages and made subtle word changes, but rarely did he cut the original text. The reprinting of *The Querist* was different. He literally gutted the work, leaving out most of the references to very "mechanism" (the National Bank) it was meant to promote.

In the rather shame-faced "Advertisement by the Author" prefacing the 1750 edition, he even admitted that he had considered not prefixing his name to the revised text, but he had been over-ruled by a "friend." Further along in the "Advertisement," he apologized for "meddling out of my profession" and admitted, in a back-handed manner, the utter defeat of his proposal for an Irish National Bank. The whole tone of the "Advertisement" is self-deprecatory, indicating that, in retrospect, Berkeley considered the work a well-meaning, ineffectual failure.

The Querist is certainly a marginal text in the Berkeleyan canon. There are even indications that the original text's marginality was planned.[1] *The Querist*, which was written and published in 1735–37, was designed not to directly confront the ultimate authorities who could decide the fate of the Querist's project: the King in London and the Parliament in Dublin. The query form in which it was cast indicates that its intended persuasive power was to come from its suggestiveness, rather than from authoritative, argumentative force, of the type Locke displayed in his economic writings.

Moreover, by publishing *The Querist* in installments, spaced over a three years time, in Dublin and London, Berkeley and his supporters—Samuel Madden, his Dublin editor, Sir John Percival, his London editor, and Thomas Prior, his political confidant—had apparently chosen the strategy of the subtle probe rather than the bludgeoning polemic.

The 1735–37 pamphlets consist only of 895 short blocks of queries, each numbered, and with rare overt cross-referencing. Even more modest are the title pages of Parts I and II that are identical and simply state "The Querist, containing several queries proposed to the consideration of the Public." They bear a nondescript engraved emblem accompanied by the standard information: city, year of publication, printer and book seller. The same applies to Part III, except for a new,

equally nondescript emblem, a face in profile instead of a pair of birds, and an epigraph "Consult not with a Merchant concerning Exchange" from the Ecclesiastes (chapter 37, verse 11). Berkeley's name does not appear anywhere in the original text. The only touch of irony is on the first page of all three parts, which carries a rough engraving with, at its center, a bee-hive surrounded by swarming bees, a reference perhaps to Mandeville's infamous *Fable*.

This self-professed failure is the object of my inquiry.

IRELAND'S ECONOMIC CRISIS

Whose Fault is it, if poor Ireland still continues poor?
The Querist, III, 324

Wealth, Money, and Irish Poverty—the opening themes of *The Querist*—were issues of great concern for Berkeley on his arrival at Cloyne in southern Ireland. After more than twenty years of extensive travel (from Sicily to Rhode Island), quasi-exile, and quixotic projects, he was ready to settle down in his "small bishopric."[2] Cloyne was to be his last way-station before death and he evidently was prepared to make the best of it, intending to spend his days educating his children and tending his rather small Anglo-Irish "flock."

He was to remain for the next seventeen years at Cloyne, with only a single interruption in 1737–38 when he went to Dublin to campaign for his National Bank project and to pursue libertines. This attachment to Cloyne was not due to the excitement of life there. It was one of the poorest, least prestigious dioceses in Ireland. His friends urged him to take up residence in Dublin, but he refused. Berkeley did not want to appear to be an absentee Churchman receiving tithes and rents from obscure corners of Ireland while circulating between Dublin and London for the social "seasons."[3] Moreover, he had a positive horror of being seen as a money-hungry and ambitious cleric. To demonstrate that he was a man of principle, he had voluntarily offered to give up the Deanship of Derry (reputed to be worth £1000 per annum) a decade before in order to proselytize and gain funds for his "Proposal for the better supplying of Churches in Foreign Plantations and for converting the savage Americans to Christianity, by a College to be erected in the Summer Islands."[4] And when his friend Thomas Prior urged him to

apply for a bishopric better than Cloyne, Berkeley replied in a letter on March 2, 1734:

> I thank you for your advice. But if it please God the Bishop of Derry were actually dead, and there were ever so many promotions thereupon, I would not apply, or so much as open my mouth to any one friend to make an interest for getting any of them. To be so hasty for removal, even before I had seen Cloyne, would argue a greater greediness for lucre than I hope I shall ever have.[5]

Why then did this "absolute philosopher," so anxious not to appear greedy for lucre and status, turn his attention to writing *The Querist*—a series of three pamphlets made up only of queries which are all about money, banking, and power—immediately on taking up his bishopric at Cloyne?

The obvious answer is that, though he did not want to appear greedy, he was concerned about his own and his Church's pressing financial needs. In the months after he "kissed their Majesties' hands for the bishopric of Cloyne," in January 1734, his letters to his friend, lawyer and political confidant, Thomas Prior in Dublin demonstrated his anxiety concerning the monetary aspect of his post. He wrote to Prior querying of Cloyne:

> Pray send me as particular account you can get of the country, the situation, the house, the circumstances, of the bishopric of Cloyne: let me know the charge of coming into a bishopric, i.e., the amount of fees and first-fruits.[6]

His response to Prior's usual thorough financial report was filled with anxiety, as if he suspected that he had made a bad decision in accepting the bishopric:

> In a late letter you told me the bishopric of Cloyne is let for £1,200 per ann. out of which is a small rent-charge to be paid. I am informed by a letter of yours, which I received this day, that there is also a demesne of 800 acres adjoining to the episcopal house. I desire to be informed by your next, whether these 800 acres are understood to be over and above the £1,200 per ann. and whether they were kept by former bishops in their own hands.[7]

Berkeley was disappointed in his hope that the rents from 800 acres were additional to £1,200. This is how he summed up his financial situation at Cloyne in a letter of March 2, 1734:

> I find the income of Cloyne considerably less than was at first represented. I had not known that I should, over and above the charge of patents and first-fruits, be obliged to pay between £400 and £500 for which I shall never see a farthing in return, besides interest I am to pay for upwards of £300 which principal devolves upon my successor. No more was I apprized of three curates, viz. two at Youghal and one at Aghadee, to be paid by me.

He concluded that if he had returned to the Deanship at Derry and "taken my affairs into my own hands" he would have cleared considerably more than what he expected to earn from the bishopric at Cloyne.[8] Berkeley's financial anxiety certainly should not be over-estimated, if we consider that the annual income of an Irish laborer's family, at the time was about £15,[9] and that in addition to the £1500 that came to him through his 1728 marriage to Anne Forster—daughter of the Chief Justice of Ireland[10]—Berkeley in 1724 had inherited £3000 from Hester Van Homrigh, the "Vanessa" of Swift's *Cadenus and Vanessa.*[11]

But in the years preceding his coming to Cloyne, Berkeley had extraordinary expenses. His decade-long campaign to establish a college in the Bermudas had taken a financial toll. Even without perusing his account books for the period 1721–1731, we can suppose that the cost of traveling to Rhode Island, buying land, building a house, while starting a family, must have been considerable. On hastily leaving Rhode Island, he had donated his farm, house and books to the future Yale University, the total cost of the gift being between £2000 and £3000, and he had made many other smaller gifts to individuals and institutions in New England, e.g., his gift of a £180 organ to Trinity Church in Newport. Although the adventure of the Summer Islands did not ruin him, it certainly had left him in a precarious financial position, so that often he played the stock market and constantly tried to find the best interest rate for his savings. Still, he was no financial wizard and was to face his declining days dependent upon his ecclesiastic income.

This circumstance forced him to directly confront the Anglican Church of Ireland's economic problems during the first half of the

eighteenth century. For the Churchmen of this period depended for their income upon the rental of the Church land, "the glebe," as well as the tithes paid by Anglican landowners and those imposed upon the Catholic "natives." The tithes, however, were hard to collect for practical as well as ethical and political reasons. It is important to remember that the catholic "natives" were a major source of financial support of a Church that belonged to their oppressors.

The tithes included the "great" or predial tithes, payable on the fruits of the earth (corn, hay wood, fruit and other crops), which were mostly paid by the catholic tenants. There was even a predial tithe on potatoes, that was peculiar to Munster, where Cloyne is located. The tithe was a levy on the products of the soil and, in effect, a tax on subsistence. Though it have been easily paid in good times, it became a mortal curse in seasons of dearth.

Maurice Bric has noted an important change that was affecting the tithe system in the period Berkeley was coming into his bishopric:

> From the second quarter of the eighteenth century a rising population and the expansion of the colonial and war-theatre markets as well as bounties from parliament and (later) from the Royal Dublin Society encouraged a more calculated attitude to agriculture. Consequently, there was a new awareness of the intrinsic value of tithe and this encouraged some owners to draw in kind and others to reassess the value of the customary modus.[12]

Then there was the agistment tithe, which was payable on animal products, such as lambs, colts, wool, milk, eggs, honey, and dry, barren cattle. This tithe was paid largely by the Anglo-Irish grazers. Finally, there was the personal tithe which was payable on "such profits as do arise by the honest labour and industry of man."

These tithes were not always easy to determine, nor were they transferred to the clergy peacefully. The predial tithe on agricultural products, for one, was hard to evade and easy to determine, since the clergyman, if he was in residence, or his tithe-proctor, if he was an absentee, would know intimately the local agricultural conditions. For the tithes were often fixed ratios of the total agricultural product (usually 10 percent) or a monetary equivalent thereof, and usually averaged about 20 percent of arable rent. The rental value of glebe land could also be easily inferred from the rentals of neighboring land owned

by lay landlords. But the agistment tithe was notoriously more difficult to collect, given the mobility of its source (livestock) and the political power of the payers, and frequently came to no more than 12 percent of the pasturage rent. As for the personal tithe, it had virtually vanished by the early 1730s.

Aside from the usual efforts of tithe evasion, two major problems faced the Church of Ireland's appropriation of its share of the Irish agricultural surplus in the early eighteenth century. The first was a tendential problem. Since the tithes were a proportion of the agricultural surplus (either in kind or in monetary form), improvement in the Church's income depended upon rising agricultural prices and quantities. But as L. M. Cullen pointed out for the first third of eighteenth-century Ireland:

> As far as the agricultural staples were concerned, long-term price trends were unattractive; this in turn was reflected in little variation in output. The output of wool and butter actually declined; grain growing . . . was already proving unremunerative, and even in the 1720s there was some modest movement out of grain cultivation.[13]

Inevitably tithe collections had a tendency to stagnate or drop, during the decades before Berkeley went to Cloyne, except perhaps for the tithe of agistment, which included the results of cattle grazing, one of the few tithable commodities on the increase both in price and quantity in the 1720s.

The second factor was episodic, but it could have had catastrophic consequences for an ecclesiastic landlord. Rents rose between the 1690s and the 1720 by between 30 percent to 60 percent. The frequent harvest failures, between 1726 and 1734, however, made the payment of rent excruciating for poor tenants:

> Three bad harvests in 1726–28 reduced the country to famine. The first of these was not followed by retrenchment. Imports of grain, added to a continuing high level of other imports, resulted in an adverse balance of trade and in the most unfavourable exchange rates of the decade in the first half of 1727. Bad harvests in the following two years further sapped the economic reserves of the community. . . . Rent arrears mounted ominously despite a good

> harvest in 1729 and a bumper one 1730, and the hereditary revenue fell sharply in the year 1730/31.[14]

Behind these generalities was the struggle that surrounded rent collection during a famine, which was always prone to generate insurrectionary violence. Thus, Berkeley would have immediately known, on looking at the figures Prior sent him, that his official income, although apparently substantial, would be difficult to collect. For tithe payments and rent collections were dependent on the whims of weather and the flagging efforts of farmers and cottiers. Furthermore, Berkeley arrived in Cloyne in the midst of an economic and demographic collapse whose severity was only matched by the Great Potato Famine of the nineteenth century. According to recent demographic evidence, County Cork, the juridical location of Cloyne, experienced a modest annual population increase between 1706–1725 (about +1.0 to +1.5 percent), but between 1732–1744 there was a demographic catastrophe and population rates were reversed to -1.0 to -1.5 percent.[15]

This demographic collapse was not limited to Cork. It characterized Ireland through the second quarter of the eighteenth century, largely due to the harvest crises of 1727–1729, 1739–1741 and 1744–1745. The "Great Frost" of 1740 saw the peak of calamity both statistically and humanly. Death rates of over 50 per 1000 were estimated for that year, and southern Ireland was especially hard hit.[16] These statistics portray a situation similar to the African famines of the 1970s and 1980s. Inevitably the main victims of the famines were children and even the most callous rent-rackers and tithe proctors would have found it hard to collect in these times.

These demographic facts and tendencies intensified the sense of crisis in Berkeley's circle. We know, for example, that Swift's apocalyptic *Modest Proposal* was inspired by the famines of the late 1720s. Also Thomas Prior's publication of *A List of Absentees of Ireland* (1729), was driven by a desperation similar to Swift's.[17] Surely, on realizing that his fate brought him back to Ireland (after his effort to escape to the Bermudas in the 1720s failed), Berkeley experienced the full force of this crisis as an official of the Church of Ireland, and as a representative of the Anglo-Irish "Ascendancy."

The long-term stagnation, spiked by intermittent famines, also affected him directly, as his family's financial future was now precariously dependent upon the performance of two equally unreliable

contributors: a financially depressed and emotionally unstable rural gentry and a despondent, conquered rural proletariat.

As a clergyman, he could not help but experience the ethical contradictions his Church faced in Ireland. The survival of the Church was now rooted in its ability to extract food from starving Catholic cottiers, all in the name of Christian virtue. As an official member of the Irish House of Lords, he could not help being concerned for the political stability of an "Ascendancy" that undermined the well-being of the "native" population, even though there may be only three "natives" to one Protestant, as Prior claimed.[18]

True, there were no *jaqueries* in the 1720s and early 1730s, but the possibility of riots was always present, especially if mass hunger was exacerbated by the legal apartheid enforced through the Penal Laws. The famines did, however, lead to a number of "tumults." In the spring of 1729, for instance, in Limerick and Cork, bands of men gathered to stop the movement of corn to the North and then they "[broke] open warehouses and cellars, and set what price they pleased on provisions."[19]

Thus, if the tithes were to be increased and rents paid without igniting a rebellion, there would have to be a major change in the economic life of Ireland. This was the problematic Berkeley faced on his arrival at Cloyne, leading him to drop his work on the fluxion controversy and take up *The Querist*.

TITHE AGISTMENT, THE CHURCH, AND THE DUBLIN SOCIETY

George Berkeley did not give us an explanation for the timing of *The Querist's* original publication. In his only published discussion of the piece, the "Advertisement" of the 1750 revised edition, he writes:

> to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, by promoting an honest industry, will, perhaps be deemed no improper employment for a clergyman who still thinks himself a member of the common-wealth. As the sum of human happiness is supposed to consist in the goods of mind, body, and fortune I would fain make my studies of some use to mankind with hope it will not be thought faulty or indecent in any man, of what profession soever, to offer his mite towards

> improving the manners, health, and prosperity of his fellow creatures.

These lines would seem to justify Pope's angelic personification of the bishop, to whom "every virtue under heaven," and Swift's claim that Berkeley was an "absolute philosopher" indifferent to gain. Perhaps by 1750, when Berkeley was looking to another departure from Ireland (this time in the direction of Oxford), these lofty sentiments were accurate. Fifteen years earlier, however, more basic concerns prevailed and led to the composition of *The Querist.*

A clue to such concerns is provided by a poem Swift wrote in the spring of 1736, a few months after the first part of *The Querist* appeared, entitled "A Character, Panegyric and Description of the Legion Club." In it Swift described the members of the Irish House of Commons:

> Let them, when they once get in
> Sell the Nation for a Pin;
> While they sit a picking Straws
> Let them rave of making Laws;
> While they never hold their Tongue
> Let them dabble in their Dung;
> Let them form a Grand Committee
> How to Plague and starve the City;
> Let them stare and storm and frown,
> When they see a Clergy-Gown.
> Let them, 'ere they crack a Louse,
> Call for Orders of the House;
> Let them with their gosling Quills,
> Scribble senseless Heads of Bills;
> We may, while they strain their Throats,
> Wipe our A—s with their V—.[20]

What had the House of Commons done that so aggravated Swift? The answer was obvious to all in Dublin who read or heard the poem in 1736: the House of Commons had repealed the agistment tithe. Thus, on April 11, 1736, Dr. Barry in Dublin wrote to Lord Orrery of Cork that "Our Town is crowded with Lawyers and Country Gentlemen; agistment is the word that divides their Hopes and Fears."[21]

The agistment tithe, as we have seen, was a tax on animal products. It was largely paid by the Anglo-Irish "Country Gentlemen" to whom Barry refers. In the spring of 1736 the same gentlemen, who accepted (and mostly passed off to their tenants) the predial tithes, rejected the Church of Ireland's right to collect agistment tithes, becoming the main defaulters on tithe payments.

The agistment tithe was especially contentious in Ireland, because the landowners were increasingly turning arable land into pasturage, attracted by the low labor intensity and high exportability of cattle and sheep production.[22] In 1722 Archdeacon Neale of Leighlin brought a "class action" suit on behalf of the Anglican Church of Ireland into the Court of Exchequer, winning the case in court, and the gratitude of his superiors. Nevertheless, the Anglo-Irish grazers resisted the ruling, ironically by appealing to precedents set by the pre-Reformation, Gaelic "custom" and to "past practice" of the Church of Ireland as indicated by the tithe records like that of Balmalangan in 1540–41: "Tithes at present waste, the lands being under Sir John Plonkett's cattle, it being the custom of the country that lands when being so used for pasture should pay no tithes" or in the complaints of ministers in 1615 to a "regal Visitation throughout this Kingdom": "there is very little tillage of the ground, whereby did arise in times past, by the sowing of grain, tythes for the sustencance of the Incumbent, whereby he kept residence and hospitalitie amongst his parishioners, but they have converted the arrable ground into pasture, and graze unprofitable cattle garrons, studds, young cattle, out of which the Church hath not any tythe, except two pence for a milch cow."[23]

Resistance to the agistment tithe continued and increased as more land was turned over to pasturage, in response to the shifting price ratios between beef and "corn" in the post-1725 period. The economic reasons motivating the Anglican landlords' resistance to the tithe agistment, are revealed by contemporary estimates. If only about three percent of the large landlords' holdings were "under tillage," the elimination of the agistment tithe would have made that sector of agricultural production almost tithe-free. Given that tithes were the heaviest direct tax on farming during this period, their elimination would have increased the profitability of livestock grazing in Ireland to much higher levels than in other tithe-paying, competing countries, and would have made Irish cattle and lamb products even more profitable in a period when agricultural incomes in other sectors were declining.[24]

The situation can be characterized as a zero-sum game played between the clergy and the laity for survival. For a time, the laws and court decisions seemed to give the clergy the hope of legitimating its tithe demands; but this hope ended in the very period when Berkeley became Bishop of Cloyne. In 1734, a "revolution from above" was carried on against the agistment tithe:

> As Primate Boulter states, "associations were entered into most of the landlords and commoners to join against agistment and the like associations were sent down to most counties against the assizes and signed in most, though refused in some, and a common purse was to be raised in each country to support any one there that should be sued for agistment. There was a rage stirred up against the clergy that equalled anything that had been seen against the popish priests in the most dangerous times, though the clergy behaved themselves with a temper that surprised their enemies."[25]

This success in organized tithe evasion emboldened the landlords to introduce a petition in the Irish House of Commons, which they did in December 1735. The petition was sponsored by "Gentlemen, in Behalf of themselves and the Rest of the Farmers, Grasiers of Ireland." They argued that the agistment tithe was a new invention of the clergy and "no such Tythes have ever been paid, or even demanded in this Kingdom until a few Years since." Three months later, a similar petition was introduced and received a favorable reaction from Commons. Members of the House of Commons introduced resolutions rejecting the clergy's right to the "new" tithe, and claimed that the tithe impaired the Protestant interest by causing emigration and division between laity and clergy.[26]

Technically, these "resolutions" by the House of Commons were not the law of the land. To become law, legislation passed by the House of Commons had also to be passed by the Irish House of Lords, and then it had to be transmitted to the King's Privy Council to be approved by the King in London. But the Irish House of Lords was largely comprised of Church of Ireland bishops and their supporters, consequently these resolutions passed in Commons were never put before the House of Lords to face inevitable defeat. But with the support of the House of Commons, the "gentlemen" in the countryside made the

repeal of the tithe agistment a *de facto* law and all the appeals of the clergy to God and London could not reverse it.

Berkeley was affected by the agistment tithe crisis both personally, and in terms of its broader, long-term economic and political consequences. Although his income might has been less directly dependent on tithes in Cloyne than in his former post in Derry, the gentry's attack on the Church of Ireland's right to this important category of income undermined him much more than even the loss of revenue. He wrote the first part of *The Querist* when the agitation leading to the House of Commons resolutions was unfolding, and we can well imagine that the tithe crisis must have forced him to revise it, together with the personal financial and political calculations he had made prior to his departure for Cloyne. Some estimate that the elimination of the agistment tithe reduced some clerics' income by more than a third, but it also brought the "English" and "Anglo-Irish" sides of the Church together in an unlikely alliance of Dean Swift and Archbishop Boulter.[27]

Why were the "Country Gentlemen" so hostile to the very clergy whose role was to give them an ideological justification to their "Ascendancy"? And what could done about it?

On the first question, a deep split existed between the grazers and the highest figures of the Church like Swift, Boulter, and Berkeley. The Church opposed the type of economic development the graziers were proposing for Ireland. In 1728, six years before the onset of the tithe agistment crisis, the clergy, including Swift and Boulter, had helped to get a law passed through the English Privy Council to the effect that five acres out of every one hundred should be tilled. On that occasion, Primate Boulter had written directly to the English Privy Council to argue for the bill. "Many persons," he wrote:

> have hired large tracts of land, on to 3 or 4000 acres and have stocked them with cattle, and have no other inhabitants on their land than so many cottiers as are necessary to look after their sheep and black cattle; so that in some of the finest counties, in many places there is neither house nor corn field to be seen in 10 or 15 miles traveling.[28]

Landa suggested that the Church preferred tillage over pasturage because, "Tithes on products of the soil, though often difficult to collect, were usually considered valid, whereas tithes on pasturage were

both less valuable or in dispute or litigation," and he provides some good evidence for the hypothesis.[29] But along with this immediate struggle for the surplus, there was also a struggle over the Irish path to economic development during and after the disastrous 1720s. On the one side, the graziers were vying for a capital-intensive, export-oriented economy, while, on the other, the Church and its allies favored a more diversified, labor-intensive, and (at least in the figure of Swift) "Ireland-first" economy.

Cattle grazing, like our modern bio-tech industry, required a high level of capital inputs (literally) and little labor. Given the Irish laborers' low income, beef could not profitably be sold on the internal market. Further, a grazier economy is land-intensive and, wherever a large population exists, it has genocidal implications (which Hollywood films about cowboys and American Indians have eulogized). These were consequences the Church of Ireland feared, given its mercantile, and tithe-centered valuation of its own flock.[30]

The Church was not alone. The Dublin Society, founded by Berkeley's lawyer and friend, Thomas Prior, with a number of M.P.s, physicians, clergymen and academicians in 1731, openly rejected the "cattle raising" path to development, and opted for a more diversified Irish agriculture. It urged an import-substitution policy:

> It is clear from the minutes and earliest records of the Society that its main priority was to increase the amount of land under tillage by reclaiming boggy and marsh ground and to encourage the planting of trees for forest as well as hops and fruit production. A number of papers or communications dealing with these subjects are written out in full in the minute books, as well as papers on the cultivation of saffron, madder and woad so as to provide the raw material for dyeing since large quantities of these products were imported from Holland and France.[31]

In the case of Ireland, at least, the Church and the "Improvers" were often one and the same. (This, perhaps, marked some of the differences in the relation between the established religion and the intelligentsia in eighteenth-century Scotland and Ireland.)

But this alliance of Dublin Society merchants and professional men with the Anglican high clergy was not able to dominate the desires and politics of the land-owning, cattle grazing gentry. These often claret-

besotted gentlemen were more representative of the Anglo-Irish ruling class than the Bishops and bourgeois intellectuals centered in Dublin, and they held political power. As J.C. Beckett pointed out:

> In the traditional and generally accepted picture of . . . eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish society the most familiar figure is the greedy and tyrannical landlord, squeezing the last penny of rent out of a starving tenantry and spending the proceeds in the fashionable world of London and Bath or in riotous living at home. No doubt there were many such landlords; and they well have been commoner in Ireland than in contemporary England.[32]

But surely on the ideological plane, their scientific and religious critics could claim the high ground. Were the gentry just irresponsible, thoughtless high-livers or did they have sophisticated defenders of their own who were influencing and defending their interests?

LIBERTINISM AND THE CRISIS OF THE ANGLO-IRISH ASCENDANCY

> And it is to be feared, that age of monsters is not far off.
> *A Discourse* (1738)

Though the immediate and long-term economic differences between the Church "corn"- and the gentry "beef"-interests were clear, Berkeley saw more sinister motives behind the tithe rebellion. Like Swift and Boulter, he suspected that Dissenter interests in England were the "puppet-masters" of the anti-tithe agitation.[33] But behind the drunken "Country Gentlemen," the absentee landlords and their henchmen who supported the tithe rebellion he also detected another, more subversive opponent legitimizing their greed: *the free-thinking libertine.*

Berkeley had openly battled this threat in 1732, when, after his return from Rhode Island, while waiting for ecclesiastical preferment in London, he published *Alciphron, the Minute Philosopher in Seven Dialogues Containing an Apology for the Christian Religion, against those who are called Free-thinkers.* He had defined as free-thinkers those "who write either explicitly or by insinuation, against the dignity, freedom, and immortality of the human soul." He introduced in the dialogue two types of free-thinkers, Alciphron and Lysicles, the former

an exponent of Shaftsbury's philosophy and the latter of Mandeville's attitude. Berkeley has Lysicles, the more scornful and skeptical of the pair, in his critique of "established religion of any kind," declare that "it is good policy, that we should be frugal of our money, and reserve it for better uses, than to expend on the church and religion," and he explicitly scorned church-lands and tithes as frivolous social expenses.[34]

The rebuttal comes from Euphranor and Crito, Berkeley's mouthpieces, who give a spirited defense of tithes and glebes, identifying them as forms of property. They maneuver Lysicles into admitting that an attack on tithes and church-lands would justify an attack on the land of the nobility as well. Lysicles, however, not only admits to this truth, he trumps it: "This enlarges our view, and opens a new scene: it is very delightful . . . to behold how one theory grows out of another."[35] In the ensuing debate he even warns, "One thing I know, there is a rare nursery of young plants growing up, who have been carefully guarded against the every air of prejudice, and sprinkled with the dews of our choicest principles."[36] Berkeley was convinced that these "plants" flourished in Ireland as well, delegitimizing in one stroke the Church and its emoluments, and providing the ideological roots for the attack on tithes launched by the grazers and other "dry, drudging, covetous, rapacious folk."

Berkeley knew that the free-thinkers and libertines were not to be easily controlled by rational economic incentives; for like Lysicles, they were "airy notional men . . . who swim in pleasure" and had no care for business.[37] Nor were their allies conscious of the political danger they were teasing and unleashing with the libertines' wit. For he feared that the same reasoning that led to the tithe rebellion would ultimately and self-reflexively lay the foundation for an expropriation of the very Anglo-Irish gentry that banded together to refuse the tithes. Thus, for Berkeley, the tithe rebellion was not only the result of a short-term, pleasure-first mentality at work. It constituted a crisis in the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, pitting the Anglican Church and its "improving" allies in the Dublin Society against the libertines in a fight for the soul of the Anglo-Irish gentry.

Events in Dublin in 1737–1738, after Berkeley published the last part of *The Querist* and as he recognized its failure, conspired to give Berkeley an opportunity to launch a "devil baiting" campaign against the libertines whom he thought to be behind the attack on the Church, both economically and ideologically. In speeches, table conversation

and pamphlets Berkeley urged the state authorities to literally root the libertines out of the body politic.

At that time there were two typical "libertine" social clubs of the day in and around Dublin, the Blasters and the Hell-Fire Club. The former met in town while latter met in what is now a ruin on top of one of surrounding mountains (which is still referred to in tourist guides to this day) during the time of the tithe agistment crisis. They continued in the tradition of the London Hell-Fire Club which was suppressed by royal proclamation of 1721, and there might have been an overlap between them and the recently inaugurated Masonic lodge in Dublin.[38] But their blasphemies and anticlerical antics were beginning to become more open in 1736–37.

It is not clear whether the Blasters and Hell-Fire Club were part of a network of male, homoerotic libertine anticlerical clubs that were so much in evidence among young Englishmen both at home and abroad, beginning in the 1720s, or whether they harkened back to the late seventeenth century clubs of anti-clerical, bisexual rakes.[39] Either way, anti-clericalism was definitely in their ideological genes and this anti-clericalism was not necessarily a continental import. For there was certainly a tradition of "home grown" Anglo-Irish anticlericalism, free-thinking and deism that could offer an intellectual humus for libertine sociality. John Toland, the archetypal anticlerical freethinker, for example, was Irish and attempted to proselytize his *Christianity Not Mysterious* in Dublin in 1696. His book was condemned and burnt by the Irish Parliament and he was driven from the island then. But one of Toland's supporters, Lord Molesworth, was a prominent Anglo-Irish intellectual in the early eighteenth century, who wrote critically of the Church of Ireland's tithing of Catholics, and kept the libertine tradition alive until the time of the Blasters.[40]

Not much is clear about the Blasters' theory and practice, except for their apparent pleasure in taking the Lord's name in vain. The House of Lords' Committees on Religion was assigned to investigate "the causes of the present notorious immorality and profaneness." The Committee reported on "an uncommon scene of impiety and blasphemy [that] appeared before them . . . that several loose and disorderly persons have of late erected themselves into a Society or Club under the name of Blasters, and have used means to draw into this impious society several of the youth of the kingdom."[41]

Berkeley began to attend the House of Lords' meetings in November 1737 and continued throughout the legislative session that ended in March 1738. This was the first and last time he took his seat on the Bench as one of the Lords Spiritual. His immediate reason for attending the session was to campaign for his National Bank plan, as will be discussed in the last chapter, but his only public statement during the session was on the Blasters case. During his stay in Dublin, he also wrote and published *A Discourse Addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority Occasioned by the ENORMOUS LICENCE AND IRRELIGION OF THE TIMES* , again dealing with the Blasters.

Berkeley's argument in *A Discourse* is unusually ill-tempered, invoking the "empire of God or the devil" and threatening his opponents with hair-raising punishments reminiscent of the tortures and executions he recommended in the *Essay* of 1721. *A Discourse* begins by noting that most of humanity must operate on prejudices (opinions based on trust), since most do not have the time nor the capacity to acquire genuine knowledge. This is especially true of civil authority which is necessary for any state, for "Power, physical power, resides in the people" and "authority is necessary to restrain and direct the people's power."[42] But civil authority is rooted in "the religious fear of God," for without religion the state loses its "center" and "cement." Consequently:

> whoever is a wise man, and a lover of his country, will not only be solicitous to preserve the honour of God sacred and entire; he will even discourage that prevailing prejudice against the dispensers of God's word, the teachers of those salutary doctrines without which the public cannot thrive or subsist. He will be not contemner, not even of those rites and ordinances enjoined by law, as necessary to imprint and retain a sense of religion in the minds of men. He will extend his care to the outworks, as knowing that when these are gone, it may be difficult to preserve the rest.[43]

For Berkeley, free-thinkers, like Shaftsbury, Mandeville and their disciples, subverted the prejudices necessary for religion and government, while the blasphemous Blasters were presumably the libertines' agents:

> But there cannot be a higher, or more flagrant symptom of the madness of our times, than that execrable fraternity of blasphemers, lately set up within this city of Dublin. . . . It is no common blasphemy I speak of . . . [it is] a train of studied deliberate indignities against the Divine Majesty; and those, of so black and hellish a kind, as the tongues alone which uttered them, can duly characterize and express. . . . Deliberate, atheistical blasphemy, is of all crimes most dangerous to the public, inasmuch as it opens the door to all other crimes, and virtually contains them all. A religious awe and fear of God, being . . . the center that unites and the cement that connects all human society. He, who makes it his business, to lessen or root out from the minds of men this principle, doth in effect endeavour to fill his country with highwaymen, house-breakers, murderers, fraudulent dealers, perjured witnesses, and every other pest of society.[44]

Berkeley concluded with a classical argument used to target groups for governmental repression from the sixteenth-century witch hunts to the late twentieth-century drug wars. The magistrates had to repress these blasphemers and "put them out of countenance," if the state was to survive. For the Blasters roughly practiced what the more subtle libertine philosophies of Shaftsbury and Mandeville preached. These "minute philosophers" undermined the authority of religion and they encouraged anarchic attitudes (like the graziers's illegal refusal to pay the tithes). Thus, if the government punished the Blasters and other libertines for assaulting the "outworks" of religion, then some precedent would be set for putting all their accomplices, including the grazers one would presume, "out of countenance."

This anti-libertine campaign, which will be studied in greater depth in Chapter 5, was only one part of the campaign of national improvement that Berkeley and his allies in the Dublin Society like Prior and Madden were organizing with and around *The Querist*. It was the simple part. For the answer to the libertines' open challenge to Church and State was simply a police matter of isolating and then repressing them. But the problem posed by the tithe revolt was more difficult. The Anglo-Irish graziers were too powerful to be treated as objects of criminal law even though they refused to pay a lawful tithe while the Catholic natives could not be forced to pay the tithes, however lawful, if their own income was far below subsistence.

The problem posed by Ireland's economic stagnation was two-fold: (1) how could the Anglo-Irish grazers' appetite for profit and luxurious consumption be controlled? (2) How could the native Irish, who were now the main tithe payers to the Church of Ireland, be made more productive?

THE "TARTARS" MEET THE "GOTHS"

> I. 19. Whether the bulk of our Irish Natives are not kept from thriving, by that cynical Content in Dirt and Beggary, which they possess to a Degree beyond any other people in Christendom?
>
> George Berkeley, *The Querist*

If tithe receipts were not to fall after the repeal of the agistment tithes, the predial (or agricultural) tithes had to be collected with greater efficiency (and draconian harshness), in the absence of an increase in output. This shift of the tithe from the affluent Anglo-Irish graziers to the poor Catholic farmers and cottiers was uniformly seen, both by contemporaries and later commentators, as the most important political economic result of the tithe agistment crisis.[45]

For example, the acute anonymous author of the 1810 *State of Ireland* considered the matter of the "Great Tithe Transformation" in an *Enquiry into the History and Opinion of Tithe* :

> What the necessary and unavoidable consequences of this injurious measure [the effective halting of the tithe of agistment by de facto refusal] must have been, it is easy to foresee: by it the clergy were thrown from the rich grazier and the protestant proprietor of extensive tracts of land, upon the poor catholic peasant for support, from those who were able and ought to pay their own pastors, upon those who were driven from "the demesne of the gentleman to the garden of the cotteger" to draw their subsistence from those who were already starving. Had the rectors been allowed their fair demand on agistment which at that time constituted the chief source of their revenue, they would have been enabled to exercise greater lenity in their dealings, and to indulge the natural humanity of their dispositions towards the poor husbandman, from whom by that

> unjust, impolitic and interested vote of the House of Commons, they were obliged to derive their support.[46]

These sentiments were bitterly echoed by Lecky towards the end of the nineteenth century :

> It was a common thing for a parish to consist of some 4,000 or 5,000 acres of rich pasture-land held by a prosperous grazier who had been rapidly amassing a large fortune through the increased price of cattle, and of 300 or 4,000 acres of inferior land occupied by a crowd of miserable cottiers. In accordance with the vote of the House of Commons in 1735 the former was exempted from the burden which was thrown on the latter. . . . The poor man was probably too ignorant to know that the exemption of pasture-land being due to the vote of one House of Parliament had no legal validity, and was sustained only by the terrorism which the landlords and the larger tenants exercised over the clergy, but he could hardly fail to feel the gross injustice of his lot.[47]

This Great Tithe Transformation could take place without an immediate public response because of the abject legal and political condition of the Catholic "natives" in early eighteenth-century Ireland. Yet, no major political insurrections against English rule occurred in the first half of the eighteenth century (though Scotland exploded many times, most notably in 1715 and 1745). Between 1691 and 1761, there was only one major agrarian rebellion, the hougher movement of 1711–12, where large numbers of cattle and sheep were killed. However, there was no systematic attack on the Anglo-Irish gentry or their personal property.[48]

The Irish Poor in Ireland may have been too passive even for their Anglo-Irish rulers. Their underclass' peace (compared to the rambunctious Scottish Highlanders) may have even deprived them of a political union with England that Berkeley, like many of his class, desired. Sir George Clarke, for one, explains why Scotland achieved "Union" in 1707 while Ireland (which tried in 1703) did not in these terms:

> The Irish Parliament was in more effective subordination to the English government and Ireland was so quiet that English statesmen

> were not afraid of what might happen there. Nor was it to be otherwise until two generations had passed.[49]

It is true that episodes like the Wood's Half-pence Affair demonstrated how a dangerous schism between the Irish Parliament and the English Crown could develop. But such an event lacked the open anticolonial revolutionary pressure of the 1798 revolt which literally dictated the "Union" in 1800.

This passivity of the "native Irish" in the first half of the eighteenth century had deep sources. The most obvious being the genocidal character of the seventeenth-century English suppression of Irish revolts, which has led many contemporary observers to argue that the English experience in Ireland was a model for "the conquest of North America, and the suppression, indeed the destruction of the nations living there." Massacres, planned famines and plagues, the destruction of reproductive infrastructures (from deforestation to the slaughter of cattle herds), and enslaved emigration were the fate of the "native Irish," most notably during the Cromwellian war of reconquest in the 1640s and, in a more muted way, in the Williamite war in the 1690s.[50]

But the memories of conquerors' descendants are short and thin. Thus, one can imagine the newly positioned Bishop Berkeley watching from his church portal the "peasants" going to his fields with the exasperation a master class feels toward its slaves, where contempt at their apathy and suspicion about potential revolt mingle. But as Aristotle pointed out, wonder is the beginning of philosophy. Wonder at the "native Irish" passivity may have intensified as Berkeley could remember the political, economic and military actions of Irish immigrants which he himself had experienced and heard about during his youthful wandering through France and Italy (1714–1720), his American sojourn (1728–1731) and his many visits to London.

Every year, thousands of Irishmen and women followed the original 14,000 Jacobite "wild geese" (the officers of the Irish forces that supported James II, who were allowed to leave Ireland after the Treaty of Limerick) migrating to France and other continental Catholic nations, where they formed Irish brigades that proved the scourge of the British armies. In the Americas, the Irish were conspicuous in the annals of piracy, brigandage and anti-British insurrection throughout the eighteenth century, often in league with Africans as in the "New York Conspiracy" of 1741. In London, they were renowned as work-

ers, fighters, lovers, criminals and rebels. Indeed, through the racist slurs and ruling-class bigotry, the London Irish undoubtedly presented a picture of too much motion to the visiting Berkeley.[51]

In eighteenth-century Ireland the resistance of the Irish "natives" to legal-religious domination and the land expropriation they suffered took the form of an "underground" support for the banned Catholic priesthood and a stubborn refusal to work that troubled Berkeley to no end—the more so, we can surmise, since he had seen (in France, London, and Rhode Island) that they could work and struggle excellently elsewhere. Berkeley was tolerant on the "religious question"—i.e., whether the open worship of a non-established religious rite should be allowed—for an Anglican clergyman of his day. He actively cooperated with the Catholic clergy and frequently suggested that Catholics should be admitted to Trinity College. Work was more crucial than religion for his economic planning, since he believed, in line with the mercantile opinion of the day, that labor was the ultimate source of national wealth.[52]

Arthur Young's account of his travels in Ireland a generation later, between 1776 and 1779, might give us a glimpse of Berkeley's enigma: the Irish laborer. Young writes of the "casual labourers" wandering across the land with neither Poor Law nor the possibility of ownership hindering their drift. They stopped at a convenient place and "with a few sticks, furse or fern, they make up a hovel much worse than an English pig sty, support themselves by work, begging or stealing: if the neighborhood wants hands, or takes no notice of them, the hovel grows into a cabin."[53] A family consisting of a man, woman, six or eight children, and a pig can "settle" in the space of a day. Young could not resist indulging in the usual "dirty" Irish aggrievement, but he added that he found these people "as athletic in their form, as robust and as capable of enduring labour as any on earth."[54] He also noted that they carefully reserved this "robust" capacity to labour for the time they wished it to be used.

Young's account reminds one of the bleak landscapes, the great coats, the conjunctural and conjectural sexuality, and the eternal wandering of Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* trilogy and his famous plays. Some have argued that they were inspired by Beckett's experiences in France; but their intoxicating flavor comes more from Guinness than from Beaujolais, and their dominant rhetorical form is an elaborate structure of excuse rather than a prose inspired by *action directe*. Not Sartre, but

the loquacious Irish proletariat—so used to "waiting for Godot" and crafty with the dialectic of despair—is behind Beckett's existentialism. Molloy-Moran-Malone's meta-cynicism also has its roots in the Irish proletariat's eighteenth-century experience, the experience of a class not totally enslaved, but infinitely distant from freedom or value.[55]

These Irish men and women baffled and challenged the likes of Berkeley, as they displayed the refusal, still dreaded by "development" economists worldwide. They refused to equate life with work and money, and to labor more when offered a higher monetary compensation for additional labour.[56] This behavior was not unusual for workers of that period, as E. P. Thompson has shown for the English, but the Irish seemed determined to carry it on even beyond the grave.[57] Consider how Dorothy George described an Irish wake in eighteenth-century London (I refer the reader to Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* for a slightly different approach): "The corpse, no matter what had been the cause of death, was laid out upon the only bed and burial was delayed, often for very many days, till money had been collected from the neighbors for the wake, which was open to all comers as long as there was anything to drink or smoke."[58] George added that this Irish custom "was particularly unfortunate from the sanitary point of view."

To Berkeley the Irish wake would have appeared more unhealthy from a economic point of view, as the wake glorified the principle of non-accumulation, celebrating death as the slyest escape from oppression and as the great counter-power of waste and dissolution. The wake was also a collective activity (not a "family matter" or a "small private affair") involving every member of the community. It was "open to all comers" and participation did not depend on any exchange relation, as the body of the dead one belonged to all, though its labor power had been the property of a London contractor or a Dublin pimp. Indeed, the wake was the final and most telling form of passive resistance practiced by the Irish proletariat, against any Power that coveted Labor. It was the last and best joke on the Boss, after all.

Out of Berkeley's wonder at the state of the "native Irish" came a multi-dimensional analysis of its causes and the "native Irish" condition. Thus, in *The Querist* he asked about their civility:

> I. 138. Whether there be upon earth any Christian or civilized people, so beggarly, wretched and destitute as the common Irish?

their heredity:

> III. 227. Whether our natural Irish are not partly Spanish and partly Tartars; where they do not bear signatures of their descent from these nations, which is also confirmed by all their histories?
>
> III. 228. Whether the Tartar Progeny is not numerous in this land? And whether there is an idler occupation under the sun than to attend flocks and herds of cattle?

their social development:

> II. 183. Whether our native Irish are not the most indolent and supine people in Christendom?
>
> II. 184. Whether they are yet civilized and whether their habitations and furniture are not more sordid than those of the savage Americans?

their psychology:

> I. 19. Whether the bulk of our Irish natives are not kept from thriving by that cynical content in dirt and beggary which they possess to a degree beyond any other people in Christendom?

and their economics:

> III. 258. Whether great profits may not be made by fisheries; but whether those of our Irish who live by that business do not contrive to be drunk and unemployed one-half of the year?

This was the standard litany that could be heard, as the claret glasses were raised in the squires' dining halls night after night. Berkeley, however, presented these "Characteristics" not as "givens" but as spurs to action. Consider one of the unkindest cuts, his comparison of "our native Irish" with the "savage Americans." Such an assessment would not discourage Berkeley who, years before, had gone to great lengths to build a College to convert the natives and slaves in America. If savage Americans and African slaves could be converted to Christi-

anity, certainly Christians (even Catholics) could be "converted" to Industry. Again, consider his genetic account of "our native Irish," whom he depicts as a novel mixture of Spanish and Tartar genes.[59] What an anti-industrial heritage. The Spanish—"rich and lazy"—with a touch of Moorish languidness cloned onto the swift destructiveness of the Tartar, good only for war, raiding, and zoophilia.

But Berkeley was not a determinist, racial or otherwise. He pointed out that even in India good administration could effectively counter "natural" obstacles:

> II.192. Whether the natural inducements to sloth are not greater in the Mogul's country than in Ireland, and yet whether, the Banyans are not all, men, women and children constantly employed?

If all are employed in India, why not in Ireland? He queries elsewhere:

> III. 229. Whether the wisdom of the state should not wrestle with this hereditary disposition of our Tartars, and with high hand introduce agriculture?

Heredity is not destiny, it can be "wrestled with" and transformed, if force and wit are wisely applied. Certainly the squires' drunken litany, for Berkeley, was no excuse.

Berkeley's most telling perception of "our Irish natives" lies in the expression he used to depict their attitude toward the squalor of their lives: cynical content.[60] This suggestive expression raises the "native Irish" attitude to a truly philosophical plane; for contentment in "dirt and beggary" is one thing, but "cynical content" adds a radical dimension to class psychology. Cynicism connotes a sneering, surly, captious and fault-finding attitude, while also describing a self-debilitating activity. With this description, Berkeley caught not just a fact but a will in Irish poverty. This cynical will had to be confronted, if national prosperity was to be achieved. For the planned subversion of the other through the subversion of the self, embedded in this will, in its ever-active inactivity, was at the center of Berkeley's problematic.

The Irish poor had to be stirred into industrious activity in the face of their own inhibiting will. Simple force would not suffice to instill industry in them. Enormous violence had already been employed in Ireland with no productive results on this account. Surely at the bottom

of this cynical will of the Irish was a reaction against their position as a conquered people, stripped of past, present and future. But they neither revolted against their subjugation, nor did they reconcile themselves to it. Theirs was that *ataraxia* of slaves who refuse to recognize their slavery, living in an unsubstantial reality that can never rest but is always motionless.

Berkeley was no stranger to his state which, in the psychology of his day, was called "hysteria," although Hegel was to describe it seventy years later under the category of Skepticism:

> It announces the nullity of seeing, hearing and so on, yet itself sees and hears. It proclaims the nothingness of essential ethical principles, and makes these very truths the sinews of its own conduct. Its deeds and its words belie each other continually. . . . Its talk, in fact, is like a squabble among self-willed children, one of whom says A when the other says B, and again B, when the other says A, and who, though being in contradiction with themselves procures the joy of remaining in contradiction with one another.[61]

The original historical source of Cynicism and Skepticism is the slave, who sees in his/her slavery a fault which is not his/her own, although any attempt to counterpoise him/herself against it makes it his/hers. These classical conditions were transposed to Ireland with a wit which was not quite Diogenesian. Not surprisingly, Hegel's "self-willed children" remind one of Beckett's famous couples like Watt and Knott who revel in "the joy of remaining in contradiction with one another."[62]

With such beings, motion is neither action, nor industry nor progress. Consider, for example, the journey of Beckett's Mercier and Camier, a journey that leads nowhere. And what are we to say of Watt, who locomotes by the following "method":

> Watt's way of advancing due east, for example, was to turn his bust as far as possible towards the north and at the same time to fling out his right leg as far as possible towards the south, and at the same time to sling out his left leg towards the north, and then again to turn his bust as far as possible towards the north and to fling out his right leg as far as possible towards the south and then again to fling out his left leg as far as possible towards the north, and so on, over and

over again, many, many times, until he reached his destination, and could sit down.[63]

But the cynical involutions and contortions of the Irish Poor were the not the only obstacles to an economic "take off." The "Knotts" of Ireland, the Anglo-Irish, presented a perfect complement to the "natives'" "A."[64] Their heredity was unquestionably English:

I. 97. Whether the upper part of this people are not truly English, by blood, language, religion, manners, inclination and interest?

I. 98. Whether we are not as much Englishmen as the children of old Romans, born in Britain were still Romans?

Apparently, however, the "natural phlegm of this island" transformed true-born Englishmen into anti-intellectual "Goths," who, if not absentees in London or the continent, spent most of their time on their estates idle and drunk, their ladies "dressed in French silks and Flanders lace" wasting "what is made by domestic industry" on "foreign luxury." The landlords' relation to the land and its people was purely pecuniary. These Anglo-"Goths" neither had the interest nor the knowledge of what was needed to make the land and the "natives" productive. They were only attracted by real estate deals, get-rich-quick schemes, and the advice of libertine "sharpers" while "a light and ludicrous Vien [was their] reigning Humour." To the point, of course, that they could undermine the very foundation of their rule, the Church of Ireland, for a few more pounds of profit.

Both men and women of this class were caught "imitating those neighbours in our fashions, to whom we bear no likeness in our circumstances," so that vanity has become the driving force of their consumption:

I. 154. Whether nine-tenths of our foreign trade be not carried on singly to support the articles of vanity?

Their eyes were perennially turned beyond the horizon of their environment and, therefore, they did not see anything about them, to such a point that when they built their homes, though "all necessary materials" were available in Ireland, they sent to Norway for "fir for

flooring and wainscot." As for the result, Berkeley sums it up with a threatening query:

> I. 124. . . . And whether a modern fashionable house, lined with fir, daubed over with oil and paint, be not like a fire-ship, ready to be lighted up by all accidents?

For Berkeley, then, the economic problematic of Ireland was posed by the self-reinforcing polarity of a ruling class that could not rule and a working class that would not work. Anglo-Irish illiterate Goths meeting the nomadic, hereditary descendants of the Tartars; utter destitution and beggary meeting vanity and foreign extravagance; hovels worse than those of the "savage Americans" meeting expensive, pretentious fire-traps; wine-drunkards meeting beer-drunkards; absentee landlords meeting absentee tenants; wretched Cynics meeting frenzied Hedonists . . . they meet and, of course, miss each other. Berkeley's class analysis revealed a stalemate, but not of equal forces in confrontation. The chronic Irish stalemate was predicated on indifference and distraction, with one side willingly unable to act and the other only able to act irresponsibly.

Who could break this peculiar stalemate? Technically, Ireland was ruled by the King in London. Was it not his and his government's responsibility to break the impasse? But the English government did not make the problematic of Ireland its affair. This indifference put the Anglo-Irish Establishment in such a contradictory position that the history of the Irish independence movement in this period is full of figures like Molyneux, Swift, and Berkeley who identified themselves as displaced and differed Englishmen. The complex forces focused on these members of the Establishment, however, transformed them into "Irish patriots" and founders of the "Sinn Fein" ideology in spite of themselves. England's rulers, with few exceptions, were interested in Ireland only as the source of "cheap labour and cheap capital" (and for the King yearly tax budget allowances), since the emigration of Irish labour and Irish capital to England was essential for the accumulation process there.[65] Thus "depopulation" and "absentee" (and, of course, "quiet") were the only words England's rulers wished to hear as far as Ireland was concerned.

But for those fated by earlier incriminating political choices to spend their days in Ireland—especially Church officials like Swift and

Berkeley who were suspected of Jacobite sympathies—these were bitter words. Let us remember that Dean Swift's "Modest Proposal" for solving England's protein problem with roasted Irish children and his mocking of Petty's "cost-benefit" analysis arose out a concrete problem: the mass migration caused by the famine years of 1726–1729.[66] This emigration meant "cheap labour" in England but it meant "no production," "no rents," "no tithes" and "no taxes" in Ireland.

William Petty's dream of turning the whole island of Ireland into a "sheep walk" was a nightmare for Swift (Berkeley's early mentor in matters bureaucratic and political).[67] Swift sustained a prolonged guerrilla warfare with English policy makers after realizing his Tory affiliations would sentence him to a life-long Irish "exile." Both in his writings and in his political activities Swift attempted to open a space for himself and his Church between the triangular vise of a sullen, evasive "native" population, an indifferent imperial government and an Anglo-Irish laity self-interestedly destroying the foundations of its own salvation. In this process he continually argued for the need to domestically exploit Irish labour and to keep Irish capital at home.[68] The themes of his 1720s writings dealt with one or more aspects of the Irish triple-bind: (import/export policy) *The Use of Irish Manufactures*; (monetary policy) *Drapier's Letters*; (labour policy) *A Modest Proposal*; (ideological domination) *Gulliver's Travels*, especially Book III's Laputa episode.[69]

Swift's disgruntlement, despair and ultimate "madness" taught Berkeley a deep personal lesson, but he had no choice except to continue in Swift's direction, though not down his suicidal path. Berkeley's own income and the long-run survival of the Church of Ireland depended on the ability of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy to discipline itself enough so that it could utilize its "native" labour force and keep its capital from escaping to England while, simultaneously, not antagonizing the English government. These were no mean feats. For Anglo-Irish domination in Ireland was dependent upon English military might (as was shown during the 1640s and 1690s) and hence on a continuing English interest in the flow of Ireland's labor and capital to England. To save Ireland, however, the "native" Irish refusal to work and the "Gothic" mentality of the Anglo-Irish graziers had to be overcome on "native ground." But solving one problem could aggravate the others. For if, say, emigration of labor and capital flow to England were stopped, then

why should the English militarily support the Anglo-Irish rulers in case of trouble?

Were Berkeley, Swift, Prior and the members of the Dublin Society trying to square a socio-economic circle?

Swift played a risky and often self-contradictory game in this context. His writings are rich in lamentation of his "exile" in an Ireland of slaves and fops while lacerating in his denunciation of the English bourgeoisie's arrogance. He too often appeared to be the negative inverse of Buridan's ass, trapped at the center of two equally disgusting alternatives, but with Buridan's result: immobility. In the end, Swift's life lay in ruins. Berkeley sought another strategy that would harmonize instead of antagonize the social constraints of his problem.

ACTION IN *THE QUERIST*

> I. 9. Whether Power be not referred to Action; and Action doth not follow Appetite or Will?
>
> George Berkeley, *The Querist*

The conditions for the solution of Berkeley's and his Church's problematic were full of constraints. They could not propose a revolutionary restructuring of the triangle of social relations they faced.[70] But whatever transformation they proposed must leave Ireland's English rulers, its Anglo-Irish Establishment, and its Catholic natives in the same relative hierarchical positions. The power topology Berkeley operated in would allow for no social substitutions or eliminations. Consequently, given Fanon's definition of decolonization as "the violent substitution of the native for the colonist," Berkeley clearly could propose neither decolonization nor genocide of the native population.[71]

Berkeley's "given" was that Ireland's basic social relations could not change, therefore, for change to occur each vertex of the socio-political triangle must be raised in power without disturbing the overall configuration. A very nice piece of social geometry, indeed! But could it be done?

Only an examination of the vertices themselves and their motive powers could answer this question. Further, since the English ruling class was to be conventionally placed at the unmoved apex of the power gradient, the Querist's analysis of the Irish problem reduced to

the examination of principles of social movement or rest—the action—of Catholic natives and Anglo-Irish gentry.

Action, in general, can be analyzed as a serial motion in a number of ways: temporally (beginning—> middle—> end) or logically (excitation—> environmental means—> object).[72] Berkeley assumed that the middle term of these action series was unproblematic, i.e., Ireland was as good a place as any for economic activity and, if anything, better than most. Thus, after the Querist described his utopia:

> I. 129. Whether one may not be allowed to conceive and suppose as Society, or Nation of Human Creatures, clad in Woolen Cloaths and Stuffs, eating good Bread, Beef, and Mutton, Poultry and Fish in great Plenty, drinking Ale, Mead, and Cyder, inhabiting decent Houses built of Brick and Marble, taking their Pleasure in fair Parks and Gardens, depending no foreign Imports either for Food or Rainment; and whether such People ought to be pitied?

he queries, in response to his query:

> I. 130. Whether Ireland be not as well qualified for such a state as any nation under the sun?

Catholic natives and Anglo-Irish gentry move in the field of this enabling environment, but the result is economic stagnation, famines, and folly. Clearly the difficulty lay with the beginnings and ends of action, i.e., the nature of its excitation and the justice of its result. For action is not simply motion, the nature of its excitation qualifies the action as much as its velocity and path. But this excitation is not a physical matter, it must be analyzed with the categories of spirit. The Querist found perverse levels of excitation in both ranks of Irish society: an apathy or self-repression of excitation in the lower with an overstimulation of excitation in the upper classes.

In *The Querist* the notion of excitation is categorized in various grades: "Wants" (needs or lacks), "Appetites" or desires, and "Aspirations"; it qualifies various objects as "necessaries," "conveniences," "luxuries;" it is oriented by social constellations like "opinion," "fashion," and "custom." Together these grades, objects and orienters form the "prevailing will" of a nation that is the final determinant of its economic success or failure. The richness of the Querist's vocabulary,

however, does not imply the existence of an elaborate and precise structure of discourse. At best we can be sure that wants excite the poor while fashion drives the gentry. The lack of exactness and system in the use of terms like "Will," "Action," "Appetite," "Spirit" is not new to *The Querist*. This casual disorder in the employment of the terms of desire and spirit dogs Berkeley from his youthful fumbling in his *Philosophical Commentaries* (1707–1708) to his final Platonic non-solution in *Siris* (1744).

This is especially troubling given the fact that Berkeley wrote in a period when moral psychology was flourishing in England and Scotland.[73] The ambiguous seventeenth-century terminology (including Winstanley's "inner light" along with Descartes' techniques for controlling the passions) had passed through Locke's terminological regime to Shaftsbury and Mandeville (in England) and Hutcheson (in Ireland and then Scotland). The novels of Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding also helped to create, by means of a radical exteriorization of the person, a psychological interior. "Psych-talk" and "sex-talk" exploded in the eighteenth century, as Foucault and many others have amply pointed out. Eventually, these studies of "the mechanics of the soul" were channeled into Smith's standardization of capitalist psychology (which reached its twentieth century robotic limit in von Neumann's decision theory.)

Berkeley, however, was a reluctant participant in this project. Though a philosopher of the spirit, he was wary of too nicely psychologizing the spirit away. He states his suspicions through Euphranor, one of his veils in *Alciphron*, in response to a Shaftsburyan argument:

> I cannot conceive why the acute Cratylus [Shaftsbury] should suppose a power of acting in the appetite and reason and none at all in the will? Allowing, I say, the distinction of three such beings in the soul of man, I do not see how this could be true. But if I cannot abstract and distinguish so many beings in the mind of man so accurately as you do, I do not find it necessary; since it is evident to me in the gross and concrete, that I am a free agent. . . . If I should suppose things spiritual to be corporeal, or refine things actual and real into general abstracted notions, or by metaphysics split things simple and individual into manifold parts, I do not know what may follow.[74]

Berkeley's Euphrenor decides to opt out of psyche-chopping by an appeal to "the gross and concrete," but this path only further delays the confrontation with the discourses of the self which the problematic of Irish economic development posed. Some sophistication was necessary to deal with the cynical souls smiling as they muttered in Gaelic and handed over their tithes.

Indeed, when the query "What is spirit?" is asked of *the* philosopher of spirit, decades of evasive replies ensue. According to the youthful Berkeley: "The Will is *purus actus* or rather pure spirit, not imaginable, not sensible, not intelligible, in no wise the object of the understanding, no wise perceivable."[75] But if will is spirit, and spirit "passeth beyond all understanding," then how can the will be the object of research, transformation and reform? Berkeley's early refusal to objectify the spirit lead the mature Berkeley *qua* social scientist and economic activist to the abyss of the ineffable. For unlike the natural philosopher who is interested in explaining and controlling sensible ideas received from without, the Querist must act directly on the wills and spirits within society's members to achieve his purpose. But can one act wisely in a realm where the understanding is inoperative? Berkeley argued that Newtonian physics could at best partially decipher the grammatical structure of the language of the divine spirit, but this physics could not claim to understand God or change His ways.[76] This essentially passive, or at least receptive, attitude of natural philosophy is alien to "the study of mankind." One studies humanity to change it—in the Querist's case, to plan Ireland's economic "take-off"—but to actively change anything to achieve an end, knowledge is required. This is true of spirits as well, i.e., one must not only know *that* spirits exist, but also *how* they exist. Berkeley was faced with a paradox in 1735 that arose directly out of his previous attempts to so radically divide spirits and things: one can know what cannot be changed (natural laws) while one cannot know what must be changed (social or spiritual "laws").

Berkeley tried to evade the consequences of such a paradox throughout his life. His anxious soul-searching concerning this lack of clarity about spirit reached a peak in his travels to Southern Italy where he went in order to study "the stories about the bite of the tarantula" and the music and dancing of the tarantella cure for his friend Dr. Freind. During that trip he lost the "manuscript to the second part of the Treatise" which was to deal directly with spirit. He never "found the time" to rewrite that second part, as he told the inquisitive Samuel

Johnson in Rhode Island. His own paralysis and hysteria are evoked for us by the association of the tarantulas and the lost book on spirit. The later failure of his major mid-life "project"—the College in the Summer Islands—further pointed to the consequences of his philosophical impasse. Can one reasonably project without even an approximate "mechanics of the spirit"? Perhaps his neo-Platonic tar-water fascinations of the 1740s (reminiscent of the natural magic hermeticism of the past and the non-mechanical science of the future) were the outcome of his inability to resolve his version of the "paradox of social science." Nature can be a solace to those battered by social defeat.[77]

But in 1735, Berkeley was not so doctrinaire. He could not afford to be. Between 1732 and the publication of *The Querist* Berkeley's philosophy went through a little noticed ontological revolution. Instead of a bare-bones ontology of ideas and spirits, he developed the hints of his previous work in the philosophy of physics and mathematics and created a whole new mediating realm of principles, notions, beliefs and mental forces. This 1732-34 conceptual revolution made it possible for Berkeley to create a rudimentary anatomy and mechanics of the social spirit as well as an institutional embodiment as suggested in the query: "Whether the soul or will of the community, which is the prime mover that governs and directs the whole, be not the legislature?"

If part of the Irish problem was the sick level of excitation among the classes, what could the will of the community, the legislature, do about it? Well, since "fashion doth create appetites," the legislature must "interpose in the making of fashion" and "not leave an affair of so great influence to the management of women and fops, tailors and vintners." The point of this intervention was to produce "frugal fashions in the upper ranks." In more political terms, the legislature could change the consumption habits of the Anglo-Irish by, for example, shifting them to beer and cider (instead of claret) and by stimulating a taste for domestic construction (replacing the purchases of fine imported clothing). These changes in upper-class consumption would create a demand for "smiths, masons, bricklayers, plasterers" and boost the local tile, furniture and interior decorating—painting and sculpture—industry.

The legislature also could act to change the wants of "our native Irish," to make them "accustomed to eat beef and wear shoes" and experience a "general habit of living well." This transformation in wants is necessary because of an elementary law of the social spirit: "I. 65.

Whether there be any instance of a State wherein the people, living neatly and plentifully did not aspire to wealth?" This blue-print for changing the needs of the poor implies that wants too can be created. Certainly, different wants create different actions. There is a world of difference between, for example, a person who wants food and one who wants beef for dinner. But in order to create wants, especially wants leading to industry, the experience of the native Irish had be changed as well. For wanting and getting are not independent, since there is a deep relation between imagination and sensation, viz., my imagining the complex X-Y-Z is parasitic upon my perceiving X, Y, and Z:

> But my conceiving or imagining power does not extend beyond the possibility of real existence or perception. Hence as it is impossible for me to see or feel anything without an actual sensation of that thing; so is it impossible for me to conceive in my thoughts any sensible thing or object distinct from the sensation of it.[78]

Thus I cannot imagine the taste of beef without having experienced it. Wanting (i.e., being conscious of needing or lacking a particular sensation) implies imagination. Thus one can create a want in someone only if one can make the other experience what s/he is to lack, and this not only once, but frequently. If legislators would have the Irish natives want to eat beef and wear shoes, the legislature must provide beef and shoes before the creation of the want as its precondition.

Aspirations, on the other hand, are not as easily created or manipulated as are Wants. As the social law mentioned above suggests, they too have their preconditions. The subtleness of Aspirations derives from the fact that their objects are spirits, while the object of a want is an idea. One may want to eat beef, one cannot aspire to it (at best, one can aspire to be a beef-eater). Being spirits, the objects of aspirations cannot be imagined. Thus I cannot lack being Einstein or Einstein-like, since "I" and "Einstein" are not ideas, according to Berkeley, and they cannot be compared. The legislature could not force anyone to aspire to be a wealthy person, for example. The best it could do would be to create the preconditions for the aspiration and trust that the rest will follow.

Appetite is the mean between these capacities of the will, for it combines the particularity of the object of Want with the abstractness

of Aspiration. Let us say I am a bored gentleman, I might have the appetite to see something I have never seen, to taste what I never tasted, to feel a passion I never felt. As in mathematical logic the existentially quantified variable contrasts with a name, Appetites have an aspect of infinity Wants do not. They share with Aspirations, however, the susceptibility to emulation. Thus I cannot want to eat beef unless I have eaten beef—no matter how many times I have seen others eat beef. But I can develop an appetite for claret not because I habitually drink it (I might never have seen a claret bottle) but because I hear, perhaps, that my English cousins do. The abstractness, the susceptibility to emulation, the potential infinity of Appetite makes it a freer, more fanciful capacity, and thus harder to control and direct.

Given this elementary "mechanics of the soul," the Querist's legislature could try to control the Appetites through education, sumptuary laws, consumption taxes, import restrictions in the same way as it could try to stimulate new Wants in the cynical Irish by making good beef, warm clothing, and shoes available to them. By so doing, the legislature could lay the groundwork for a generalized aspiration to social wealth, i.e., to a Berkeleyan utopia, not for a select few on the Summer Islands, but for a whole nation: "I. 313. Whether, as others have supposed an Atlantis or Eutopia, we also may not suppose an Hyperborean Island inhabited by reasonable Creatures?"

But this utopian supposition requires the ability to change the present configuration of excitements to economic action: the beginning of the act (i.e., the subject's want, appetite, or aspiration) must be changed as well as the object or end of action (i.e., the subject's necessaries, conveniences, luxuries). The legislature must also ensure that the results of the ensuing economic action are proportional to the "just pretensions and industry" of each of the social members. This is crucial, since one of the conditions of the problem the Querist faced was that any economic transformation would leave the previous social relations intact. This accounts for the "proper pretensions" part of the distribution scheme.

Finally, the legislature must excite "industry," as he queries with his draconian, anti-Mandevillian side openly expressed:

> I. 3. Whether the drift and aim of every wise state should not be, to encourage industry in its members? And whether those who employ

> neither heads nor hands for the common benefit deserve not to be expelled like drones out of a well governed state?

Though Berkeley clearly recognized the "proper pretensions" aspect of his problematic in the "heads or hands" part of this query, he also darkly suggested that the "industry" aspect is crucial for an economic justice. Thus the "take-off" would require a "redistribution of income," and a method that would accomplish it without a direct confrontation with property relations.

The Querist's utopia therefore required the creation of a new dichotomy in both of Ireland's social classes cut by the criterion of industry. "Pretensions" pure and simple would no longer be enough to determine social status. The Querist proposed a dramatic increase in the "living standard" of the "working poor" and at the same time a form of slavery for the "indolent poor." This proposal was not a product of a generalized transition from "low" to "high" wage philosophies, or between seventeenth-century "repressiveness" to late eighteenth-century "humanism." The Querist posed a well-conceived theory of wage hierarchies whose heirs are still respected to this day.[79]

Thus, the Querist subverted the demand for a uniform wage increase "across the board" or a minimum wage, such as could be instituted by a generous Poor Law solution:

> II. 205. Whether the poor, grown up and in health, need any other provision but their own industry, under public inspection?

> II. 206. Whether the poor-tax in England hath lessened or increased the number of the poor?

He argued for a finely-tuned downwards redistribution of wealth, while uttering words a modern "social liberal" would be proud of, with ecological metaphor as well,

> I. 65. Whether to provide plentifully for the poor be not feeding the root, the substance whereof will shoot upwards into the branches and cause the top to flourish?

> I. 164. When the root yieldeth insufficient nourishment, whether men do not top off the tree to make the lower branches flourish?

but he suggested state-run slavery for "idle folk":

> II. 217. Whether all sturdy beggars would not be seized and made slaves to the public for a certain term of years?

and he had great plans reserved for them:

> II. 214. Whether other nations have not found great benefits from the use of slaves in repairing high roads, making rivers navigable, draining bogs, erecting public buildings and bridges and manufactures?

Together with criminals convicted of capital crimes, they would be sent to hard labour on the roads of Ireland "instead of sending them either to America or to the other world."

Berkeley refused Lockean "thanatocracy" and Pettyian genocide for the Irish poor. As a substitute he chose a very visible slavery. The state's slaves were not to be kept behind bars or high walls, to be panoptically viewed by a central hidden observer. Criminalized workers would be ostentatiously displayed "chained in pairs kept at hard labour" so that the spectacle could be "very edifying to the multitude." Thus, instead of the "thanatocratic" gallows meant to terrorize or fortify the viewer, the "chain gang" was to be the Irish spectacle of order. In such a republic of labour, the answer to the following query was a foregone conclusion:

> II. 228. Whether the most indolent would be fond of idleness, if they regarded it as the sure road to hard labour?[80]

One can sense the Querist's theoretical delight at the prospect of such a scheme which sets up a constant tension in the cynical breasts of the "native Irish." If indolence is, as Hylas defines it in the *Dialogues*, "nothing more than a privation of both pain and pleasure," then these vulgar cynics would find it impossible to rest under the Querist's regime. Either they would work to be well-fed, clothed and lodged (for pleasure) or they would work to escape the lash of slavery (from pain), but work they must. In the Querist's utopic Ireland there is no space for either Buridan's ass or waiting for Godot and certainly no time for excuses and spleen. The "native" Diogeneses savoring their freedom in

an afternoon of doing nothing would become extinct and so would their barbs against Anglican bishops and others of their betters.

Berkeley is not averse at times to satirizing the Querist's strategy. Thus after imploring "the leading men and patriots" to find "methods to employ the lame and the blind, the dumb, the deaf, and the maimed in some or other branch of our manufactures, he suggests the ultimate in Irish revenue collection:

> II. 196. Whether a tax on dirt would not be one way of encouraging industry?

But this is an occasional whim, for the self-deprecating humor or the *saeva indignatio* of a Swift are not his characteristic attitudes. Berkeley's virtues were humility, calmness, conviction and a sense of justice. Thus the Anglo-Irish too would not escape the whip of the Querist's pen. They would be judged on their contribution to social industry. He does not ask them to push ploughs or lay brick (but learning how to read would be a good start!). If they failed to employ their "heads" for the common benefit, slavery would not be their fate. For Berkeley's age did not see the violence, which was commonly employed against the rural and urban proletariat, inflicted by the bourgeoisie against itself as in the period of the Terror during the French Revolution. But he is not above a few querying rants against the vanity and anti-intellectualism of the rich, Ladies—"I. 147. Whether a woman of fashion ought not to be declared a public enemy?"—and Gentlemen alike—"I. 196. Whether the gentlemen of estate had the right to be idle; and whether he ought not to be the greatest promoter and director of industry among his tenants and neighbours?"

The Querist does not propose that a statutory authority should expropriate besotted squires or strip ladies of their silks, rather he appeals to the Anglo-Irish gentry's long-term self-interest, i.e., to the benefits of having a productive working class to rule and of education as a boost to their own "public spirit." (This education was to include the publication of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* for instruction to the ladies and the expansion of Trinity College for the men.)[81]

Thus, under the Querist's scheme the Anglo-Irish would immediately pay their workers a bit more and charge their tenants a bit less in rent, they would drink less claret and wear simpler clothes, but they would gain free labour from the state's slaves, while the "trickle-up" income

effect would ensure social stability and eventually increased rents and profits. A Hyperborean Utopia indeed!

Armed with his rudimentary "anatomy and mechanics of the spirit," Berkeley was in a position to provide a surprising solution to the long-term economic problematic that his Church and class faced within seemingly conflicting political power constraints. Let me end this chapter by summing up both *The Querist's* problematic and the constraints.

The Problematic

How to increase the income of the Church of Ireland and each social class in the face of (a) the "cynical content" of the "native Irish" who were unproductive but who were destined to become, after the agistment tithe rebellion, the primary tithe payers for the Church of Ireland; (b) the short-sighted, irresponsible members of Anglo-Irish gentry that were either absentee or intent on immediate profits, and were draining the Irish economy of its wealth, in addition to and supporting a suicidal, "beef-export" oriented path of economic development.

The Constraints

How to increase national income in Ireland without (a) threatening the interest of the British government in Ireland, (b) disturbing existing property rights, (c) changing the power hierarchy among the social classes. In a word, the Querist had to provide a plan to increase social "momentum" without threatening the destruction of an unegalitarian, colonialist and rigid socio-economic structure.

The Answer

Money, i.e., the creation of a National Bank (overseen by the Irish Parliament) that would issue legal-tender paper currency, and a National Mint that would issue small coins.

NOTES

1. Of course one can overdo the marginality of *The Querist.* The work went through about eight or nine reprintings during Berkeley's life-time and has always

remained slightly above the horizon of economic history ever since. An fine account of *The Querist's* impact on economic and social thought can be found in Rasid (1990). For more on the publishing history of *The Querist* see Johnston (1970: vi–vii.). Marx refers to it in the mid-nineteenth century in his *Contributions to a Critique of Political Economy*, and in the twentieth century it has been seen as an important step in the development of both the theory of money and the theory of wages, as in Coats (1956–57). *The Querist* is said to mark both the change from "low-wage" to "high-wage" economic policies and the transition from the mercantile substantialist-metallist concept of money to the functional, cartelist view of modern times. More accurately, if we prefer to take a teleological perspective on the text, the importance of *The Querist* lay in its intersecting the theory of wages and the theory of money. For Berkeley theorized the next steps in the money form of the wage, which is the key development in class relations of eighteenth-century capitalism in Britain, as Linebaugh (1993), has taught us.

2. *Letters*, B. to Prior, 2 March 1734, p. 230.

3. On the non-residency of the Church of Ireland clergy see Landa (1954: 118–21). For an account of the life of an average Bishop of the eighteenth century Church of Ireland see Falvey (1993: 103–14) and Falvey (1995). The picture of "a Church of Ireland establishment materially poor and spiritually torpid, unable and unwilling to rise above the mundane" is challenged by figures like Berkeley and Swift. But they were not alone. David Hayton argues that the Church experienced a "second reformation" in the first half of the eighteenth century. See Hayton (1995: 166–86).

4. Cf. Luce (1949: 100–101). Luce quotes Swift's letter (3 September 1724) to Lord Carteret, which delivers the offer. Swift refers to Berkeley as "an absolute philosopher with regard to money, titles, and power." It should be noted, however, that Berkeley was an absentee cleric and was so listed in his lawyer's book, Thomas Prior's *List of Absentees of Ireland* (1729) with the following comment, "the yearly value of his estates spent abroad being about £900," as noted in Luce (1949: 95). Indeed, although he was Dean of Derry for almost a decade, 1724–1734, he was in Derry for less than a month, barely enough time to be installed.

5. *Letters*, B. to Prior, 2 March 1734, p. 230. Prior's and Berkeley's modest estimation of the ecclesiastical and economic status of Cloyne seems to be accurate. Akenson (1971) develops a reasonable method for assessing the"relative desirability of Irish Bishoprics." On a scale from A, the least desirable, to G, the most desirable, Cloyne is very close to the bottom at level B, Akenson (1971: 22–24). As for income differentials, the Bishopric of Derry was worth over £2,200 during the 1730s, i.e, almost twice the income of Cloyne, Akenson (1971: 35) There are other indices of the Cloyne's relatively low rank. For example, the gross average acreage of diocese land was 30,420 while Cloyne had only 12,480 acres (calculated using statistics from Falvey (1995). Thesis. Apparently Cloyne saw some better fortune in the century after Berkeley's tenure as bishop, but even in the period between 1834 and 1865 Cloyne's episcopal revenues averaged about £5,000 while the average of all sees was £6,870 (calculated from a table in the Clergymen of the Established Church of Ireland [1868: 249]). Finally, a more pathetic bit of evidence can be found in the fate of Anne Berkeley, who fell on hard times immediately after the death of her husband. As Falvey notes in Falvey (1995: 85), "Frazer cites a Sept.

1752 letter from the Duke of Dorset, the viceroy, to the Irish Lords Justices to refer at petition to the Irish Revenue [concerning Anne Berkeley]. This petition had been sent to the King by Berkeley's successor, James Stopford."

6. *Letters*, B. to Prior, 15 January 1734, p. 224. In a January 15, 1734 letter to Prior, a few days before getting the post. The "First Fruits" is literally a down payment for receiving a benefice. It was a tax that originally went to the Pope amounting to the annual value of the benefice (including tithes and rents). After the Reformation, the First Fruits went to the Crown.

7. *Letters*, B. to Prior, 28 January 1734, p. 226.

8. *Letters*, B. to Prior, 2 March 1734, p. 230. Why did Berkeley not return to Derry in Ireland, since the Deanship was his, after returning from Rhode Island in October 1731? After all, his justification for being an absentee, i.e., his missionary work among the American Indians, was null and void on arriving back in London. Luce's comments in Luce (1949: 153) are confusing at best, "By modern standards [Berkeley] should have gone straight back to Ireland, resided in Derry, and discharged the duties of his office; but had he done so, in the circumstances of those days, his position would have been difficult, if not intolerable; the absence of royal approval would have been taken universally as a mark of disapproval; latent opposition, jealousy, and envy would break out; his leadership and powers of service would be at an end." Receiving tithes and rents in absentia was apparently less "difficult" for Berkeley, according to Luce, than discharging his duties. Is this accurate, is there more here than meets Luce's eye?

9. Cf. for rural incomes of the Irish poor, A. Young, *Tour in Ireland.* (London, 1780); Maxwell (1941); for a discussion of urban wages in Dublin see Cullen, Smout, and Gibson (1988).

10. Luce (1949: 146).

11. Though he had to fight law suits from Hester Van Homrigh's father and brother and pay off her debts in England, he managed to net some of the inheritance. Prior, as his lawyer, received 1s in the pound as commission, see Luce (1949: 87-91).

12. Bric (1986: 274). The "modus" was an agreement between tithe owner and parishioner which substituted monetary payments for the tithe in kind and "established modes of valuing tithe, in some places by the acres, in others by quantity of produce."(p. 272) For the discriminatory impact of the tithe burden see Chart (1920: 49–50).

13. Cullen (1972: 48, 52). Cullen noted that "beef was the only main agricultural export to grow through the 1720s and 1730s."

14. Cullen (1986: 145). James Kelly points out that after the subsistence crisis of 1725 and 1726 and the famine conditions in 1727, 1728 and early 1729, the economy did not immediately "bounce back." This was especially true of rental income. "Landlords . . . continued to experience difficulties procuring rents, and some minor gentry went bankrupt . . . it is clear also that many landlords were extremely frustrated by the recalcitrance of tenantry who were adept at taking advantage of every situation," Kelly (1991–92: 102).

15. From Petty to the present there has been a "lively" debate on Irish demography, a classic article is Connell (1965: 423-433). For a fine discussion of

Cork County in this period see O'Flanagan and Buttimer (1992), especially O'Flanagan (1992).

16. On the Great Frost see Dickson (1997). Dickson estimates that between 13 to 20 percent of the Irish population died between 1740 and 1741. Similar estimates can be found in Daultrey, Dickson, and O'Grada (1981: 626–27).

17. Apparently Primate Boulter criticized Prior's *List* and it was generally considered subversive, cf. Meenan and Clarke (1981).

18. The proportion of Catholics to Protestants was a "hot" demographic issue at the end of the 1720s and the early 1730s. The Irish House or Lords put the ratio at two to one. But Primate Boulter in 1727 argued that it was more like five to one. He says, "We have incumbents and curates to the number of about 800, whilst there are more than 3,000 Popish priests of all sorts here." See Lecky (1972: 72). J. L. McCracken's recent estimate seems to verify Prior's, he writes, "If any reliance can be placed on the proportions, as distinct from the total figures, in the population estimates of 1732 and 1733 . . ., it would appear that over 70 percent of the total population of Ireland was catholic," in McCracken (1986). As for the town and parish of Cloyne the ratio of Protestant to Catholic households in 1766 was the following:

	Protestants (P)	Catholics (C)	Ratio (P/C)
Town	32	144	22%
Country	12	110	11%

Calculated from Casy (1965: sections 998–1000). For a recent discussion of eighteenth-century demographers like David Bindon who were attempting to calculate the ratio of Catholics to Protestants in the City of Dublin see Fagan (1998: 27–33).

19. As reported by Primate Boulter to the Duke of Newcastle, cf. Croker (1824).

20. Swift (1966ii). Swift's poem was not the only direct attack on the gentry's parlimentary representatives in 1736 for repealling the agistment tithe. Alexander McAulay published a pamphlet entitled *Property Inviolable or, Some Remarks upon an Pamphlet entitled "Prescription Sacred"* that year which defended the Church's right to the tithe. McAulay presented a couple of legalistic arguments against the reasoning of *Prescription Sacred*'s author who argued that the Church had no right to the agistment tithe. McAulay's first argument was simple: the agistment tithe is legal in England; English law dominates in Ireland; therefore, the agistment tithe is legal in Ireland. His second argument was less syllogistic: repealling the agistment tithe is a violation of private property, but no legislature has the authority to violate private property. He also included a sociological observation as well: "Nobody can doubt, that if Tythe of Agistment or any other Tythe, were taken away, landlords wou'd set their lands Proportionally higher; as we see at present in the case of Impropriators: And I must submit it to the Public, whether it wou'd contribute to the Benefit of Ireland, that a Number of Men, who expend their whole Income in the Kingdom, shou'd have part of their revenues withdrawn from them, to be transferred to another set of men, many of whom consume their whole Incomes in other countries" (p. 29). McAulay also noted that there was a grave demographical

asymmetry between the clergy of the Church of Ireland and the Church of England. The former numbered, according to him, about 750 and ministered to a total Irish population of 2 million (which makes for 2,666 persons per clergyman) while the latter numbered 10,000 and ministered to 7 million (which makes for 700 persons per clergyman).

21. *The Orrery Paper* (1903: 155). Barry adds, "It was changed a few hours for another Topic. A mad Officer was tryd for ravishing an old ugly Woman."

22. Cullen writes that there was a significant increase in the price of beef after 1725 and throughout the 1730s beef prices were 20 to 40 percent higher than during the 1715–1724 decade, in Cullen (1972: 52). Given the circumstances of land tenure, this relative price transformation led to a reduction in tillage.

23. The first quotation is from White (1943: 232) and the second from "Council Book of Munster (Those Parts Relating to the County and City of Cork)" in Caulfield (1879: 319–20). Information on the early history of the tithe of agistment was kindly provided by Prof. Nicholls of University College Cork. Louis A. Landa has a discussion of the Tithe Agistment controversy as well as other battles over "temporalities" in Chapter III of his still very useful Landa (1954). Maurice Bric's discussion of the tithe revolt in Bric (1986: 275–77) is an important addition.

There was no agistement tithe crisis in England. It continued to be paid throughout the eighteenth century, although there were many individual disputes. Eric J. Evans in Evans (1975: 45) notes, "Hay and agistment tithes, in particular, were more strictly collected in this period. Cases concerning these products abound and it would be redundant to provide an extensive catalogue."

24. Cullen claims that the repeal of the tithe agistment was not a "potent factor in accounting for the advance of pasturage," in Cullen (1972: 67); but this claim depends upon what one takes to be "potent" in a "potent factor." Surely there is good reason to believe it was a factor, since it inevitably increased the net profit of pasturage in the price environment of the post-1725 years.

25. This is taken from a very interesting, but anonymous account of the tithe agistment crisis, *State of Ireland considered with an Enquiry into the History of Opinion of Tithe: on a Plan for Modifying that System, and providing an adequate maintance for the Catholic and Presbyterian Clergy* (2nd ed.) (Dublin, 1810) p. 9. The estimate of the percentage of land under large landlord's tillage comes from this tract.

26. Louis A. Landa's account is to be found in Landa (1954: 135–40).

27. Bric quotes Dr. Synge's estimates on the impact of the agistment tithe revolt and the "change in Culture" due to increasing pasturage and they were very high. He claimed that Church tithe revenue was reduced by anything from one to two thirds, cf. Bric (1986: 276). Falvy (1996: 70) notes that "All the Anglican bishops reacted angrily to the Commons demand in 1735 that the tithe of agistment should not be paid to the clergy. With the steady increase in pasturage and enclosure throughout the country, this was a serious loss." Prof. Patrick Kelly pointed out to me the unifying effect of the tithe revolt on the Church by bringing together adversaries like Swift and Boulter.

28. Quoted in Landa (1954: 141).

29. Landa (1954: 143–44).

30. Ireland has been the testing ground of what contemporary demographers call "crisis-led demographic transitions," i.e., population reductions through famine, war, plague and forced emigration. Ron Lesethege (1989) is a contemporary classic in this genre. For a critical discussion of this approach see Caffentzis (1995a).

31. Meenan and Clarke (1981: 3). Samuel Madden, the "editor" of *The Querist*, was the Society's major patron. Beckett (1976: 76), after reviewing the lives of the founders of the Dublin Society, concluded: "Here, then, in the early membership of the Dublin Society, we have a fair cross-section of what might reasonably be regarded as the most important element in the Anglo-Irish tradition. Public attention has most commonly been fastened on the absentee noble or the swashbuckling squireen; but if we are to find the truth character of Anglo-Irish life we must seek it in the middle ranks of society, among merchants and professional men, who might often, indeed, have links with the land-owning class, but whose influence in the world depended on ability and initiative rather than on wealth."

For a discussion of the alliance between the secular and clerical "improvement" movements in Ireland see Barnard (1996) and Connolly (1996).

Berman (1988: 119–40) has a rather different reading of the Irish intelligentsia's relation to the Enlightenment. He argues that eighteenth-century Irish philosophy had a "distinctly counter-enlightenment character" because Anglo-Irish philosophers had to defend the Anglican Church's political priviledge. Berman identifies Enlightenment philosophy with what he calls "left-wing Lockeanism" (i.e., "natural religion, rationbalism, and tolerance") or what Berkeley would call "free thinking." My reading finds the Anglican Church's economic policies "developmentalist" and allied with what would be called Enlightenment views.

32. Beckett (1976: 73). One need not be either a dissenter or a libertine to find the tithe a "very unpleanant property" and obligation. Evans (1975) notes a huge legal record of tithe disputes, especially in his Chapter 3, "Tithe Disputes and Litigation."

33. Landa (1954: 146).

34. *AL*, v, 31.

35. *AL*, v, 112.

36. *AL*, v, 113.

37. *AL*, v, 115. Berkeley has Lysicles develop a form of moral perspectivism he calls "Pythagorean" which differentiates humans into birds, beasts, and fishes, with their appropriate "systems of morals, politics, rights, and notions."

38. For more on the Hell-Fire Club see Lecky (1898: 323–24). On the connections with the Masons see Williams (1973). For a discussion of Freemasonry and the two ideological enemies of the Whig-dominated Church of Ireland, Jacobitism and Catholicism, see Murphy (1994: 75–82) and Fagan (1998), Chapter 5, "Catholic Involvement in Freemasonary."

39. Trumbach (1989) is an important study of the social intersections of libertinism and sexual transgression during this period in England, especially pp. 130–37. The gatherings of "sodomites" in taverns or "molly-houses" in eighteenth-century London were matched by the emergence of clubs of aristocrats and intellectuals like the Kit-Cat Club (1696–1720) and later by the Society of Dilettanti (established in 1734). They too expressed the vicissitudes of libertinism and sexuality, but in a different class key. Brewer (1997: 41) describes the Kit-Cat Club in

the following words: "The Kit-Cats gathered regularly to eat, drink and toast their favourite beauties. The libertine, bibulous values of the Restoration courtier lived on in the pornographic verses read at their meetings—'With that He seiz'ed her panting in his Arms/Greedy of tasting her forbidden Charms/Swift thro the curling breaks his Pintle drove/To seek amongst dark shade the Springs of Love'—and in the toasting and drinking bouts that accompanied them."

For a discussion of this period's homosexual clubs and "circles" see G. S. Rousseau's essays: "The pursuit of homosexuality" and "'In the house of Madame Vander Tasse': a homosocial university club" in Rousseau (1991).

40. A full-length study of Toland is to be found in Daniel (1984). A fine study of Toland's impact on the study of religion is Harrison (1990: 74–90). Lord Molesworth's critique of tithing practice in Ireland is to be found in his *Some Considerations for the Promotion of Agriculture and Employing the Poor* (1723), an assessment of his work in the context of the anticlerical movement can be found in Champion (1992: 178–82). An interesting contrast of Berkeley's and Toland's thought and life can be found in Eagleton (1998: 17–67).

41. A short account of this story can be found in Luce (1949: 176).

42. *Dis* 208.

43. *Dis* 220.

44. *Dis* 218–19.

45. Many of the class conflicts in the later part of the eighteenth century, like the Whiteboy movement, that began in earnest more than twenty five years after 1735 are often attributed to the recomposition of the tithes. In Wall (1973), Maureen Wall argued that "As result [of the repeal of the tithe agistment], the burden of supporting the Established Church now fell more heavily on the cottiers, labourers and small farmers, who had to provide from their potato patches what had been lost from the ranches of the grazers . . . it is probable that attempts to alter traditional uses led to tithe disturbances in many instances."

46. Anonymous (1809: 9).

47. Lecky (1972: 120–21).

48. Cf. Connolly (1987: 52–57). His general observations of the 1711 incident as well as those between 1761–90 were: "The outbreaks were linked in each case of major shifts in agricultural circumstances, most commonly a deterioration in market conditions. . . . Protest, furthermore, was in all cases defensive in character, arising in response to changes in existing patterns of land use or economic relations, and seeking to preserve what were seen as existing rights with the agrarian system. The methods used to pursue these limited aims were correspondingly restrained"(p. 53).

49. Clarke (1958: 321). There was definitely a desire for a legislative union with England among many in the eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish Establishment. In 1703 a petition was sent to London proposing such a union, but it was refused. Archbishop King, Molyneux and many others supported union as well. For a discussion of this matter see Johnston (1970: 24).

50. For a short survey of the horror see Rai (1993: 30). He writes "Petty . . . estimated the loss of human life during this period: 'about 504,000 of the Irish perished and were wasted by sword, plague, famine, hardships and banishment between 23rd October 1641, and the same day in 1652.' Half a million Irish had died out of a total population in 1641 of 1,448,000. But this, even if the most

dramatic, was not the only loss that Ireland suffered. According to Petty, 40,000 Irish soldiers went abroad, and 100,000 Irish men, women and children were transported to the Americas. Modern estimates are much lower, but still in the region of 50,000."

51. For a discussion of expatriate Irish military service see Simms (1986: 631–43). For the Irish in London see Linebaugh (1992), especially the chapter entitled, "If you plead for your life, plead in Irish." Irish workers in England became universal labourers and soon got the taste of abstract labour as the eighteenth century ballad, "The Irishman's Ramble to London," suggests. For after leaving Ireland, to "stay no more . . . to live upon potatoe fare," the Rambler arrives in London and, as the Chorus goes:

> If all things should fail you
> And nothing at all prevail,
> Take the straps on your shoulder,
> And carry the milk pail.
>
> If of all things I've told you
> There's nothing at all will do
> Take a stick at your fist,
> Stand a pimp at some bagnio door.
>
> But curse upon that New Drop,
> Tis fatal to the Irishman
> Whenever they handle the pops
> Or the forging pen.

"The Ramble" is to be found in Holloway and Black (1975: 131–32). For further description of Irish workers' activity in England see Thompson (1968: 473–78).

52. Berkeley addressed two of his latter publications directly to the Irish Catholics and their clergy, "A Letter to the Roman Catholics" (1745) and "A Word to the Wise" (1749) in Luce and Jessop (1953vi). His frequent criticism of his own laity's sloth would hardly make Berkeley an early supporter of Weber. For a discussion of the relation between religion and "work-discipline" in eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Ireland see Connolly (1983). Connolly rejects the Weberian view that Protestants tend to be more "industrious" than Catholics due to their religious attitudes to worldly success. Kevin Whelan has recently brought to the fore an important "underground" phenomenon: the slow rise of a class of Catholic or crypto-Catholic middlemen, who owned land and accumulated profits throughout the eighteenth century. Berkeley was, perhaps, conscious of this creeping return of Catholic land ownership, given his concern for continuing communication with Catholic clergy. See Kevin Whelan (1996), chapter I, "An Underground Gentry?"

53. As quoted in Freeman (1969: 101). This isotropicity with respect to the place of settlement was not total. J. H. Andrews, in a delightful article entitled "The struggle for Ireland's public commons," has argued that common lands in many different legal forms survived both the Cromwellian and Williamite settlements as well as Parliamentary enclosure acts (after the Union) far into the nineteenth

century. These commons were magnets for the poor. "A notable feature of many commons was the inefficiency with which grazing and turf-cutting were kept in check. In the absence of effective stinting or other restrictions, a common probably supplied its poorer beneficiaries with a larger share of a family's real income than would accrue to their more affluent neighbours. It would consequently be natural for them to spend more of their time there, and it must be for this reason that commons came to be seen as haunts of an economically and morally inferior sub-culture, a complaint voiced at Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, in 1710 and subsequently repeated at various other places, as well as sometimes being applied to the commons of a whole county and for that matter of Ireland in general. . . . The right simply to be on a common, in technical language, the right to roam, is one that only a lawyer would ever think of doubting, and the visitations . . . were arguably a form of 'sequent occupance' in which the use of the land could be intensified without losing its collective character. The next stage was to build permanent habitations, not on the common itself—that would be destructive of its communality—but just outside it. On John Race's map of County Dublin (1760) some forty houses of this kind are lined up alongside Garristown Commons like runners alert for the starting signal," see Andrews (1987: 13).

54. Freeman (1969: 102).

55. Samuel Beckett's tutor at Trinity College Dublin was A. A. Luce, *the* Berkeley authority in the 1920s, cf. Bair (1978: 36–38).

56. The "perverse" or "backward bending" labour supply curve is a phenomenon of "underdeveloped" as well as "post-industrial" capitalist societies, cf. Hunter and Robertson (1969: 213–17). One's labor supply curve becomes non-"normal" if one substitutes "unpaid time for paid"—this is called the "negative income effect." This "effect" is an anathema political economists tried to eliminate in the United States during the 1980s, and they have been rather successful, cf. Schor (1991).

57. Cf. Thompson's now classic essay reprinted in Thompson (1991).

58. George (1965: 129–30).

59. Swift shared and perhaps inspired some of these genetic theories, e.g., he writes in *A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* (1710): "Lastly, the whole Proceeding, as I have here related it, is performed by the Native of Ireland, with a considerable Improvement; and it granted that this noble Nation, hath of all others, admitted fewer Corruptions, and degenerated least from the Purity of the Old Tartars," Swift (1965: 178). Spenser ([1596] 1970) developed the view that the Gaelic Irish were descended not from the Tartars but from a similar stock, the Scythians who had once lived around the Caspian Sea. This genetic theory was quite popular in the seventeenth century. Also, Canny (1988: 2) notes that "almost every promoter of English settlement in Ireland [in the sixteenth century] . . . compared their work to that of those contemporaries who were attempting to settle among the North American Indians."

60. "Cynical content" is exact to the Diogenesian legends which combine an ironic hostility to Money and Power. Consider two of most famous "facts" about Diogenes: He came to Athens to debase the currency and he told Alexander the Great to stop stopping the light. For a recent discussion of cynicism see Branham and Goulet-Caze (1996). See especially Branham (1996: 90), where Branham argues that "the ideology of Cynicism originates as the set of rhetorical strategies

Diogenes invented to make persuasive sense of such 'minimal living,' so at odds not only with the traditional aristocratic notions of a desirable life, but with the existing models of the philosophical life as well."

61. Hegel (1931: 350). For more recent commentary on eighteenth-century views on "hysteria" see Foucault (1965) and also G.S. Rousseau (1983: 8–12).

62. Beckett (1963).

63. Beckett (1963: 30). For Mercier's and Cramier's journey, see Beckett (1974).

64. Beckett saith, "[Watt's] ataraxy covered the entire house-room, the pleasure garden and of course Arthur," in Beckett (1963: 208). George Berkeley's grandfather "went over to Ireland after the Restoration (the family having suffered greatly for their loyalty to Charles I) and there obtained the collectorship of Belfast," in Luce (1949: 22). Thus Berkeley did not come from Old English stock, whose ancestors went to Ireland before the Restoration and who largely remained Catholic, nor from the Elizabethan and Cromwellian settlers, whose claims to land were based upon successful suppression of native Irish revolts. But he had absorbed the general paranoia concerning the long-term effects of living in Ireland. "A chief hazard was the possibility that whatever English people went to settle in Ireland would, like the descendants of the Anglo-Normans [Old English] before them, become absorbed into the existing barbaric society; this . . . was considered the inevitable outcome of cultural interaction whenever a program of reform was not pursued to its logical conclusion," Canny (1988: 38).

65. One of the most important exceptions was John Locke who befriended William Molyneux, the original Anglo-Irish "nationalist," and with him helped lay the foundation of the Irish linen industry.

66. On the economic background of Swift's "Modest Proposal" see Davis (1971: xix–xxi). The use of Ireland as a labour reserve for English industry was not an eighteenth century matter alone, Engels wrote in 1844: "The rapid extension of British industry could not have taken place if there had not been available a reserve of labour among the poverty-stricken people of Ireland. The Irish had nothing to lose at home and much to gain in England," Engels (1958: 104).

67. On Petty's attitude to Ireland see Bonar (1966: 83–100).

68. See Swift's "A Short View of the State of Ireland" in Swift (1963: 1–12), among many others.

69. Herbert Davis's editions of Swift's prose works are full of useful notes on these matters.

70. Berkeley seems to be uninterested in the Presbyterians in the North as a distinct factor in his social analysis, although some contemporary estimates put their numbers at half of the Protestant population by the mid-eighteenth century, cf. McCracken (1986: 39–41).

71. Fanon's now classic analysis of de-colonization is to be found Fanon (1967: 33). For an attempted application of colonial and postcolonial theory to Irish history see Gibbon (1996).

72. Berkeley's theory of action and spirits is getting increasing, though rather sour, attention recently, cf. Dancy (1987) and Taylor (1985).

73. Smith (1976) is a mid-eighteenth century synthesis of much of this work. For an old style review of this period's psychological theorizing see Stephen (1949), Chapter IX. There has been a flood of studies (structuralist, post-structuralist,

Marxist, and feminist) of eighteenth century psychological terminology and systematics in the last scholarly generation. For a general overview influenced by these trends see G.S. Rousseau's essay, "The discourses of psyche" in Rousseau (1983).

74. Berman (1993: 146–47) or *AL*, vii, 18.

75. *PC* 850.

76. *P* 108–9.

77. Berkeley's path to the tar-water pail was later paralleled by Wilhelm Reich's journey from a Marxism that could not defeat the Nazis to the Orgone Box.

78. *P* 5.

79. The "economic" theory of such phenomena are found in discussion of "dual" labour markets, labour market segmentation, or even "wage discrimination," cf. Freeman (1972: 90–97).

80. There has recently been a tremendous increase on the literature on prisons and capital punishment in the eighteenth century. The stimulation has many sources, including the increase of incarceration in many "advanced" nations, with the U.S. taking the lead, since the early 1970s. The works of the Warwick school and of Foucault were central in shaping the discussion, for the Warwick school see Hay *et al.* (1975) and for Michel Foucault see Foucault (1977). A major work on capital punishment in eighteenth-century Britain is Linebaugh (1992).

81. In this Xenophonic dialogue, Socrates' conversation with Ischomachus, the self-described Athenian "gentleman," revolves around the training of the gentleman's wife. Berkeley may have taken this training as the model for the Irish gentlewoman. Strauss (1970) tells a story about the off-stage results of this training that might have changed Berkeley's mind about the book, if he had known it.

Chapter 3

Prolegomena to *The Querist*

Section 1: Querying the Querist

> I. 43. Whether a single hint be sufficient to overcome a prejudice? And whether obvious truths will not sometimes bear repeating?
> George Berkeley, *The Querist*

Bishop George Berkeley wrote *The Querist* as a response to the politico-economic dilemma the Anglo-Irish ruling class faced in the early eighteenth century. On the one side, the mercantilist policies of the British state made it impossible for the Anglo-Irish to carry on independent foreign trade; but, on the other, any attempt to evade these policies would bring down the wrath of the British state and perhaps stir up jacqueries among the expropriated Irish "natives." The strategy Berkeley proposed in *The Querist* has been the object of some interest among historians of capitalist development,[1] but in this section I would like to draw attention to the form of that seminal book. This form begs for explanation since the book contains all and only queries, 895 queries.

Certainly Berkeley's form is an odd one to use in any branch of "learning" at any time, but this is especially true of political economic literature in the early eighteenth century. The innumerable pamphlets that the English and Irish presses stamped out during this period have the tone of the declarative and imperative to the hilt. For they were the product of state advisors or free-lance projectors and they invariably

exuded an air of self-confidence that might now be (and, if Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* is valid testimony, even then was) considered ludicrous. We might call the tone of this literature an "expression of the rising bourgeoisie" or the typical rhetorical mode of bureaucratic hustlers interested in gaining a hearing in the cacophony of a burgeoning empire's control room. Whatever option we choose, we must note there was never any lack of convinced proponents declaring solutions to the most vexing of questions, from the best banking policies to the most economical ways to exploit the poor.

When the time came for Berkeley to enter into the arena of projectors and loud publicists, he chose a rhetorical genre that was bound to surprise his readers. Why? Commentators on *The Querist* have not taken up such a question.[2] Indeed, they have read the query form transparently, i.e., as a tedious device to say, with the addition of a question mark and an interrogative word order, what is said in the declarative hearts of *The Querist's* sentences. Thus, in query I. 145, we appear to have a question that is simply a declarative sentence in interrogative clothing: "Whether it be true that we import corn to the value of two hundred thousand pounds in some years?" What is this saying but: "Often, in the early eighteenth century, corn of up to two hundred thousand pounds worth was imported into Ireland." One can easily see why the commentators have taken up their transparency stance. After all, the queries do not appear to be genuine questions at all. They seem to openly dictate their answer. In fact, about seventy percent of *The Querist's* queries are anti-interrogative questions of the form: "Is X not Y?" I call these "anti-interrogative questions" because their strongly suggested answer is: "Yes, X is Y."

As the reader runs through these queries, s/he is lulled by the total unproblematicity of the questions, until one seems inevitably to forget the question form and does the anti-interrogative operation "naturally." The commentators just take the inevitable result of reading—the destruction of the questioning aspect of *The Querist's* queries—as the immediate intent of Berkeley's writing, as if it were a script that was irrelevant to the content of the text. But then we must ask of Berkeley and ourselves, why this charade? If he "knows" the answers to the questions, then why produce the questions in the first place? Aren't the queries but pseudo-questions? Could we not say that Berkeley's queries are examples of good occasional expressions gone berserk, a pleasant diversion turned into a perverse obsession? Is *The Querist* a monument

to eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish cuteness?

The transparency view seems to imply these conclusions, and, most emphatically, that the form of *The Querist* is a stylistic irrelevancy which must be mechanically ignored. Though the commentators might not have taken the trouble to state this explicitly, such a conclusion appears *inevitable*. But is such a conclusion *acceptable*? Knowing the care Berkeley took over the form of his writing, the importance he attributed to his monetary ideas, and the systematic connection he made between language and persuasion, it would be unreasonable to believe that he chose such an unusual form lightly. He surely considered the query form of *The Querist* seriously and saw in it a distinct advantage over the projectors' appeals and imperatives.

What, however, were the considerations and forces that might have brought Berkeley to such a preference? I will approach an answer to this question by a series of approximations: first, by placing Berkeley's questions in the context of question-making as a device of power in philosophy; second, by examining the contemporary eighteenth-century significance of the query form; and finally, by specifying the relation of Berkeley's theory of persuasion to the Querist's form.[3]

Questions/Power/Philosophy

Questions are often seen in linguistics and practical logic as declarative sentences with an external, interrogative twist. For example, the declarative sentence embedded in a question like "Have the guests come?" is "The guests have come." Such embedded sentences are often called "sentence radicals." The semantics of questions is not exhausted by sentence radicals. Questions come in types which are often dichotomized into "Yes-No" versus "Wh" questions (or, as it is sometimes expressed, "whether" versus "which" questions). Questions like "Did you close the door?" are "Yes-No" questions, while questions like "Who slaughtered the goat?" are "Wh" questions. "Yes-No" questions simply ask the interrogatee to provide an affirmation or denial of the sentence radical, while "Wh" questions have sentence radicals that are "open" sentences (e.g., in our previous example, the sentence radical is "X slaughtered the goat") which cannot be affirmed or denied. Rather, the interrogatee is asked to provide the appropriate substitution instance(s) for one or more of the free variables in the sentence radical. The relation between the surface structure of the questions and the

deep structure of the sentence radical is, usually, seen as a matter for the future "progress" of the science of syntax to describe.[4]

Yet this research seems to be useless in our quest for understanding Berkeley's rhetorical tactics. This is partly due to the linguists' and their philosophical "hand maidens'" failure to realize the originality of the question as a mode of intercourse . . . and its gift for categorical evasion. It seems that the duplicity of language has yet to be grasped in formal linguistics and logic, and that the Great Prosaic Myth still reigns, i.e., that language is there to be the "honest broker" of bits of information and intentions collected by word-pinching interlocutors in the verbal market, who are straining at the bit to get "back" to their non-linguistic business with their "data." This Myth pervades syntax as well as "pragmatics" (as a glance at the Gricean maxims makes clear).[5] However, questions can detach themselves from their sentential radicals and ridicule them, e.g., "How's the weather?" or more ironically, "How's life?" or more devilishly, "Why should I speak to you?" The question in its many guises is not so much reducible to a modal variant of a sentence radical but rather, the question can find itself at an infinite distance from its radical, humiliating it and showing that it is of no importance at all. Thus, our previous questions are not about the weather, life, or speech, but rather, revile, revoke, and/or regret them.[6]

Questions can be like Aristophanes' lovers in Plato's *Symposium*—and in the Greek, *eros* and *eroteme* (Love and Question) make for an almost punning relation—they are not whole within themselves but are looking for something beyond and other. Not satisfied, like declaratives and imperatives, with their own self-affirmative existence, they are hunting for a sentence to echo and answer themselves. The interrogator is nothing without the interrogatee. Yet between any couple, there are coordinates of a power field to be considered, for the power relations determined by the coordinates will have a crucial effect on the question itself, especially given its total vulnerability in its desire for the other.[7] That is, asking a question implies a request, demand, hope, or desire for an answer or response; consequently, there is a crucial element in the question that is inevitably determined by the field of power relations in which it is imbedded.

Power relations can be extremely complex and polyadic, but for our purposes let us consider power as structured in couples. Let us list a few with the A-pole being the more "powerful" and the B-pole the less in the societies we will consider: master-slave, boss-employee, teacher-

pupil, priest-catechumen, confessor-confessee, judge-accused, loved-lover, inquisitor-inquisitee, male-female, etc. In this elementary arithmetic of power, we might assign "plus" to the A-pole and "minus" to the B-pole, but there are also points in the field where we get a zero-power reading. Such a situation can arise from a simple absence of power relations or from an annihilating interference of power quantities (e.g., when one teaches one's boss or when one is a judge over one's priest).

Writing "zero" for absence and "plus/minus" for "interference," we can get a breakdown on the power grid of questions emanating from zero, plus, minus, and plus/minus points in the field. Consider a few examples. If a judge asks the accused a question, it is a "plus-question," and it is not properly a "request" for information; rather, it is a command with quite identifiable penalties in the breach. The converse gives a "minus-question," since the accused has no guarantee that the judge will answer any question s/he poses. Indeed, the very "request" in certain circumstances could be considered punishable behavior. For the very same question, e.g., "Did you kill your brothers?" does not have the same force, use, and synonymy relations when it is a "plus-question" as when it is a "minus-question."

All the complex emotions driven by the confrontation of power with love, desire, or need are not, of course, mirrored in this simplistic model, but we know that with every "minus-question" is an accompanying "deferential mode." This mode varies in the courtrooms, torture chambers, classrooms, bedrooms, and factories of the world, but it is always there. However, we must not forget that these formulae of deference and the relations that "necessitate" them are not frozen eternally. On the contrary, they are continually being overturned, and questions have frequently been involved in their revolution.

Indeed, to realize that these power relations are reversible and transformable . . . and eliminable, constitutes the beginning of philosophical thought. When we categorize philosophers, we can see them through their characteristic questions warped by the power field. For example, in Athens, Socrates performs a power reversal with his "minus-questions." Socrates occupies all the "negative" slots in our power couples: he is ugly, unskilled, idle, poor, unpaid, accused, an eternal student, always the lover, he is even "feminine." He is exactly the one (like childless women in some Nigerian villages) who cannot speak in the sense of pro-posing a pro-position. Socrates does not

speak, he asks. He questions generals about courage; priests about piety; poets about inspiration; rich, well-educated, young gentlemen about being gentlemen; famous lovers about love; politicians about politics; millionaire teachers about knowledge and teaching, etc. They are all asked deferentially, sometimes in the tone of an advice seeker, but invariably, the questions become insidious. The apparently "perfect" interrogatees show themselves unable to answer the very "modest" questions that are put so respectfully to them.

Athenian philosophy begins with the socio-linguistic revolution initiated by the Socratic question. For his questions, of course, do not really appeal for information at all; rather, they are instruments of transgression and production. On the one side, Socratic questions progressively reveal the ignorance and arrogance of the "expert," the "powerful," the *kalos kai agathos* (the good and virtuous aristocrat); thus, they expose the corruption of the contemporary power relations in Athenian society. On the other side, the Socratic questions produce knowledge by stimulating in the interrogatees the "hidden" knowledge within them. This double aspect of the Socratic question was most intensely expressed in the *Meno*, where the fraudulent claims of Anytus are dangerously exposed, while the wisdom of the "slave boy" is demonstrated before everyone. Such dramatic contrasts were to cost Socrates his life.

It is in the productive side of the Socratic question that the peculiarly "feminine" aspect of the philosopher is expressed. This is best seen in the *Theatetus*, where Socrates claims to be a "midwife's son who practices his mother's art," while conceding. "the common reproach is true, that, though I question others I can myself bring nothing to light because there is no wisdom in me."[8] In genuine mental creation, the Socratic question, instead of revealing the nothingness that is there, helps the being that is not to appear; for like the "drugs and incantations" of the midwife, the Socratic question can bring the "labor" to a "crisis" and deliver the thought within the other. Socrates grants that this art is a product of feminine wisdom (similar to the love wisdom of Diotima in the *Symposium*) that makes it possible for men or boys, aristocrats or slaves, to be able to conceive the truths they implicitly know. The Socratic question is a "minus-question," since it comes up out of the "obscurity" of the "ignoble" classes of Athens; to fulfill both its functions it must be surprisingly sharp. Deferential and non-propositional, it appears to keep its place, but in reality it is a time-bomb.

Its explosion is, of course, ambiguous. On the one side, Plato, and on the other, Diogenes; on one side, a program to recreate an aristocracy on a new plane, and on the other, the utter denial of all hierarchy and a thorough-going disgust with the Athenians' imperial pretensions (Plato's included). During the day, Diogenes passed Plato's house by with his lantern; at night, when he visited, he always dirtied the rugs.[9]

In the intersection of questions and power, there are not only minus-questions, there are also questions of the "master." These questions are not really questions either; they are implicit imperatives. The series—"Will you please close the door?" "Won't you close the door?" and "Close the door!"—is continuous, if the sentences are uttered by the plus-pole and addressed to the minus-pole. Such questions command their "other." In philosophy (I do not speak of "western philosophy" since that is a philosophical myth), Heidegger most clearly exemplified the plus-question. He was the prime academic philosopher of the Nazis, and he clearly concluded that world domination required a thorough effort at creating an elite which repudiated the "positivist" values embedded in "western" philosophy. His effort required a radical questioning of this tradition in order to rid the new world conquerors of any remaining nostalgia. He therefore commanded his students to violently question themselves. (His later disgust with the Nazis had nothing to do with "humanitarian scruples"; on the contrary, he left party activity because the Nazis were not thorough-going enough for him.)

To carry out his task, Heidegger was undoubtedly impressed by his Catholic youth, his catechism and the routine of the inquisitor's interrogation. For the questions involved in inculcating and extracting statements of faith were not interested in "information." Indeed, in such interrogations, the sentence radicals are treated in a totally cynical way. For in the confession box, in the catechism school, or on the inquisitor's rack, the questions are meant to strike terror in the confessee, the catechumen, or the tortured; they are to make the subjects question themselves in order to destroy the interrogatees' resistant silence. They are not meant to reveal some hidden information but to create a new *alethia* (truth) relation between the power poles. One's "most intimate secrets" are exposed under this kind of questioning; not in a statistical spirit, but as a sign of the submission due to the questioner *qua* representative of Being.

Indeed, in seventeenth-century English, "question" was synonymous with "torture," and to read Heidegger is to experience all the tricks of mental torture. One is continually terrorized, made uncertain, mystified, and humiliated, given the sense of being lost and needing someone or something new to get one's bearings . . . the neologisms, the philosophical riddles, the complex grammar, the classical tags, the continual reference to death, anxiety, and (in the post-war years) nuclear holocaust are functional to the "questioning" that Heidegger demands of his pupil-readers. "We" must question ourselves as a matter of duty, if we wish to be part of the "elite" in the Nazi universe of the 1930s or some more defuse regime after the Fuhrer's death. All who do not undergo the "ordeal" at the hands of the "master" are considered not-quite human or, equivalently, "human, all too human." After all, it is the voluntary decision to undergo the question that is the initial sign of one's superiority. The Heideggerian text is a rack full of deliberately confused and confusing questions which stretch the brain to submission—interrogative devices for a "brainwashing" to reduce the psyche to a poor naked thing. Heidegger's critics, like Adorno, are quite off the mark; Heidegger's jargon is authentic enough . . . it is the jargon of the interrogator employing a simple, though quite fallacious logic appropriate to the boot-camp promises of the drill sergeant: you cannot learn to command unless you learn to obey.[10]

Heidegger and Socrates created in their philosophies an intense confrontation of questions with power, but there are levels in the power field where the power relations are equalized, e.g., when the questioner and the questioned are of equal power or are logically identical. Descartes is the philosopher of such questions, and his *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* is the place where he examined them. As Silvia Federici has pointed out in *Il Grande Calilbano,* Descartes launched the great project of bourgeois mental self-discipline, and *Rules* is an early "do-it-yourself" manual for learning the skills of mental self-control.[11] In this broken book, there is a decisive break between Rule XII and Rule XIII which constitutes the transition from "propositions" to "questions," between the plowed fields of knowledge and the forest of ignorance. The book begins with the known proposition and the deductive series. By intuition, we can have a clear, distinct, and simultaneously total vision of a proposition's truth, but with deduction, motion enters the mind, for we can continuously pass in an uninterrupted flow from known to knowing propositions. These mental

points and flows are finite, however. The potentially infinite continuity of thought that could satisfy a god is broken at the series' tip by the question.

In Descartes' questions, we do not find the pathos of power we have unearthed in the Socratic and Heideggarian questions, for in Descartes, there is no Other to be addressed. Ultimately, all his questions were reflexive. Questions come in two grades in *Rules*, "some of them can be perfectly well comprehended, even though we are ignorant of their solution . . . [and] there are others whose meaning is not quite clear."[12] These questions, whether definite or indefinite, were genuine; they really marked the barrier of perplexity. However, they were strange in another way . . . they did not escape the self. They involved "requests" for further information, but these requests are internally directed. The erotic component of the questions turned auto-erotic in Descartes. Consequently, his questions neutralized power relations and preserved their autonomy.

Descartes was anxious to set up objective ground rules for the answering of questions that are to be found in the questions themselves. He picks out three sub-questions that must be answered in order to answer a whole question: (1) "From what facts must the answer be deduced?" (2) "What are the marks of a correct answer?" (3) "How can it be proved that a proffered answer is the necessarily correct one?"[13] On the basis of these conditions, Descartes reduces definite questions for which these three sub-questions can be answered into "equations" of the sort that are familiar to students of algebra. Thus, the Cartesian question "answers itself," if the rules implicit in its asking are observed; for it is perfectly hermetic and autonomous from power relations external to the questioner.

Socrates asks minus-questions, Heidegger asks plus-questions, while Descartes has zero questions, where do Berkeley's queries in *The Querist* fit into the matrix of questions and power? They clearly are not Socratic or Heideggerian; they are closest perhaps to the zero-questions of Descartes, but not because of the neutrality of the power field surrounding them. Rather, the zero-power level arises from the interference of power relations experienced by Berkeley in the writing of *The Querist.* On the one side, he is an Anglican bishop and, hence, in a position of authority relative to his "flock" (members of the ruling class in Ireland and England); but on the other, he has his position at the pleasure of the Hanoverian British state. Given the contradictory

illocutionary forces in the field, the question form is that of the plus/minus-question, or "rhetorical question." A question is "rhetorical" if its answer is unproblematically implicit in the question itself, but the answer does not yet have the power to express its self-affirmation. The contradiction expresses the interfering power field of the plus/minus interrogator. Classic examples of such rhetorical questions are to be found in Mark Anthony's set-piece funeral oration in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Anthony had been given permission to speak by the assassin in power, Brutus, but he already had the right to speak before the Roman mob because of his aristocratic rank and his longtime friendship with Caesar. This contradiction leads to lines like: "He hath brought many captives home to Rome/Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;/Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?"[14] The declarative answer is left to the mob since Anthony does not yet have the power to answer himself. His questions mask declarations in order to hide himself from the power of Brutus and to hide his own power over the mob . . . until.

Berkeley's questions on Ireland's future political economy are "rhetorical" simply because the power field he was embedded in (determined by the Anglo-Irish dilemma) would allow no other formal solution. He did not have the power or position to choose the prophetic stance of his 1721 *Essay*, nor the projector's tone in the *Proposal* of 1725.[15] The query form seemed to formally solve the problem posed by the power field; thus, his questions became "rhetorical."

Queries in Early Eighteenth-Century England and Ireland

As a sustained interrogative tour de force, Berkeley's *The Querist* is unique in the literature of political economy (or in any literature, for that matter); however, as a genre, the query-series was very much an early eighteenth-century rhetorical form. This is not because the eighteenth-century question was motivated by a resurgence of skepticism or by the excitement of new "discoveries"; rather, the question proved an excellent cover, a mask or screen for other activities that could not be practiced frontally.

For example, this was the period of the "question lay" as was first described in Alex Smith's *The History of the Highwaymen* (1714):

> Before Moll Hawkins projected shop-lifting, she went into the "question lay," which is putting herself into a good handsome Dress like some Exchange Girl [a shop girl at the "New Exchange" or stock exchange] then she takes an empty Bandbox in her Hand, and passing for a Milliner's or Sempstress' Prentice, she goes early to a Person of Quality's House, and knocking at the Door, she asks the Servant if the Lady is stirring yet; for if she was, she had brought home, according to order the suit of knots (or what else the Devil puts into her Head) which her ladyship had bespoke over Night; the servant going up stairs to acquaint the Lady of this Message, she in the meantime robs the House and goes away without an Answer.[16]

But not only did the "dangerous" classes trick her Ladyship with questions, her Ladyship herself would undoubtedly wile away her evenings playing the parlor game "Questions and Commands" which is frequently mentioned in the literature and gossip of the age. The game's structure was quite simple: a "king" would be chosen and would address ludicrous questions to the circle of players while commanding forfeits incurred by failing to answer the frequently embarrassing questions.

A society divided by the "question lay" and "questions and commands" had, from top to bottom, a special ear for the question. The point of asking a question is not for an answer, but rather, for a feint, a ploy, or a trap. The early eighteenth century in Britain was a period of masks and masquerades, for after a century of divine manifestoes leading to bloody civil war and class insurrections, the ruling class was studying rhetorical devices emphasizing camouflage. The query that screens another operation is a perfect product of the time.

Further, the query-series was validated as an acceptable form of learned writing by that most influential book of eighteenth century science, Newton's *Opticks.* It was enormously popular among scientists like Ben Franklin, and was perhaps the most cited scientific work in the literary works of that century.[17] Given his deep interest in the theory of vision and things Newtonian, Berkeley, of course, was quite familiar with the *Opticks.* Newton began his book with the following austere program: "My design in this Book is not to explain the properties of light by hypothese, but to propose and prove them by Reason and Experiment."[18] But by Book III, after dealing with observations concerning "how the Rays of Light are bent in the passage by bodies,

forming the Fringes of Colours with the dark lines between them,''[19] he cut off the ordered development of Definitions, Axioms, Propositions, Observations, and Experimental reports (in the best Cartesian fashion), and ended the book "with proposing some Queries, in order for a farther search to be made by others."[20]

These Newtonian queries regularly have the form of anti-interrogative questions, i.e., they are not questions at all but "conjectures" or "hypotheses" whose interrogative form allows them to be posited without appearing to posit anything at all. Newton's readers, however, could easily see through such a ploy. Indeed, the Advertisement for the second edition of the *Opticks* (1717), gives the game away: "And to show I do not take gravity for an essential property of Bodies, I have added one question concerning its causes, choosing to propose it by way of a question, because I am not yet satisfied about it for want of experiment."[21] This is Newton's "question lay," for he "proposes by way of question"; consequently, the queries in the *Opticks* are not questions at all but simply propositions on a lower epistemic level in the Newtonian hierarchy. Newton's famous paranoiac fussiness transformed the interrogative character of the query into a mere declarative status. He was not asking for information, he was demanding that future ages prove his thoughts for him. In so doing, he enshrined the query's duplicity with his own prestige.

Though Newton's queries had a form similar to Berkeley's, they were only part of the *Opticks*' rather complex division of conceptual labor. But in *The Querist,* the queries have a monopoly. A likely model for Berkeley's formal audacity was Swift's *Queries Concerning the Sacerdotal Test* (1732–33) which, though much shorter than *The Querist,* presented its argument in a totally interrogative form. Berkeley was close to Swift both personally and professionally and was probably intimately familiar with the reasons why Swift chose this form. First, we must remember that Swift was the master of parody, pseudonymity, anonymity, and the evasion of authorial responsibility. The bulk of his literary production published in his time did not have his name on it. This was not due to some psychological perversity. Swift frequently wrote on controversial matters concerning Ireland, as we saw in his performance as the Drapier in the "Wood's Half-pence" Affair. The British authorities who ran the island as a colony could imprison authors whose writings they judged disruptive, and Swift's writings often were considered subversive. Moreover, Swift was an Anglican

Dean in Dublin. Deanships were religious posts, but they were under the direct control of the British state; thus, he held his job ultimately at the King's and his ministers' behest.

Therefore, Swift frequently published his political and economic pamphlets under a variety of pseudonyms. They were also frequently found to be "dangerous" to British interest, and their printers were occasionally tried, as we saw in Chapter I. Indeed, for a time, there was a reward for the capture of the true author of *The Drapier's Letters,* who was, of course, Swift himself. Swift managed to escape prison in 1724, but the matter he wrote on in his *Queries* of 1732 was religious, not politico-economic. It put him at odds not with Walpole and the Whig regime in London, but with many of his fellow churchmen in Ireland. This was the issue: in the late seventeenth century, a law was introduced requiring anyone who wished to be a government official to swear allegiance to the Anglican Church (viz., the Sacerdotal Oath). As the eighteenth century proceeded, many non-Anglican Protestants, "Dissenters," lobbied for the repeal of the oath, and many figures in the Whig government as well as certain Anglican churchmen agreed with them. Swift was adamantly against repeal, and when the issue came up before the Irish Parliament, he wrote a number of tracts against it. The sensitivity of the issue and the directness of his involvement undoubtedly made him more cautious. Thus, the advisability of the query form. He could present his case, but in a somewhat more hesitant light, holding back for once his famous *saeve indignatio*. He never used that form before, and he was never to use it again; it had served its purpose. Clearly, the etiquette of genres in the eighteenth century dictated the query-series for any matter that made it difficult to remain anonymous, but which had controversial and even dangerous consequences .

Berkeley had the same vulnerable relation to the British state as Swift did. He was a bishop, after all, and undoubtedly, his taste for confrontation was significantly duller than his older mentor's. Thus, on his return to Ireland at the end of the Sacerdotal Oath affair, Swift's little *Queries* pamphlet might well have suggested the genre for Berkeley's political economy and his reflections on money.

Berkeley's Theory of Persuasion

We have shown that if Berkeley was to write a book of questions they would be of a "rhetorical form" and that the query series was a

fashionable eighteenth-century genre to express controversial views. But, though it might have been "reasonable" for him to choose the interrogative form for his monetary views, what were the decisive motives for his choice? To determine them, we must turn our attention to the way Berkeley envisioned the problem of persuasion.

As a bishop and lifelong clergyman, Berkeley composed many a sermon, so the problem of persuasion and rhetorical strategy was of practical concern. However, Berkeley was also a theorist of language, and what I wish to do in this section is to show how his views about language in persuasion made his choice of the query form inevitable.

The problem of persuasion for Berkeley (as for most others in this period) devolved into the production of certain ideational connections in the audience. But, almost axiomatically, to study the production of ideational connection in others, it is crucial to turn attention to our own ideational production. Berkeley noted two general types of connection. One has an inferential, judgmental, and deductive character. Mathematical thought forms the model here, e.g., from the ideas of right triangle and isosceles triangle, an idea of a forty-five degree base angle is literally "produced" on the basis of deductive inference. But such a Cartesian conception of ideational production was severely limited according to Berkeley. There was another type of ideational connection that did not have a deductive "rational" character but was absolutely essential for the understanding of the finite mind.

This type of connection brings us to the heart of Berkeley's ideational ontology. In effect, ideas are hermetically sealed, totally monadic, and inert entities in Berkeley's view. They cannot cause other ideas to be; but notwithstanding, ideas are profoundly suggestive (from the Latin: *sub*—below, and *gestare*—to make or bring). This is especially true of sign ideas (e.g., the very shades of black and white you "read" on this page or the varying sounds you hear while the page is "recited"). These sign ideas have no deductive tie with the signified; rather, the sign *suggests* the signified: "Ideas which are observed to be connected with other ideas. come to be considered as signs whereof things not actually perceived by sense are signified or suggested to the imagination, whose objects they are, and which alone perceives them."[22]

There is no rational judgmental connection between the sign idea and the idea of the signified; the connection is sub-rational, non-judgmental, and essentially involves the imagination. By naming this

connection "suggestion," Berkeley emphasizes its sub-rational character and totally identifies signification with it: "As sounds suggest other things, so characters suggest these sounds; and, in general, all signs suggest the things signified."[23]

But when does an observed connection between ideas turn into a signification? There is no final reason for it; rather, it depends upon the suggestibility of the imagination that transforms an arbitrary connection into a meaningful relation. Indeed, to depend upon reasons would make meaning impossible. (Already, it would seem that Hume's critique of causality and induction, as well as his upgrading of "habit," await in the wings.)

With Berkeley, the mind's sub-conscious (or at least sub-rational) suggestibility becomes totally revalued relative to the Cartesian paranoia against it.[24] Descartes attributed all our errors to the fact that we "leap before we look," and we do this because the will behind that leap is being driven, not by a rational process, but rather, it is distracted by desires and passions emanating from the body via the "little gland." These passions create a "commotion" within the mind, making it impossible for the will to make decisions that are clearly and rationally considered. These decisions have their root in the unconscious and lead to error and evil. The major Cartesian problem of life was to limit this area of unconscious body-rooted "commotion" and suspend all decision-making when undergoing it; solving this problem is the essence of the self-control that Descartes aspired to and taught.

In Berkeley's work, this unconscious human suggestibility was not relegated to the realm of privation, falsehood, and evil. On the contrary, suggestibility permeates the mind, giving it an essential attractive force that is responsible for mental unity, continuity, and coherence. This suggestibility is the foundation of the significant. Indeed, if we depended only upon Cartesian intuition and deductive powers, we would not be able to speak nor even read the *Meditations*! Linguistic connections are arbitrary; there is no reason why one sign should be the sign of the signified. If this were not the case, there would at best be only one language, yet there are many. "Infinitely various are the modifications of light and sound, whence they each are capable of supplying the endless variety of signs and accordingly have been each employed to form language."[25]

Therefore, one has no choice but to open oneself up to the suggestibility of the mind, to trust it even though its operation is not

rational at all. To turn the gaze of pure skepticism on it, even in Cartesian fashion, would make all meaning and action impossible.

Thus, the first conclusion we can draw is that, for Berkeley, persuasion does not only progress along the deductive route of Cartesian rhetoric, but also the Path of Suggestion. Moreover, this is God's Path in his conversation with humanity, for it is through suggestion that God communicates his presence in the world. God's discourse is not rational, for semantic connection can have only two sources, "the one by arbitrary appointment of mankind, the other by that of God himself." God produces in us "ideas of sight and touch" that are arbitrarily correlated and that come to suggest each other (i.e., the sight of something circular has no more necessary connection with the touch sensations experienced when fingering a ring, than does the word "round"). God creates the correlation of experiences that make the circular sight suggest a curving feel, in the same way that one's English teachers create the circumstances where the word "round" suggests circular sight and curving touch experiences. The difference between God and "mankind" is that God's connections are extremely regular, while mankind's are "infinitely varied."[26]

Berkeley's God, however, has nothing of Newton's "Pancrator" (All-ruler) who imperiously bosses his creatures through laws, chastisements, and commands; much less is he akin to Descartes' God who supplies "mankind" with a "natural light of reason" . . . alone.[27] Rather, Berkeley's God is continually producing in us experiences that we are free to connect or not; there is no imperative for us to accept his suggestions. Because he is indirect, intimate, unobtrusive, and sly, revealing himself at each instant through our rich but arbitrary experiential connection, we can easily forget this arbitrariness and treat connections as "natural" in the same way that an accomplished reader of English will scan these pages and "naturally" conclude that this is a book about George Berkeley. But there is nothing "natural" in reading—nor in walking, reaching, throwing, or any other physical action. Such activity is the product of innumerable connections that appear to be inscribed in things with an iron necessity but are actually free creations dependent on our ability to accept the suggestions of our God-given experience and to trust our imagination.

Thus, our second conclusion is that Berkeley's model of persuasion is that of language learning, where, through the indirect suggestive build-up of ideational connection, the imagination is induced to create

appropriate semantic relations. This brings us to the motto of this section, Berkeley's query I. 43: "Whether a single hint be sufficient to overcome a prejudice? And whether even obvious truths will not sometimes bear repeating?" Berkeley's task in *The Querist* was to overcome the Anglo-Irish's mercantile "prejudices" and to convince them of certain, for him, "obvious truths." This ultimately meant the rejection of the mercantilist "language of money" and the acceptance of a truer language. But how was he to proceed? The way God did, through "hints" and "repetitions." Since mercantilism is indeed a language of money, it cannot only be deductively argued against. Ideational connections made by the imagination are not deductively made; consequently, they cannot be deductively unmade. That his fellow Anglo-Irish citizens forged an imaginative connection between gold and social wealth, between the quantities of precious metal in a country and its economic health or illness, is a fact. It was also, according to Berkeley, a prejudice; it is a connection made too hastily which shaped itself into a language of illusion, since mercantilism does not give us "a sort of foresight, which enables us to regulate our actions for the benefit of life."[28]

But if the mercantilist prejudice cannot be deductively invalidated, how can it be attacked by hints and repetitions? A hint is given by a questioner to the interrogatee, not as an answer, but as a suggestion which turns one's attention to another direction and opens oneself to a new set of connections that might conceivably provide an answer. God gives us hints with pain or pleasure, for example, when we run through an apparently open door only to discover that it was both closed and made of glass. The Anglo-Irish already had some "hints"—they were miserable enough—Berkeley could not make them more so, but he could provide hints in other ways that would turn their attention to another field. This is a field they overlooked because of their mercantilist prejudices and their tendency to blame everyone else for their condition instead of looking to the possibility of their own delusion.

Once the hint is accepted, the next point in the process of persuasion is repetition, for the new ideational connections must be strengthened. The imagination, once opened up by a hint, must be impressed by the constancy of the new connection. After all, Berkeley conceived his project as ultimately teaching his fellow Anglo-Irish a new language of money, and this language cannot be learned simply with one brilliant

deduction. It must be worked at, approached in a thousand different ways, until the suggestion takes on the strength of signification. Just as God is indefatigably teaching every one of us the language of vision throughout our lives, so too must the legislator address the citizens again and again. As a bishop, Berkeley was automatically a member of the Irish Parliament, and hence a legislator.

Hints and Repetitions. What rhetorical form would allow for such a combination? The query-series. The individual questions do not directly demand an immediate affirmation or denial; they make no logical attack on the Prejudice; rather, they individually provide hints of another language of money and wealth that is more adequate. As individual units, they literally suggest new connections between basic economic variables; rhetorical questions do not command the auditor to a new vision, but they do induce.

All (non-plus)-questions introduce a sense of the indefinite, the possible, and the variable in a linguistic field that previously had been fixed. Whether-questions, for example, like "Whether P?" pose at least the alternatives P or not-P, or even more complex ones depending upon the internal structure of "P." Which-, what-, and whose-questions present their alternative answers as a matrix and a category condition.[29] In other words, questions like "Which of the Ps is R?" put a category condition on the answer(s), it must be a P, and it must satisfy the matrix, "x is R." Thus questions introduce free variables into a language and operate like quantifiers even before full-fledged quantifiers have come into play.[30]

Thus the ability to ask questions takes one beyond mere digital propositional logic into a more complex logical world. This complexity is increased when the questions are asked in a series, as in *The Querist*. Though questions are neither true nor false, they have a logic based upon their possible responses. This logic can be relentless in its direction, if it is tied to the engine of *elenchus*, i.e., the famous dialectical exercise of the ancient Mediterranean world practiced by many an Athenian schoolboy and one Zeno and Socrates mastered. The rules of the elenchus procedure are that A begins with a proposition P and Q is to question A, and to question only, while A is to answer only, with "Yeses" or "Nos." Q "wins," if A is lead to affirm not-P.

Berkeley, as Swift before him, was a master of dialectics and the elenchus and he practiced it almost daily during his time at Trinity.[31] Though the characteristic elenchus structure is not found explicitly in

The Querist, the logical structure of a set of affirmations and/or denials of the 895 queries has an overall bearing on the "point" of the text. For, after all, not all of the 2-to-the-895th-exponent sets of possible answers (a number larger than all the seconds in the history of the present universe) to 895 questions are logically consistent. Indeed, it is likely that most will be inconsistent, and only a few of the logically consistent will be plausible. Consequently, the implication is that the thing most abused in these matters is Logic itself!

Indeed a full set of Yes/No answers to 895 questions, if they are consistent, marks out a possible political economy rooted in an assessment of past monetary experience, contemporary Irish experience and the theory of money. It is exactly the sense of constructing a new world (guided by the hints of a quasi-divine Querist) that gives the surprised satisfaction so often noted by many readers of *The Querist*.

The next aspect is repetition. *The Querist* is not loquacious for nothing; the "obvious truths" must be repeated in order to solidify the connections. If God must continually repeat the connection between circular sight and curved feel, then the Querist is not above the same requirement. He must teach through repetition, but repetition is not rote. Thus, the need for a series of queries or hints; their persuasive power does not arise from the argumentative march of the Cartesian mind, starting from indubitable axioms and ending with an ordered flow of deduced conclusions. On the contrary, *The Querist* has a singularly meandering structure, jumping from snide remarks about m'Lady's dressing habits, to metatheoretic suggestions about the relation of power to money, to guarded proposals about the education of Irish Catholics.

This mixture of levels and topics, this flow—interrupted to go back to previous points and switched ahead as if there was nothing to prove—creates a peculiar response in the reader as the queries accumulate. After the hundredth or so, something surprising occurs: the very "transparency" of the Querist's questions suggests itself, and the series of quizzical connections suddenly becomes declarative fact. The job of persuasion is actually put into effect through what might be called a "hypnotic trick"—a "trick" which would not have worked if the form of the sentences were mixed and the intent were Cartesian. The "transparency" reading of the commentators that I mentioned at the beginning of the section is a true sign of the very success of Berkeley's strategy.

In Query I. 316: "Whether he, who only asks, asserts'? And whether any man can fairly confute the querist'?" and in Query II. 11: "Whether therefore it be not high time to open our eyes?" we can hear Berkeley dropping the reader hints of what he is doing, ironically introducing himself into the rhythmic back-and-forth flow of the series in the way a hypnotist will punctuate the hypnotic session with meta-remarks to test the strength of the hypnotic trance and to induce a "crisis" in the subject.[32]

Thus, we can conclude that the form of *The Querist* is not merely determined by the matrix of relations of power and questions, nor only by the fashions of eighteenth-century political discourse, but also by the theory of persuasion Berkeley developed out of his semantic theory and practice. The latter was probably decisive.

NOTES

1. For example, Vickers (1959), Ward (1959), Rashid (1988).

2. Typical commentaries on Berkeley's economic writings written by economic historians like those mentioned in footnote 1 above are not surprisingly tone-deaf to the formal questions posed by *The Querist.* But the more philosphical and literary efforts directed to the text have been surprisingly unquizzical as well. For example, Hutchison (1953: 53) is sensitive to Berkeley the philosopher, but simply takes the question form as way to "stimulate thought and discussion and to 'make his countrymen think'—as he puts it—rather than to lay down a rigid programme." A more sophisticated rhetorical approach was charted by Ellen Douglass Leyburn, a literary critic, in Leyburn (1937). She saw the query series form as a way to attract the attention of and to indirectly rebuke his audience. More recently, another literary critic, Terry Eagleton in his "Crazy John and the Bishop," notes the fact that "*The Querist* is cast in the form of rhetorical questions to the reader, questions confidently anticipating the answer 'yes.' It is, in short, a dialogical form, suitable for a man who held that we can be sure of the existence of another mind when we hear another speak to us. Yet the dialogism is strictly limited, as with the various tedious straw targets of materialist philosophy Berkeley sets up in his Platonic dialogues in *Alciphron.*" With this brief dismissal of Berkeley's talents, Eagleton goes on to complain that Swift did not write *The Querist,* for he "would have made us unsettlingly uncertain of their approximate answers," the critic states in Eagleton (1998: 45), and then flits off to other topics. Does Berkeley's choice of such an unusual genre deserve this treatment?

3. My approach is quite different from Michael Foucault's treatment of Berkeley's economic writings in Foucault (1973). He pays no attention to the details of composition and is content with imposing a "macro-syntax" on Berkeley's work, among others'. But it is in the details, in the "parole," that explanation is to be found. No wonder Foucault could not find it.

4. Logical work on questions was deeply influenced by Polish logicians, especially Ajdukiewicz (1974: 85–93). The linguistic analysis of questions is given an overview by Lyons (1977). An interesting parallelism in the syntax of interrogative and negative sentences is developed in Haegman (1995), posing the possibility of another rhetorical form: a text with all and only negative sentences.

5. For a spirited defense of Grice's meticulous preservation of the Great Prosaic Myth see Kempson (1975).

6. Linguistic research is not only in danger of being done by beings which speak no language, but linguistic theory is increasingly becoming like those economic theories whose postulates only apply to periods of no war, no depression, no governmental intervention . . . to no time.

7. For an interesting beginning effort in the field of questions and power see Goody (1978). Although a similar connection between questions and volition (the "power" term of the eighteenth century) was drawn in Harris ([1751], 1968). Harris wrote: "if we inerrogate, if we command, or if we wish...what do we but publish so many different volitions? For who is it that Questions? He that has a desire to be inf'ormed" (p. 16).

8. Plato (1957: 25–27).

9. There has been a tendency to see Socrates as a rather shameless toady of the Athenian aristocratic class. This trend reached its zenith in Stone (1988), where the Socratic questions has been relegated to a piece of psychological warfare against the democrats of Athens, meant to confuse and demoralize the honest burgher's virtue. This is not the place for a debate on such matters, but two points should be kept in mind: the class consequences of the Socratic questions were ambiguous, while the nature of Athenian democracy was of an imperial sort. For a recent discussion of the relation of Diogenes to the Socratic tradition see A. A. Long (1996).

10. A good example of Heidegger's "torture=question" style in his early period Heidegger (1959). The literature on Heidegger's deep involvement with the Nazi movement and state is now enormous. For a playful contribution to this grim genre see Federici and Caffentzis (1987).

11. Federici and Fortunati (1984).

12. Descartes (1973: 48–49).

13. Descartes (1973: 61).

14. Shakespeare (1955: Act II, scene 2, lines 9–96).

15. The 1721 *Essay* and the 1725 *Proposal* can be found in Luce and Jessop (1953vi).

16. Quoted in Partridge (1971: 550).

17. Cohen (1963: 137–38).

18. Newton (1963: 1).

19. Newton (1963: 338).

20. Newton (1963: 338).

21. Newton (1963: cxxiii).

22. *TVV* 39.

23. *TVV* 40.

24. Descartes (1973b: 352–54) includes a section on, "In what the strife consists which we imagine to exist between the lower and higher part of the soul." Berkeley's theory of suggestion was part of the gradual sea-change that takes place

in eighteenth-century rhetoric and philosophy against the axiomatic stylistics of the seventeenth.

25. *TVV* 40.

26. *TVV* 40.

27. For a discussion of the varieties of God in Descartes, Newton, and Berkeley see Koyre (1957).

28. *NTV* 147.

29. See Belnap and Steel Jr. (1976: 22).

30. The intimacy of quantifiers and questions is emphasized by Hintikka who noted in his "game-theoretic" approach to quantification that quantifiers can be treated as questions initiating a search in the context of a game with Nature (or the Devil). He writes, "One 'language game' in which quantifiers can naturally occur is what I shall call the language-game of seeking and finding; and it seems to me that this is by far the most important kind of language-game in which they can occur," Hintikka (1973: 59).

31. For a discussion of "elenchus" in Berkeley's work see Walmsley (1990), chapter 6. Elenchus is one of a number of dialectical procedures used for pedagogical purposes in ancient Athens. For a discussion of the history of its use from Plato's Academy to Trinity College, Dublin in the early eighteenth century see Rembert (1988: 11–72).

32. There is much to be discovered about the relation between what has sometimes been called empiricism, and "Mesmerism." They are joined by the introduction of a new gravitational force in the mind, "suggestion," which partly echoes pre-Cartesian "natural magic," and partly looks ahead to the non-mechanical scientific revolution of the nineteenth century. Mesmer was deeply influenced by Paracelsus, and his first work, *Planetarum Influxu* appears a generation after Berkeley's *Siris* (1744).

SECTION TWO: DEFETISHIZING GOLD

The Querist is a postmodern, hyper-text written before the domination of modernism. It is non-deductive, anti-axiomatic, ironic, playful, structurally self-reflexive, open-ended, and paradoxical. The reader must weave the text for him/herself by responding to 895 questions, hence it is at least 2-to-the-895th-exponent potential books in one. Read *The Querist* with caution, since it resists the confident interpreter's "eureka!" at all points.

Since the basic unit of the text is the question itself, therefore it is anti-representational to the core. Its questions bring the decision and action of the reader to the fore while the authoritarian ideology of objective semantic content, often claimed for declarative sentences in linguistic theory, retreats before them.

Moreover, the Querist's questions continually refer beyond themselves, both fore and aft. They not only demand that the reader decide the answers, they call for an investigation of their presuppositions. The hermeneutic method appropriate to *The Querist* must be simultaneously bold and tentative, since the text does not allow any interpretive Archemedian point. *The Querist* is structurally unlike the Platonic dialogue form that Berkeley used so effectively in *Dialogues* and *Alciphron*. For the Platonic dialogue presents the reader with a textual surface and play of questions and answers through which one can (however tentatively) interpret an authorial design.[1] But *The Querist,* by being a text of all and only questions, collapses the author into the text and destroys the reader's comfortable distance from it. To interpret it, one must enter into the text as well. The diameter of *The Querist's* hermeneutic circle tends to zero. Hence, it asks much from the reader. Not only does it provoke an energy of decision, it calls on the reader's knowledge of the invisible ground of concerns and achievements that launched the questions in the first place.

All these reflections are not counsels of hermenutical despair. For though the Querist speaks in queries, he does have a plan. Though his way of realizing it, however, is labyrinthine, suggestive, and allusive, its outline is clear:

- to persuade his audience of "the true idea of money as a ticket or counter for conveying power";

- to convince his audience of the need and practicability of instituting an Irish National Bank and an Irish "small change" Mint, i.e., of the need for new and local methods for the production of money;
- to systematically "defetishize" gold and silver *qua* money.

I will deal with the first two parts of the plan in the next chapter, but they both required the third, i.e., the dissolution of the Prejudice that money must be gold, silver and/or other "precious" materials. If Berkeley had no logical basis for overthrowing this Prejudice, *The Querist* would have been a mischievous adventure. How then did Berkeley convince himself that specie was not necessarily the best for of money? Why was he so confident that gold and silver could be demonetarized, both intellectually and practically? He definitely needed this confidence, since he was not only staking his own and his friends' intellectual reputations on it. He and his editors (Madden in Dublin and Percival in London) and his publicist (Prior in Dublin) thought it wise to publish the first edition of *The Querist* anonymously in 1735–1737, probably for legal reasons. Since there was literally a "gag rule" on any proposals for a National Bank that the Irish Parliament imposed in 1721 when it voted down the first proposal to create a National Bank. But given the small network of readers and discussants of the day (especially in Dublin) and the prominance of Berkeley, Prior, and Madden, the identity of the Bishop and the Querist would have been as easily spotted (and "outed," if it came to that) as the identity of Swift and the Drapier. Certainly, in the 1750 revised edition of *The Querist* that he signed, Berkeley continued his campaign to defetishize gold unabated, even though much of his National Bank scheme was cut.

A philosopher like Berkeley could only feel this confidence if his general philosophy was in step with his views on money. Whatever the empirical evidence for the detachment of gold and money—which was indeed quite uneven in 1735 given the spectacular failure of the Law system in 1720 and the controversial success in Rhode Island in the 1720s—it was not enough. What were the philosophical lines of force that led Berkeley, as early as 1721, at the beginning of his monetary education to state in the *Essay* that specie-money and credit "have the same value" just as long as they "promoteth industry"? In this section I will decribe the philosophical prolegomena derived from his first conceptual revolution (1709–1713) that shaped Berkeley's initial im-

pressions in the philosophy of money and laid the basis of his later defetishizing program.

I use the word "defetishize" to characterize Berkeley's plan rather anachronistically. Berkeley never deployed the term "fetish" to qualify gold or anything else. The closest word to "fetish" in his vocabulary was "idolatry." If one were anxious to stay true to the eighteenth-century context of the text, the phrase "de-idolatrize gold" would have been a more appropriate to refer to Berkeley's intentions.[2] But I wish to bring *The Querist* into a trajectory of texts that passes through Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Feurbach's *The Essence of Christianity*, and most especially Marx's *Capital* and beyond. For Berkeley's concern in *The Querist* was not merely to suggest an efficient mechanism that would "solve" the monetary problems of Ireland. He was anxious to probe the nexus that connects money with human activity in general, and he was one of the first to theorize the Hell and Maya of alienation and reification in the world of commodities. Consequently, the phrase "defetishizing gold" will keep this trajectory boldly, but tentatively, before us as a project of this section.

"Defetishizing gold" involves ridding the reader of a prejudice and then implanting a correct alternative understanding of money. The former can proceed through logical argumentation and elenchus, as he did in his earlier works, but the latter must be accomplished through "non-rational" methods like suggestion, according to Berkeley's theory of persuasion discussed in the last section. He shaped the intellectual tools to carry out his program in two periods of his career. Berkeley's negative defetishizing campaign depended upon his youthful philosophy embedded in his *Principles*, *Dialogues* and *The New Theory of Vision* of 1709–1713, but his positive proposals for monetary reform are to be found in the discoveries of his "second conceptual revolution," developed in the new edition of the *Principles*, *The Analyst*, *Alciphron*, *The Querist* and *A Discourse* of 1732–1738. Whether, indeed, the negative and positive programs of the early and late Berkeley are coherent is an issue that will be assessed in the next chapter. But first let us turn to the confutation of the fetishizing Prejudice that identified money with gold.

Idolatry and Fetishization

The purported necessary relation between money and precious metals was a special case of Berkeley's *bête noire:* idolatry. From his earliest writings Berkeley attacked the philosophical works of Locke to Newton and especially their "free thinking" epigonies for being rooted in and empowering a most refined and deadly form of idolatry of the day: materialist and specie-obsessed economics. In the *Principles* (1710) he connected the anti-materialist conclusions of his philosophy with an attack on idolatry:

> The existence of matter, or bodies unperceived, has not only been the main support of *atheists* and *fatalists*, but on the same principle doth *idolatry* likewise in all various forms depend. Did men but consider that the sun, moon, and stars, and every other object of the senses, are only so many sensations in their minds, which have no other existence but barely being perceived, doubtless they would never fall down, and worship their own ideas. (*P* 94)

On Palm Sunday 1714 he preached a sermon in Leghorn granting that though pagan philosophers might have been able to use reason to reach an understanding of "the invisible things of God":

> the bulk of mankind being directed by the vain pursuits of riches and honours and sensual pleasures from cultivating their minds by knowledge and vertue, sink into the grosssest ignorance, idolatry and superstition. Professing themselves wise they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image.[3]

Thus for the early Berkeley, religious idolatry, philosophical materialism, and the obsession with money formed a complex. Two decades later in *The Querist* this insight matured into a specific program: the deracination of the Prejudice that specie is the only real form of money from the minds of his Anglo-Irish readers.

Not surprisingly, Berkeley, in his life-long critique of idolatry, saw himself in a Mosaic light. When he arrived in Newport, for example, in January 1729 the first sermon he preached had a definite Mosaic cast. He reviewed the history of religion and observed that "Jewish Law provides against idolatry and corruption of manners, natural religion

comprised in the decalogue, one God to be worshp'd without image basis of the whole. After the golden calf rites instituted to prevent idolatry."[4] For when Moses came down from his conversation with Yahweh on Mt. Sinai he saw his people dancing naked around a calf-shaped god of gold. Predictably, his anger "waxed hot":

> And he took the calf which they had made and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon water and made the children of Israel drink of it. (Ex. 32:20)

Then Moses ordered his henchmen, the Levites, to slaughter three thousand of the more recalcitrant gold worshipers. Berkeley had a similar Mosaic problem in the form of the mercantile prejudices of his Anglo-Irish flock. They too had to be defetishized. But Berkeley in 1735–1737 had neither Levites nor wholesale chemists at his disposal. All he had were mild words of "persuasion and suggestion" (and some threats of the gallows for the libertine "free-thinkers") to carry out a similar program of defetishization.

It is easy to forget, almost three centuries later, how intense this "chryso-clastic" (gold-smashing) struggle was and what weapons (intellectual, political and military) were deployed by the friends and enemies of gold. John Law, for example, with all the police powers of the state at his disposal, tried to legislate specie out of the form of money in France on May 1, 1720.[5] He failed miserably; and his failure was a great lesson to Berkeley.

Berkeley's own "chrysoclastic" program in *The Querist* had two levels: one overt and imagistic, the other covert and theoretical. The overt aspect is readily seen on the surface of *The Querist*, the theoretical part is based on the metaphysics, epistemology and semiotics he had developed in the *Principles* and *Dialogues* at such great cost to his ecclesiastic career two decades before.

The overt part begins with a typical eighteenth-century stereotype:

> I. 31. What makes a wealthy people? Whether mines of gold or silver are capable of doing this? And whether the negroes, amidst the gold sands of Afric, are not poor and destitute?

Here we are shown that proximity of gold has nothing to do with wealth. Case in point, Africa.[6] But this lack of correlation of possession

of specie with wealth is not a racist slur, for the same lack can be found in the then classic stereotype of quixotic Spain:

> I. 45. Whether even gold, or silver, If they should lessen the industry of its inhabitants, would not be ruinous to a country? And whether Spain be not an instance of this?

Elsewhere he claims that the Spanish are "rich and lazy." These are not original sentiments. Spain was continually used by mercantilist theorists as an example of a nation gone to ruin because it did not manage favorable trade balances, i.e., it could not keep its gold and silver to itself.[7] Berkeley's deployment of the image however, is the opposite of theirs. Spain's possession of the bulk of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century gold and silver production sapped the primary factor of wealth production: *Industry.* Berkeley suggested that a contradiction existed between the two poles of the mercantilist universe. If a nation's industry is directed towards the accumulation of gold and silver stocks, then the very success of the enterprise can militate against the means, as the Spanish case so conventionally illustrated for his pamphlet-reading public.

Continuing in this theme, Berkeley could not resist a bit of Mosaic social pharmacology:

> III. 283. Whether gold and silver be not a drug where they do not promote industry? Where they be not the bane or undoing of an idle people?

If Money is the "blood and spirits" of the community, then to inject gold and silver into the circulation of a community tending to idleness is to prescribe economic fatality. This especially applied to the Irish who appeared to Berkeley as almost genetically disposed to "indolence." The Querist claims, "our native Irish are partly Spaniards." Should, by chance, gold and silver be found in clover fields and make their way into Irish circulation on a large scale, an already idle and supine people (who are partly Spanish) would become, if possible, even more idle and supine (i.e., totally Spanish). Further, if, against all odds, a successful mercantilist growth cycle began to take hold in Ireland, it would immediately short-circuit and deflate; for the social body would respond

to the surplus gold and silver by curtailing the extra effort that produced the surplus in the first place.

It is crucial to see, however, that Berkeley was not against money *qua* gold and silver *per se*. Rather, he was concerned that money's "virtue" as the exciter of Industry be recognized. Some countries had defetishized gold and silver enough to use it without falling prey to its drugging and baneful effects (e.g., the typical seventeenth-century success story, Holland). But Ireland, both for constitutional and colonial reasons, was in no such position, first and foremost, because the identification of money with gold and silver was still a prejudice among the elite:

> III. 249. Whether our prejudices about gold and silver are not very apt to infect or misguide our judgments and reasonings about the public wealth?

"Prejudice" is a crucial term here. As we will see in more detail in Chapter 4, Berkeley was beginning to revalue a whole set of "intermediary" concepts like Prejudice in this period. These intermediaries were more than ideas, but less than spirits. They could affect or guide (or infect and misguide) our understanding in a potentially infinite number of situations. Hence a mistaken Prejudice was much more catastrophic than a mistaken Idea whose normal consequences immediately informed its owner of his/her error. Prejudices about gold and silver were especially dangerous, in Berkeley's view, for they made the basic category mistake of idolatry: confusing ideas of things with spiritual activity. This idolatry was at the heart of the mercantilist fallacy (which even Swift committed), for it put means after ends, detached signs from the signified, saw effects as causes, and sacreligously placed things above spirits. Indeed, mercantilism was a special case of the general prejudice (and even sin) of materialism, viz., the belief that material substances are active.

Berkeley knew that his Anglo-Irish brethren were deeply mired in this idolatry. The Querist's attempt to defetishize gold and silver presupposed his more general anti-materialist program. For one cannot defetishize through images. This is what Moses taught his people in the sickness following the ingestion of the golden potion (when the feces of the people was undoubtedly flecked with gold for a period) and the ensuing massacre. A Lockean association of one idea, "gold," with

another, "bane" or "negroe" or "Spaniard," would at best be a form of iconoclasm leading to another icon. But Moses and Berkeley had a more radical intent that a Lockean pedagogy ignored. Locke was concerned that the right sequence of ideas be induced in the pupil so that, by repetition, a correct association is formed in the receptive mind. Berkeley's intent was to break up the apparent monopoly of ideas to expose and excite a space of spirits. That is why the overt, imagist aspect of his defetishising program is so sparse and, in the end, for all its stereotyping, half-hearted.

Locke's Theory of Money Revisited

Berkeley laid the foundations of *The Querist*'s defetishizing program almost a generation before its publication in his critique of abstract ideas, materialism, and the representational theory of perception and meaning in the *Principles* and *Dialogues.* The work of his early period (1709–1713) formed a conceptual basis for his general defetishizing program which heard in the doctrines of the most "advanced" monetary thinkers of his day echoes of the idolatry of pre-Christian peoples.[8] Though the earlier program is not argued for in *The Querist*—as indeed nothing is literally argued for there—he depended on it for the coherence of the work. But he also used *The Querist* to developed a new dimension of his critique of fetishism and idolatry which begins in *Alciphron* (1732) and ends in the *Discourse* (1738).[9]

Berkeley's major target in this general defetishizing polemic was inevitably Locke's "way of ideas" and the Lockean semantic program which was the basis of Locke's theory of money. This philosophy of ideas and language was important because the undermining of Locke's semantics would bring logical ruin to the Locke's theory of money which provided one of the most well-known defense of the Prejudice a generation before. Consequently, Berkeley's early philosophical works (which provide a refutation of Locke's semantics) constitute philosophical prolegomena to *The Querist.* In order to understand Berkeley's defetishization strategy, let us briefly recollect Locke's idea of money.[10] For Locke, money was a complex idea with two components: a substance idea and a mixed-mode idea. Typical examples of substance ideas are "lead," "wool," "water," "gold," "silver," while typical examples of the mixed-modes are "honor," "democracy," "beauty," "taxable," "property." The substantial aspect of money

assures it of an objectivity, publicity and testability its mixed-mode aspect lacks. For gold and silver are not only objects of desire but, by being natural substances, any disagreements two people might have concerning their qualities and quantities can be resolved by open experiment and measurement. On the other hand, we might permanently disagree about a mixed-mode aspect of Money, e.g., the legal status of monetary possession, especially if we came from different societies. Such a disagreement, being based on divergent and changing customs and fashions or divergent interpretations of common customs end fashions, has no converging character.

Consequently, for Locke, the substantial aspect of Money in precious metals was essential to the monetary functions of exchanging, storing and measuring value.[11] For the metallic substance exchanged guaranteed an objectivity to the exchange that could be checked by a third party beyond the subjective interpretations of the exchanging partners. Further, substances could be re-identified and their properties were predictable across temporal transformations, hence they can be stored. Finally, the public measurability of the weight and fineness of gold and silver throughout the planet made them perfect super-social standards of value.

Locke argued in the 1690s that any attempt to detach the substantial aspect of the idea of money would lead to economic and social chaos and would certainly spell the demise of England's growing dominance of the world market. Indeed, Locke's analysis of Money was to serve as the philosophical foundation of English monetary policy until the world wars at the end of the eighteenth century. This policy, however, posed the very Anglo-Irish dilemma Berkeley tried to transcend, since it continually strived to repress any experiments in England *and* the colonies to introduce specie-less, fiat money.

Locke's Semantic Program

Berkeley identified Lockean philosophy with the social forces and types promoting "the ruin of Great Britain," especially the mercantilist Prejudice which equated money with precious metal. Thus Berkeley's struggle with Locke was no battle of academic "papers" or a polite "exchange of views," for all the formalities of scholarly etiquette that Berkeley respected in his references to Locke.[12] When he dueled Locke or, more directly, his epigonis he fought active, influential, but evil

spirits. Lockeanism was "behind" the corruption of a masquerading Walpolean ministry as well as the robbers' and housebreakers' "disbelief in a future state." Indeed, Locke was a "front" for the "skepticism, Atheism and Irreligion" he fought all his life. Although on reading the dry, business-like *Essay on Human Understanding*, one might be disarmed and wonder what the anxiety was about!

Berkeley's logically needed to reject Locke's philosophy of money *because* he rejected Locke's materialism, his representational theory of perception and, most crucially, his semantics. For Locke's theory of the meaning of money was a direct application of his general semantic program, i.e., "each word must be backed by a publicly recognized, temporally durable, conceptually distinct and determinate idea."[13] This program was built upon three hypotheses:

(A) words signify ideas (semantic "backing");
(B) most ideas "backing" words are general ideas, whether simple or complex, produced by abstraction (abstractionism);
(C) ideas of substance which are abstracted from particular ideas are caused by non-mental, corpuscular structures "outside" us (materialism).

These philosophical hypotheses were crucial to Locke's Philosophy of Money. But Berkeley would have had to reject them to remain consistent to his early philosophy, even if he had never written *The Querist*. Let us examine each in turn:

(A) demanded any monetary symbol (word, coin or bill) have a definite "idea-backing" as an essential ontological condition for its being money.

(B) made it obvious that these monetary ideas are general and abstract. A penny, e.g., not only signifies a particular idea produced on its appearance, it also is associated with a general idea of a quantity of silver. Hence one would be willing to exchange this particular penny with 11 others for a shilling because this (particular) penny's silver ought to be 1/12th of a (general) shilling's silver.

(C) assures the Money holder that the combination of abstract, general ideas that constitute the idea of Money will have an extra-social, objective component "in the world" regulating the exchange process.

Berkeley's Critique of Locke's Semantic Program

The central thesis of Locke's semantic program is best expressed in the following passage:

> The use men have of . . . [words] being either to record their own thoughts for the assistance of their memory or, as it were, to bring out their ideas and lay them before the view of others. Words, in their primary or immediate signification, stand for nothing but the ideas in the mind of him that uses them, how imperfectly or carelessly those ideas are collected from the things which they are supposed to represent. (E III, ii, 2)

If a speech situation is envisioned as a triangular configuration composed of an audience, a speaker and the referents of the speaker's words, then all speech or auditory acts terminate in ideas. For the speaker's words must be "backed" by appropriate ideas, which are their primary signification, while the audience, which registers the sound ideas, must also "back" these words with their own ideas, if communication or "speech" is to take place.

Berkeley's analysis of speech acts totally rejects Locke's "idea backing" model of words and their meaning. He claimed, to the amazement of many still held in thrall by the "idea backing" paradigm, that particular ideas are rarely (if at all) directly relevant to the meaning or signification of word.[14] Berkeley identified at least four broad areas were words do not signify ideas: (a) when words have "performative" uses; (b) when words refer to spirits; (c) when words refer to relations; (d) when words are used as variables ranging over particular ideas (e.g., general nouns). Taken together, however, these areas comprise the bulk of the territory of language.

Let us first summarize Berkeley's linguistic geography:

(a) the purpose of communication is not always "to lay (one's ideas) before the view of others" since as any sermonizer knows there are "other ends (of language) as the raising of some passion, the exciting to, or deterring from an action, the putting the mind in some particular disposition;" (*P Intro* 20)

(b) the primary and immediate signification of some words (like "God", "I," "thou") cannot be ideas since their referents must be spirits and there cannot be ideas of spirits (*P* 135–38);
(c) words "may imply or suggest the relation of things; which relation, habitude or proportion as they cannot be by us understood but by the help of signs, so being thereby expressed and confuted, they direct and enable us to act with regard to things" (*AL*, vii, 13–14);
(d) "there is no such thing as one precise and definite signification annexed to any general name, they all signify indifferently a great number of particular ideas" (*P Intro* 18).

Aggregating these areas we see that for Berkeley the bulk of language ("the use of words") eludes ideas. By (a) Berkeley indicates that words are frequently meant to "terminate in the will [the originator of activity] and not in the understanding" (*P Intro*). By (b) Berkeley erases any connection between personal pronouns and other "spiritual" nouns (e.g., "angel", "devil") with ideas, while he admits that (at least implicitly) most sentences have reference to one or another spiritual and active being. By (c) Berkeley brings to the fore the interest of much eighteenth-century linguistics with words that relate two or more ideas (which would include logical operators ["and," "but", "either or," "unless," "if . . . then . . ."] as well as what we would now classify as relational words like "taller than" or "father of"). These words do not signify ideas because they require an "act of mind" for their meaning. By (d) Berkeley goes to the core of Lockean language theory by cutting the tie between "general terms" and particular ideas; rather, general terms should be considered on analogy with variables in algebra or the "givens" of geometric proofs, i.e., referring to a range of particular ideas determined by a self-defining mental activity. Thus the words in a sentence like "I walked over to my friend and spoke to him about houses" can conceivably be understood as not signifying any particular idea at all! After all, "I," "him," and "friend" refer to spirits, "and," "walked to," "spoke to," "about" and "my" are relations, and "houses" is a general noun.

When we examine Berkeley's subversion of Locke's language program we can abstract (sic) a single agent: *Activity*. "Will," "spirit," "relation," "definition" partake of a world transcending ideas, a world of spiritual action and by Berkeley's lights "we may not I think strictly be said to have an idea of an active being" (*P* 138). Although, as we

will see in the next chapter, we need to have a concept or notion of such a being and how it operates if any political-economic program is to succeed.

I. Words=Ideas: Berkeley and the Death of the Idea

The essence of Berkeley's critique of Locke's philosophy of language (and hence of the major philosophical support of the Prejudice) is to be found in Berkeley's dichotomization of ideas from actions, and his (consequent) interest in the active, operational aspect of language, including its syntactic structure. Once we understand his categorical dichotomization of activity and ideas—one of his major contributions to the linguistic transformation of the eighteenth century—we realize that his critique of Locke is not tendentious. For in Berkeley's early universe, ideas, instead of pervading all of mental space (as they did with Locke), implode to a restricted, though central, corpus.

This dichotomy is by no means standard in the history of philosophy, for the idea of "idea" was not always seen as "passive and inert." One need only experience the peculiar exhilaration of Plato's *Parmenides* to recognize that something had died in the "idea" when it entered Berkeley's thought. If we also notice the philosophical revival of the "Idea" in Kant and especially in Hegel we might justly wonder whether Berkeley was idiosyncratically and perversely setting up a Lockean scarecrow to clear the field for his "spirits." Certainly any unprejudiced reading would rid one of a temptation to classify the early Berkeley as an "idealist" or even an "idea-ist."[15] He is, on the contrary, the most idea-clastic of philosophers.

However, we cannot accuse Berkeley of idiosyncrasy. If he was the one that wrote the death certificate for ideas, Locke was the physician who presided over their death throes. First, we note that Berkeley's announcement of the death of ideas was done with the best Lockean rhetoric available, the rheotric of observation and attention:

> All our ideas, sensations, or the things which we perceive, by whatsoever names they may be distinguished, are visibly inactive, there is nothing of power or agency included in them. So that one idea or object of thought cannot produce, or make any alteration in another. To be satisfied of the truth 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 of sense or reflection, will not perceive in them any power or activity; there is therefore no such thing contained in them. (*P* 25)

One might respond, "What of the idea of death itself, or of a snake, an erotic image or an intricate, swirling well remembered mandala, do they not act on the mind?" Berkeley would reply by asking us to distinguish between the idea of the snake, the idea of the poisonous bite and the anxious connection made between them which are "blended together in our fancy." Once such a process of distinction is made, we can see that it is neither the idea of the snake nor the idea of the poisonous bite *per se* that move the mind, but it is the *relation or connection* of the idea of the snake to the idea of the poisonous bite that creates the anxiety. This relation is "an act of the mind." Moreover, the idea of the snake is complex, made up of color ideas, shape ideas, tactile ideas, etc., as is the idea of a poisonous bite. Each component *per se* causes nothing, it is only in their synthesis that anxiety is provoked. That is, observing and attending to ideas involves breaking them down into their separate components, and then realizing that what puts them together and gives them power is the Self!

Berkeley employed the operations of observation and attention to free himself (and his readers) from the slavery to and idolatry of ideas. Since no particular idea can cause one to feel or do anything, they are dead. Berkeley did not invent this "idea-freeing" method, rather he took it from Locke's writings where the death of ideas was very much advanced. Berkeley merely accelerated their *rigor mortis*, until ideas were totally reified.

In Locke, ideas did not just happen to us, rather we *have* them: for an idea to be, it has to be someone's *possession*. This is a distinctive feature of ideas because it is a special case of his labor theory of property. For we either produce the idea (as in carving of an idol) or we appropriate it (like the acorn we eat) in our mind, and the phrase "in our mind" is not a description of location but of possession. These actions of mental production and appropriation, even though preconditioned (for Locke) by a world of corpuscular structures and powers

(the "common of the mind," so to speak), create a genuine claim to possession. For just an in the case of Locke's famous acorns:

> That labor put a distinction between them and the common. That added something more than Nature, the common mother of all, had done, and so they become his private right. (ST 28)

Similarly, for an idea to be "in my mind" is synonymous with my perceiving it and so *having* it, for "having ideas and perception being the same" (E II, ii). Just like acorns, ideas are a non-durable forms of property. They cannot be stored, for it would be misleading to take the analogy of a "store-house" of memory seriously:

> But our ideas being nothing but actual perceptions in the mind which cease to be anything when there is no perception of them, this *laying up* of our ideas in the repository of this memory signifies no more but this: that the mind has the power in many cases to revive perception which it has once had. . . . And in this sense it is that our ideas are said to be in our memories, when indeed they are actually nowhere; but only there is an ability of the mind when it will to revive them again. (E II, i, 9)[16]

Thus "an idea in my memory" is synonymous with "I can reproduce this idea" and so the durability lays in my productive capacity and not in the ideas themselves. Ideas have no life or existence of their own in Locke's philosophy. They must be "revived" by our mind, for without our mental productive capacity they are lifeless, passive, and inert.

Ideas are necessarily our possessions. But if something becomes a possession, it logically loses its independence; and, from a legal point of view, it becomes chattel. The conclusion to this chain of implications in Locke's work was the creation of a conceptual antipode to the ancient Greek notion of "idea". For the Greeks, "ideas" came and went when *they* willed, they had a logic and power of their own—they were the models of or modeled on gods—and the mind could be *their* possession. But the Greeks of course, were pagans and idolaters.

Berkeley could not be accused of intellectual paganism nor of unfairness to Locke by insisting on the "inertness" of ideas. He merely clarified and extremised the Lockean universe. In his youthful reading of Locke, Berkeley obviously found the compromises and middle

ground of the frequently "underground" and "behind the Scenes" elder. One can almost hear the young Berkeley whispering over the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*: "No! Either products or producers, either possessions or possessors, either things or non-things, either ideas or spirits, no more of this conceptual diplomacy!" For to endow "ideas" with even the suspicion of powers is to engage in a profound form of mental regression which Locke was presumably fighting. To "let" an idea affect the mind, to be frightened or excited "by" an idea, is to become a pagan once again worshipping and "giving" to a thing your own powers, it would be letting a possession take possession of the possessor. Unless his strict dichotomy is applied to the Lockean world, according to Berkeley, it still would have lingering in it an archaic, obscurantist relation of mind to its products.

One cannot dismiss Berkeley's *jihad* against Locke's theory of language as superficial. For Locke the function of words was to give durability to ideas ("record their own thoughts") and to make it possible to exchange them ("to bring out their ideas and lay them before others"). In fact, Locke's conception of idea exchange is similar to the "silent trade" or "dumb barter" practiced in early West Africa, where one side would lay out "goods" on a beach and go away, returning later to (hopefully) find the other party had taken what they left and placed new commodities in exchange.[17] We might call it "stilted," but this is what many people still call "rational exchange of ideas": I say something, you say something, I do, so do you, and on and on, in alternative rhythm until there is nothing more to exchange and the parties go away—this is communication for Locke, and words make it possible. By extending the economic analogy we might call Locke's a "mercantilist conception of language": words were instruments for the accounting, storing and circulation of ideas.

For Berkeley, however, language was not limited to the mercantilist functions, it was productive as well. Words, unlike ideas, could properly affect and refer to the producers of ideas and not merely to the ideas themselves. They are an essential part of the construction of ideational structures (as with relational words and general names) and they stimulate ourselves and others to be productive (as with "persuasive" statements or spirit-referring names). Words, for Berkeley, broke out of the realm of accounting and exchange into the world of ideational industry. Consequently, Locke's scrupulosity in his linguistic accounting mania of finding for every word an accompanying idea

missed the point of language. According to Berkeley, words were to suggest and excite ideas and direct our attention out of the circuit of circulating ideas to the realm of spirits. Berkeley, with respect to words, was to Locke as the industrialist is to the accountant in the realm of language.

II. Abstraction:
Locke on Abstraction as Mental Manufacture

According to Locke "the far greatest part of words that make all languages are general terms" (E III, iii, 1). Consequently, if the word=idea isomorphism could be demonstrated to be a failure with general terms, Berkeley's critique would have struck a "killing blow." But why do general terms have so large a place in language? General terms are an outward social reflection of the fact that most of our inner private ideas are general ideas, according to Locke. Words like "dog" are a mark of Cain, since "one has reason to suspect such ideas (like the general idea of dog) are marks of our imperfection." For God has not only refused to give humans a sensory apparatus capable of seeing and touching the ultimate texture of matter (with "microscopical eyes" and tentacles), in his infinite wisdom He has also condemned humans to a defective and limited minds.

A designer of logical devices might make the following Lockean report on God's handiwork:

The Human Mind by John Locke

A. It displays severe limits in data storage: "ideas in the mind quickly fade, and often vanish quite out of the understanding, leaving no more footsteps or remaining character of themselves than shadows flying over fields of corn, and the mind is as void of them as if they had never been there" (E II, x, 4).

B It displays even more severe limits in its speed of errorless data retrieval: "[The mind] moves slowly, and retrieves not the ideas that it has, and are laid up in store, quick enough to serve the mind upon occasion" (E II, x, 8).

C. It is a linear instead of a parallel processor of data: "(The mind) having great variety of ideas only by succession, not all at once" (E II, x, 9).

D. Its rate of errorless data transmission is unacceptably low: "Men would in vain heap up names of particular things, that would not serve them to communicate their thoughts. Men learn names, and use them in talk with others, only that they may be understood: which is then only done when, by use or consent, the sound I make by the organs of speech, excites in another man's mind who hears it, the idea I apply it to in mine, when I speak it. This cannot be done by names applied to particular things" (E III, iii, 3).

E. It employs an extremely crude programming language: "We cannot so far distrust (the sense's) testimony, as to doubt that such collections of simple ideas as we have observed by our senses to be united together, do really exist together. But this knowledge extends as far as the present testimony of our senses, employed about particular objects that do affect them, and no further" (E IV, xi, 9).

Conclusion: The mind is a slow Turing machine with a finite tape whose symbols are continually fading.

Recommendations for Improving the devise:

- *speed up retrieval and transmission processes;*
- *make tape symbols permanent unless deliberately erased;*
- *introduce parallel processing;*
- *insert an infinite tape with appropriate adjustments;*
- *introduce a more powerful programming language.*

On receiving such a report God might well have chuckled and thought that the designer wished to make humans "as one of us." But that was not God's intent, according to Locke, who longed for, but despaired of, such improvements. For example, he clearly envied Pascal, of whom it was reported: "till the decay of his health had impaired his memory, he forgot nothing of what he had done, read or thought, in any part of his rational age" (E II, x, 9). But such remarkable human capacities paled beside the intellectual possibilities of some

"superior created intellectual beings." Clearly God had created an extremely hierarchical but variegated intellectual cosmos and humans had a definite, rather lowly niche in it. But, though it might have been hubris, Locke found it impossible not to daydream:

> Whereas the several degrees of angels may probably have larger views (than humans) and some of them be endowed with capacities able to retain together, and constantly set before them, as in one picture, all their past knowledge at once. This, we may conceive, would be no small advantage to the knowledge of a thinking man—if all his past thoughts and reasonings could be present to him. And therefore we may suppose it one of those ways, wherein the knowledge of separate spirits may exceedingly surpass ours. (E II, x, 9)

While Locke pined, many others in the seventeenth century actually tried to technologically transcend these limitations. Galileo, Newton, Leibniz and the remarkable M. Pascal all invented machines to help in the computation of the contents of barrels, the range of shot, the value of bullion and the orbits of comets. There were real needs pressing upon the speed limits of data retrieval and transmission, the meager data storage capacity and the linearity of mental processing in early modern capitalism. The "abstract commodity form" gripped Europe demanding that some humans transcend their ancient conceptual lot (and that millions of others, of course, be destined to be expropriated from it). The European elite's desire to be angelic (in Locke's intellectual sense at least) was becoming a commercial and military necessity. This desire was to stimulate centuries of inventiveness and world-wide appropriation of other societies' intellectual powers.[18]

Locke, who stood near the beginning of the process, contributed no new computing machines, but he did point out that the "economy of scale" principle can be applied to overcome the limits of our mental capacity. It costs us as much to store, retrieve, transmit and process an idea of a single thing as it does for an idea of a "bundle" of things. Consequently, it would be more efficient to create more powerful "programming language" employing general terms instead of particular names. God has allowed us the capacity to create such general term languages and they offer a partial solution to many problems arising out

of the defects of our mind. But this "economy of scale" has its costs both in labor and in the meta-problems it fosters.

Before examining these "costs," however, let us specify how Locke saw general terms as conceptual forms of "mass production." First, general terms allow us to store information about a mass of particulars and retrieve it many times more efficiently than an item-by-item approach. In making this point he brought up the example of generals who could call every soldier in their army by their proper name. Locke made this reference to illustrate the quaint uselessness of such "prodigious memories" which were becoming increasingly anachronistic given the leap in the size of European armies in this period of imperial world wars. Locke, ever the good bureaucrat, knew that the army as a social organization stimulated the invention of new data-processing methods as much as it inspired material mass production.

Second, general terms increase the speed and decrease the likelihood of error in transmission, e.g., the transmission of orders and intelligence in a battle would be impossible, if it were solely based on particular names.

Third, the accumulation of knowledge is not based upon particular items, rather knowledge "enlarges itself by general views; to which things reduced to sorts, under general names, are properly subservient" (E III, iii, 4). Thus the introduction of general terms is a purely "economic" device "for the easier and readier improvement and communication of knowledge, which would advance but slowly were their words and thoughts confined to particulars" (E III, iii, 20).

Like all economies of scale, general term languages do not come for "free"; work must be "invested" before they can begin to bring in the "rewards" of mental mass production. This work is the labor of abstraction. In order for a general term to be used, it must immediately signify an abstract general idea and such ideas are not given in sensation or reflection. These ideas are not data, they must be made by "the workmanship of the understanding" (E III, iii, 3). The "round-aboutness" of the production of "material capital" is to be found, according to Locke, in the production of the "mental capital" of abstract general ideas as well. Let us look for a moment into Locke's mental manufactory:

> Words become general by being made the signs of general ideas: and ideas become general, by separating from them the circumstances of time and place, and any other ideas that may determine them to this

> or that particular existence. By this way of abstraction they are made capable of representing more individuals than one, each of which having in it a conformity to that abstract idea, is (as we call it) of that sort. (E III, iii, 6)

This view of abstraction is essential in Locke's endeavor to prove that humans have no natural "formal" receptivity. The whole first book of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is aimed at convincing readers that humans do not acquire abstract general ideas for "free," just by being born human. Rather they must *work* to get these ideas. "God having fitted men with faculties and means to discover, receive, and retain truths, according as they are *employed*" (E I, iii, 23, my italics). Locke warns at the end of the first book of the *Essay* that the desire for easy intellectual wealth is widespread, but such wealth invariably becomes "fairy gold . . . (which) will be but leaves and dust when it comes to use" (E I, iii, 4). The real way to knowledge is not through frivolous "innate maxims" but via the rough road of abstraction. The only easy ideas are the particular ones that we imbibe as children with our "sucking bottle" but:

> abstract ideas are not so obvious or easy to children, or the yet unexercised mind, as particular ones. If they seem so to grown men, it is only because by constant and familiar use they are made so. (E IV, vii, 9)

Locke continued his account of the Golgotha march of the understanding multiplying the tortures of thoughts "general ideas are fictions and contrivances of the mind, that carry difficulty with them, and do not so easily offer themselves as we are apt to imagine" (E IV, vii, 9). He then provided an example that was to be central to Berkeley's critique and which I will quote at length (as did Berkeley) for future reference as well as to make my present point:

> For example, does it not require some pains and skill to form the general idea of a triangle (which is yet none of the most abstract, comprehensive, and difficult) for it must be neither equilateral, equicrural, nor scalenon: but all and none of these at once. In effect it is something imperfect, that cannot exist; an idea wherein some parts of several different and inconsistent ideas are put together. It is true,

> the mind, in its imperfect state, has need of such ideas, and makes all the haste to them it can. . . . But yet one has reason to suspect such ideas are marks of imperfection. (E IV, vii, 9)

Locke piles on the torment of "pains and skill," "difficulty," "inconsistency," and "imperfection" to emphasize not the "inconsistency" or "imperfection" of general ideas *per se*, but rather their manufactured quality and hence their sharing in the limits typical of all products of human labor. Abstract ideas are the mental residue of original sin, for Locke, just as "the sweat of our brows" and our navels are the bodily markers of the Fall.

But what makes the creation of abstract general ideas so laborious in the first place? Surely the analogy of thinking with labor is not new with Locke nor does it end with him. Hegel, for example, intensifies the analogy almost to identity.[19] But Locke rejected the classical analogy in, say, Plato's *Theatetus* between thought and the labor of biological conception. His notion of mental work arises from a profound duality: the mind is passive in its reception of simple ideas and is active in its operations upon them in just the same way that it is necessary to work upon the world in order to transform it from the God-given common into a private possession. He is fully aware of the connection between material and mental labor:

> man's power, and its ways of operation (is) much the same in the material and the intellectual world. For the materials in both being such as he has no power over, either to make or destroy, all that man can do is either unite them together, or set them by one another, or wholly separate them. (E II, xiii, 1)

Abstraction involves the operation of separation of ideas where mental effort and activity must be employed to break the passive inertic bond that ideas get on their simultaneous reception. Abstraction is a form of mental metallurgy, for out of the ore of experience a pure idea is extracted. This idea might never be found isolated in "nature," it is like pure gold, a totally human product. Hence Locke's pure abstract general idea of a triangle could not "exist" in the sense of being passively received in experience. We must manufacture this idea through work, sweat and ingenuity.

Whenever work is mentioned in a text of this period, we must of course, be on the alert for a fundamental ambivalence. On the one side, there was the Greek and Hebrew devaluation of work, although they carried out this devaluation from totally different perspectives. The Greek slave-owner philosophy identified work with "natural slavery" and "bodily suffering of indefinite duration." The Hebrew experience of work arose out of slavery. It identified work with effort and death imposed as a result of a transgression. The medievals synthesized these views from top and bottom, thus the initial impression of Dante's *Inferno* is of an enormous factory eternally producing punishment which is repeated through an indefinite duration, assembly-line fashion, while in Aquinas' heaven (as Nietzsche gleefully quotes): "The blessed in the kingdom of heaven will see the punishments of the damned in order that their bliss be more delightful for them."[20] Hell is work and heaven is watching work being done by others.

But on the other side, Locke participated in the great bourgeois revaluation of work as the source and origin of all wealth, material and mental. In that prime bourgeois creation myth told in Chapter V of the *Second Treatise* we are instructed that the fruits of the earth and the beasts they feed are "produced by the spontaneous hand of nature." This spontaneous production involved no work . . . it just happened. Thus a squirrel eating an acorn it had stored in its burrow in the Fall was not enjoying the rewards of its labor, it was merely part of nature's production process. Humans, however, could not just spontaneously reproduce themselves, they must use the world in perpetuating themselves. But use, Locke argued, implied a prior appropriation and "labor" is the name of this appropriation process. The squirrel eats the acorn, but s/he does not work for it, appropriate it and then use it, since the squirrel has no property in her/his person. There simply was no person there, and hence no property. The squirrel could be another's property while a human *qua* person could never be. But what made a human a person while a squirrel was not? Let us turn to Locke's answer:

> God gave the world to men in common, but since he gave it them for their benefit and the greatest conveniences of life they were capable to draw from it, it cannot be supposed he meant it should always remain common and uncultivated, He gave it to the use of the industrious and rational (and labour was to be his title to it); not to

the fancy and covetousness of the quarrelsome and contentious. (ST 34)

"Industrious and rational": this marks an important shift in the definition of humanity. Industriousness has been definitely upgraded from the virtue of a good slave to an essential attribute of humanity. Further, rationality could be considered at the time as an innate human potentiality, but no one would have mistaken industriousness as innate . . . yet. It would take nearly a century more of capitalist development to bring about an Adam Smith with his making "trucking and bartering instincts" definitive of humanity.[21] Industriousness was something to be achieved, of course, and not by everyone.

Abstraction was at the center of the intersection of industriousness, rationality, and humanity. For abstraction was not only the laborious metallurgic process of the mind crucial to rational functioning; it was also, said Locke, what differentiated humans from brutes. Like labor, abstraction arises from a serious human deficiency, but also like labor, its development realizes what is most characteristically human. Brutes did have many of the mental capacities humans have; for example, they not only had sense ideas they could compare and compound them as well. However, Locke assured his readers "that the power of abstracting is not at all in [brutes]; and that the having of general ideas is that which puts a perfect distinction betwixt man and brutes, and is an excellency which the faculties of brutes do by no means attain to" (E II, xi, 10). He was "positive" about this, because he can find no good evidence of the genuine use of "general ideas" among brutes; indeed, he failed to find even "footsteps" of such use. But there is a gap between the power of abstraction and the having of general ideas, viz., the actual labor process of abstraction which humans can perform to a lesser or greater degree, if they wish. Abstraction is not like sensation or reflection, a necessary aspect of existence, rather it is a God-given faculty that must be employed to create its products, general ideas, just as, theoretically, one could live close to the animals, running naked, eating a diet of berries, leaves and raw carrion meat, so too a mental life largely devoid of abstract general ideas would be possible—but perverse.

Berkeley on Abstraction and Children

Berkeley's allied his rejection of Locke's "mercantile" conception of words with this critique of Locke "manufacturing" conception of abstract ideas. This critique was to have an important consequence for Berkeley's theory of money. For if money was a set of signs signifying abstract ideas, then the Lockean struggle to maintain a correct signifying relation between, say, a particular coin and an abstract idea of a quantity of specie is nugatory.

Given the seriousness of the issues involved, Berkeley's entrance into the debate with Locke concerning abstraction was extremely ironic, irreverent and even Swiftian. Berkeley, by placing the attack on abstraction at the very beginning of the *Principles* was making an unmistakable challenge to the "establishment" (both philosophical and political) of his day. For by rejecting Locke's doctrine of abstraction he was rejecting Locke's definition of humanity.[22]

Berkeley's approach was ironic since it said to Locke: "If abstractive ability makes the difference between humans and beasts, then beast I must be." It was irreverent because it responded to Locke's haughty, self-congratulatory discourse on abstraction with the language of the "mob." Finally, it was Swiftian because his strategy was to overturn the relations of power (embodied in reason) by using them against themselves.[23]

Berkeley posed his first assault in the form of a class war in the realm of knowledge. For after a short sketch of the Lockean version of the abstraction process, he began the paragraph of the tenth paragraph of the *Principles'* "Introduction" on a personal note. "Whether others have this wonderful faculty of abstracting their Ideas, they can best tell: for myself I find indeed I have a faculty of imagining, or representing to myself the ideas of those particular things I have perceived and of variously compounding and dividing them" (*P* 10). But he ends with a class division:

> And there are grounds to think most men will acknowledge themselves to be in my case. The generality of men which are simple and illiterate never pretend to abstract notions. It is said they are difficult and not to be attained without pains and study. We may therefore reasonably conclude that, if such there be, they are confined only to the learned. (*P* 11)

This young Anglican cleric allied himself with the illiterate, the simple, the children, the vulgar, the beasts, and even the mob. In these passages he seemed to be following his resolution of 1707–8 transcribed in his *Commonplace Book*:

> All things in the Scripture which side with the Vulgar against the Learned side with me also. I side in all things with the mob. (*PC* 405)[24]

There is, of course, ample biblical precedent for such a move in Christ's guerrilla war with the Pharisees. In this case, for Berkeley, the Pharisees are similar to Locke and the "free-thinking," crypto-libertine Whig intellectuals in London. And like the Pharisees, the "learned claimed to have special mental powers achieved after grave study and effort." Berkeley, like Christ, called their bluff with the example of the little Child. Locke used human linguistic ability as his decisive evidence for the claim that the abstraction process exists: "men who use language are able to abstract or generalize their ideas." Children are, for Locke, presumably in a pre-abstract stage. But Berkeley asked the reader to listen in on their conversation:

> And surely, the great and multiplied labor of framing abstract notions, will be found a hard task for that tender age. Is it not a hard thing to imagine, that a couple of children cannot prate together, of their sugar plums and rattles and the rest of their little trinkets, till they have first tacked together numberless inconsistencies and so framed in their minds abstract general ideas, and annexed them to every common name they make use of. (*P* 14)

This passage was Berkeley's equivalent of Luke 8:7, "verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter." For if children can speak, then "the kingdom of God" in the intellectual sense ought not to be the preserve of the scribes who desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, but rather the "publicans" and the "mob" can partake thereof. Like the parable of the Pharisee and the publicans (Luke 8:4). Berkeley pulled a neat rhetorical trick here: the "learned" claim an almost alchemical mental capacity gained by extraordinary pains, yet they are outwitted by two babbling

children. In this case indeed, to side with the "exalted" is to be "abased."

But Berkeley was aware that though these rhetorical victories might make his claim that abstraction was a pure fiction more plausible, they are by no means conclusive. For Locke was no clear and distinct Cartesian in the matter of abstraction and the differences between humans, animals, and machines. He allowed for a great range of intellectual powers between the beasts and the bourgeoisie. Little children, the "simple" and the "beasts of Burden" might have the rudiments of language but they need not have the full capacity of human understanding.[25] Berkeley's siding "with the meek" could easily be evaded—arguments *ad populum* were clearly not enough. In response, Berkeley turned to geometry, for through the gates of geometry we enter into the inner sanctum of abstraction where so many philosophical myths and visions have been spawned.

Berkeley on Geometry

Berkeley's chose geometry to be the focus of his critique of Locke's abstractionism strategically. Geometry had been the model of the most abstract science since the time of the Greeks. The *perfect* circle, the *ideal* square, *pure* space and other equally otherworldly adjectives seemed to apply to this realm of abstract objects. If Berkeley could show that geometric terms and methods did not signify or presume abstractions, then he could assume the otioseness of abstract ideas in all less refined discourse as a corollary.

The first point to note in Berkeley's attack on abstraction in geometry is the state of the discipline in the early eighteenth century. As its etymology implies, geometry was and remains a politico-economic science *par excellence*. For the measurement (metre) of the earth (geo) has its roots, according to Herodotus, in the assessing by means of ropes the peasants' tributes in each new, post-flood season along the Nile. For millennia, throughout the Mediterranean as well as in India and China, geometry was essentially "The Art of the Rope" as an early Indian textbook on geometry called it. Indeed, direct measurement with rope, chain, or odometer remained the basic geometric method into the eighteenth century.[26] For example, Petty's Down Survey which laid the basis on the English division of Ireland after the Cromwellian invasion, was largely done through chain measures.

But a literal technological revolution in geometry was proceeding in Berkeley's age. New instruments like the theodite and telescopic sights and new techniques like the method of triangulation and the application of trigonometry were slowly transforming the ancient art of the tax collector into an efficient science appropriate for the ongoing commodification of the planet. What had been a tactile confrontation of "Gaia" (earth) with the "metre" had become much more abstract, visual, and precise.

Berkeley's early concern with measurement (mainly of depth) was especially understandable in an Anglo-Irish thinker, for the foundation of his class was laid by the metricization of an alien land that, unlike the Americas, was quite finite in the imagination. "Geometry," for Berkeley, remained close to its etymological root "geo/metry." Its object had nothing "abstract" about it, except the quite concrete social "abstraction" created by the exchange of commodified sectors of the earth's surface for money.

Yet this "technological" transformation of geometry was crucial in putting into question a division in geometry that developed in Athens with Eudoxus and was formalized for millennia by Euclid the Alexandrian. Its inception, as standardly interpreted, was the discovery of irrational lengths which transcended the possibilities of tactile "ruler and compass" measurements by the Pythagoreans (as was definitively proved in the nineteenth century but was surmised in ancient days). Eudoxus "tamed" the irrationals by creating a theory of proportion for all lengths (measurable or not) and, by doing so, detached geometry from its etymological roots.[27] Perhaps we might, in the tradition of Thomson and Sohn-Rethel, see in this transformation a social revolution stemming from the creation of new form of "abstract" coined wealth embodied in a merchant class detached from tactile agricultural concerns.[28] But irrespective of this hypothesis, Euclid definitively metamorphosed geo-metry into geometry, i.e., a theory of order and magnitude in general where the order was "deductive" in an account-book style and the magnitude was quite "abstract" indeed. Geometry's detachment from the earth set the stage for its typical philosophical problematics: what was geometry about? If geometric terms were not about the "gaia," what could their referents be? Paradoxically, the most precise science of antiquity had a most confused and confusing object. The series of philosophical abstractions from Plato's Ideas to Locke's laboriously manufactured mental triangle to Newton's Absolute Space

gained their plausibility by being possible answers to geometry's riddle. The "answers" however, were as riddling as the riddle.

Berkeley stood at a point where the ancient division was open to unification, for the "Gaia" had become "abstract" enough to again be the object of its science. The technology and theory of surveying, navigation, and cartography had begun to lose its artisanal, guild character. This had already been accomplished *organizationally* by William Petty who, to the great resentment of the professionals, hired demobilized soldiers ignorant or the "tricks of the trade" to do the Down Survey work in the 1650s.[29] But with the increasing use of telescopes and triangulation, the detachment of measurement of the earth from the earth was becoming complete. Measurement *praxis* had begun to ascend to geometric *theoria* or, equivalently, *theoria* had descended literally to the earth.

The major technological transformation of the relation of geometry to the land in the seventeenth century had a political-economic dimension as well. If the ancient Greek separation of land from geometry was due to the commodification of the land (and all other use values) in the first monetary societies, then the late seventeenth century in Western Europe and Colonial America present an inversion of the relation between land and money (or abstract value). Between 1650 and 1707 (the date of Berkeley's *Philosophical Commentaries*) there were many proposals to create land banks in England, Scotland, and France. These projected land banks were similar to the actual colonial American ones we have already discussed in the section on "Paper Money, Slavery, and Baptism." Either a government commission or a private bank would subscribe land security either in the form of government-owned land or privately-owned land of a certain value, say £10,000, and on the basis of this security it would issue an equivalent amount of "land money" which would circulate just as other bank moneys and coinage do.

Land bank projectors like John Law and Nicholas Barbon who were serious students of the emerging political economy of the day seemed to have been gripped by the same transformatory idea: *money could be given exchange value by being "backed" by land, instead of land being given exchange value by being exchangeable for money.*[30] The popularity of land bank projects after the mid-seventeenth century indicates that the value of land in England and France (and their colonies) had become so commodified and abstract, it, instead of

specie, could become the "universal" commodity. This universality was graphically expressed in something of a Physiocratic way by one of Barbon's partners, John Asgill, in his *Several Assertions Proved in Order to Create another Species of Money than Gold and Silver* (1696):

> What we call commodities is nothing but land severed from the soil: The owners of the soil in every country have the sale of all commodities of the growth of the country, and consequently have the power of giving credit in that country, and therefore whatever they will accept for their commodities is money. Man deals in nothing but earth.[31]

This equation of land with money constituted a revolution in the realm of value. Land, which had been an empiric residue of a social abstraction process leading to the creation of pure, universal values embodied in specie, was transformed into the foundation, standard, and store of all value.[32] That gross tactile thing, land, had become so abstract by 1707, it could do without the formal golden uniform of abstraction. This occurred because the premises of capitalist production on the land in Britain and France had begun to be satisfied. Land was increasingly being used simply for the purpose of producing for a profit and the class relations on the land reflected those throughout the system. The actual tillers of the soil had been dispossessed and were living on wages, the capitalist farmers invested their capital in agricultural production and were receiving profits, and the land owners were receiving rents. This constituted the "agrarian model" of capitalism which became a starting point for political economy from William Petty to John Locke to the Physiocrats.[33]

Berkeley in his early works simply gave expression to and sense of this early eighteenth-century convergent interaction of "touch" and "vision," of the "rope" and the Euclidian line, of field and plane, of land and money. The steps of such a mental reunion were still full of an excitement which permeates Berkeley's most satisfying work, *Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision (NTV)*.[34] But Berkeley's specific solution to the problem of what objects satisfy the axioms of Euclidian geometry in *NTV* was more ambitious than his aim in the attack on abstraction in *Principles*. In the Introduction to the *Principles* he was anxious to show that there was no need to resort to abstract ideas to

make sense of geometric words like "line" or "triangle" nor was it necessary to refer to some mysterious abstracting mental capacity to account for geometric demonstration.

Here he was supported by the increasing convergence of geo/metry to geometry. The northeast border of Berkeley's bishopric at Cloyne was not some ideal object detectable only by a totally refined mentation . . . it was measured out by a gruff ex-soldier with a chain and signified by another line on a survey map stored somewhere in London. The word "line" does not denote an infinitely thin, infinitely extended ray of no particular direction in no particular part of space (whether considered as "mental" "ideal," "pure," or "absolute"). The line is "there" in the sense that it can be made when a surveyor with a chain marks it out under given conditions of the discipline. Not just any line is a line, of course, e.g., the scrawl of a palsied geometer is not a line but it can represent a line just as the word spelled out by the letters "l," "i," "n," "e" (in English) signifies any particular line "indifferently." Not every signifier of a line is a line, but a line can be a signifier of all lines. It is this duplicitous synecdoche that is frequently forgotten by commentators on Berkeley critique of Lockean abstraction.[35] All signs that signify line-in-general are particulars but they become general by "indifferently denoting" all particular lines. However, there is a peculiar reflexivity in some line-signs. Just as the word "word" is a word and some of its properties are general (e.g, being a finite concatenation of selected alphabetical elements) so too some lines can be "used" as signs of lines in general, being lines in themselves. Whenever the member of a set signifies the whole set (e.g,, a specific quantity of gold is a commodity and it represents an infinite set of commodities which it is a member of) one must be cautious, for paradoxes and vicious circles may be lurking. Certainly the history of post-Russellian formal studies makes one paranoid when self-reference is broached. But there are virtuous as well as vicious circles.

Berkeley rejected the existence of a special "fetish" idea that represents all lines "indifferently." Locke's abstract general Line-Idea which has no length, no direction, no position, no color, nor "thickness" is not a line-idea, it is nothing at all. Any line can signify all lines, but in doing so it must signify itself. This reflexive aspect of some line signs, viz., the line-signs that are lines themselves, make for the possibility of a virtuous circle that allows us to understand the peculiar character of geometric demonstration. A line line-sign is both particular

(in itself) and general (by being made so) whereas the line-sign "line" is only general. Conversely, we might use a line to be a sign for a word in general, but because it is not a word, truths about it, e.g., its bisectability, have no relevance to universal properties of words . . . but "word" does.

The self-referential aspect of geometric signs that are geometric objects themselves can be used to explain the mysterious mixture of generality and particularity found in geometric demonstration. Berkeley was undoubtedly aware of other representations of geometry, e.g, the algebraic one developed by Descartes, but there are aspects of geometry, Berkeley insists, that have their root in geo/metry. One might develop purely "formal" geometries, of course, but they would not have crucial properties a geo/metric interpretation of geometry could provide.[36]

What does a geo/metric interpretation of geometry allow that, e.g., an analytic geometric reading does not? For a triangle ABC to signify all triangles and to be a triangle as well guarantees that there are properties it can be considered to have that all other triangles have. We might use an isosceles triangle to signify all scalene triangles, but then we cannot transfer operations concerning the sign to the set for the requisite self-reflexivity fails. In other words, the conditions that allow a specific triangle to be self-reflexive *qua* triangle specifies the conditions upon which demonstrations can be generalized. For when an idea signifies itself it takes on a double aspect, first a signifier then as signified. As signified, it is possible to demonstrate that it necessarily has a certain property; but if this demonstration does not violate the conditions that make the triangle a self-reflexive signifier too, then the proven property is necessarily present in the other indifferently signified triangles. This, of course, is not true of other signifiers which are not self-reflexive, hence the uniqueness of the geo/metric interpretation of geometry.

Thus, Berkeley pointed out that though "the diagram I have in view" while proving the theorem, "The sum of the angles of a triangle is the sum of two right angles," might be of an isosceles right triangle, this diagram is adequate for proving the proposition for all triangles. This is because "there is not the least mention made of the particulars [of the isosceles right triangle (e.g., the fact that the angles are 90, 45, and 45 degrees and that two sides are equal)] in the proof of the proposition" (*P Intro* 16). He later pointed out in the *Principles* that this self-

reflexivity can generate paradoxes similar to Russell's paradox, if one is not careful to apply the "no mention" rule strictly. For example, an inch line "is universal in its signification only," and can represent lines ten meters or ten-to-the-tenth-power meters long. But "men not retaining that distinction [between signifier and things signified] in their thoughts, slide into a belief that the small particular line described on paper contains in itself parts innumerable" (*P* 127). The mental tendency to idolatry (exemplified here by seeing the *signification* relation as an *identity* relation) tempts the mathematician to transfer the properties of lines 10 to the 10th-power meters in length and larger back to the one inch line provoking "several absurdities and contradictions" in geometry. For example, the geometers claim "an inch does not barely contain an infinite number of parts, but an infinity of an infinity of an infinity *ad infinitum* of parts" (*P* 130). The way to escape the absurdities, Berkeley warned, is to "retain the distinction" between large and small lines and to refuse to "slide into a belief" that large lines have the same properties as small ones.

"Self-reflexive" ideas have a paradoxical character Berkeley was most sensitive to, because they indicated the workings of the spirit in the realm of ideas. *For spirits, not ideas, are self-reflexive.* The signifying function (and even the membership function) of an idea are not *its* properties. They arise from the activities and intentions of a spirit. One idea can signify anything, but when it signifies itself, the extra-ideational character of signification is most clearly expressed. Berkeley's ontology is not so much a profound ideational nominalism but rather a cognitive activism, for he systemically refuses to countenance "superstition", i.e., the substitution of a "dead" idea for a "living" spirit.[37]

Abstraction for Berkeley was a philosophical creation of mental totems or icons and his intent was iconoclastic. For there is no special Idea of either Line, Human, or British Pound, any line can be The Line, any human can be Humanity, any Pound coin or bank note can be a British Pound. Positing "super ideas" transgresses the Mosaic second commandment and Locke's abstract general ideas are insidious idols *tout court*. Therefore, Berkeley's critique of abstraction is an essential part of his attack on idea-ism, i.e., the doctrine that the optimum functioning of language implies the "idea-backing" of every word including the language of money.

III. Materialism
The Critique of Primary/Secondary Quality Distinction

One of the essential features of Locke's philosophy of money was its emphasis on the need for objectivity in monetary exchange. Without it, exchange could not be universal. Locke located this objectivity in the primary qualities of the precious metals, especially the stability of their weight, size, and number. It was a doctrine typical of seventeenth century Western European thought. Locke succinctly, though awkwardly, expressed this doctrine as "the ideas of primary qualities of bodies are resemblances of them, and their patterns do really exist in the bodies themselves, but the ideas produced in us by these secondary qualities have no resemblance in them at all" (E ii, vii, 15).

This is not the place to defend the claim that the doctrine's source is in the matrix of concepts joining the natural philosophy and political economy of the period.[38] However, the personnel and institutions of the day testified to a self-conscious identification of what we would call "physical science" with the interests of a mercantilist state. Thus the Introduction to the first volume of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (1664–65) states its "Grand Design": "of improving Natural Knowledge and protecting all Philosophical Arts and sciences. All for the Glory of God, the Honor and Advantage of these Kingdoms and the universal Good of mankind."[39] This "utilitarian theme," as it is so euphemistically referred to in the sociological literature, is a statement of intent imposing new mercantilist criteria on the development of the largely mechanical "Philosophical Arts and Sciences."

Why should these criteria lead to an ontological and epistemological priority of primary over secondary qualities? The complexity of such a question is evident, but one strand of an answer has been traditionally found in the corpuscular hypothesis of Mechanical Philosophy. Robert Boyle, mechanism's most effective seventeenth-century promoter and Locke's and Newton's mentor, argued that "the corpuscular or Mechanical Philosophy" had much to recommend it:

(a) *intelligibility*: "the intelligibleness of its principles and explanations";
(b) *simplicity*: "there cannot be fewer principles than the two grand ones of our philosophy, matter and motion";

(c) *extensiveness*: "and the indefinite divisibility of matter, the wonderful efficacy of motion, and the almost infinite variety of coalitions and structures that may be made of minute and insensible corpuscles being duly weighed; why may not a philosopher think it possible to make out, by their help, the mechanical possibility of any corporeal agent, how subtle, diffused, or active soever, that can be solidly proved to have a real existence in nature?'

Intelligibility, simplicity, extensiveness: attractive aspects of any scientific theory . . . but notoriously sensitive to the "scientific community" assessing these features.

Primary qualities (solidity, extension, figure, motion or rest and number) were for Boyle the explanatory variables of the Mechanical Philosophy of the day (which reached its quintessential exemplification *and catastrophe* in Newton's 1686 *Principia*).[40] The other sensory ideas, like color, taste, and heat, whose general names were used to refer to qualities in "external objects" were secondary, since their occurrence was to be explained by a Mechanical Philosophy theory of mental production. Thus, the primary/secondary quality distinction hinged on a gigantic promissory note, viz., Mechanical Philosophy was in its essentials the correct theory of nature and will be able to carry out, along with an appropriate physiological (?) theory of sensation, an explanation of the other secondary sensory ideas "some time in the future."[41] What gave the cautious Locke such confidence in Boyle's heavily discounted promissory note at the very moment when Newtonian gravity was dissolving mechanical philosophy from "within"?[42]

The attractiveness of Boyle's, then Locke's, primary/secondary quality distinction had support from a parallel development of the social composition of the scientific community in seventeenth-century England. Since Robert Merton's work in the 1930s, there have been debates as to the "Puritan" influence on the Royal Society. The pros and cons of these debates are still the subject of a lively historical literature, but there is something that is really not controversial: whether Puritan or Anglican, "chosen" or merely "called," the members of the official scientific community were integrated members of the English or international bourgeoisie as well. Whatever the divisiveness of the Civil War, Restoration, and Glorious Revolution, the virtuosi of the Royal Society shared a material consensus: they were property-

owners and investors in a growing mercantile empire. Hence most of them shared the basic experience of bourgeois existence (the positive commodification of reality) and the set of conceptual axioms required to understand and explain to themselves their social reality:

First, it was clear to all of them that the sensuous character of a commodity could not account for its value.[43]

Second, for them "nature becomes for the first time simply an object for mankind, purely a matter of utility; it ceases to be recognized as a power in its own right; and the theoretical knowledge of its independent laws appears only as a stratagem designed to subdue it to human requirements, whether as object of consumption or as means of production."[44]

Third, the value of a commodity was reducible to the "primary qualities" of precious metals.[45]

Fourth, Land and Labor must be reduced to "number, weight and measure" in order to be properly exploited.

These axioms gave the primary/secondary quality distinction such a compelling social force that the problematic details of Newtonian science could only subtly subvert. It is important to remember that Locke in his *Essay* was concerned to be not only an "under-labourer" for the master-builders of *physika*, or natural philosophy, but he was even more concerned to contribute to *praktika*, or "ethics, which is the seeking out those rules and measures of human actions, which lead to happiness, and the means to practice them" (E IV, xxi, 3). Since wealth is crucial to national happiness, it too had its autonomous claims to Locke's attention.

The importance of the primary/secondary quality distinction in Locke's work, therefore, is over-determined. This distinction makes sense exactly in an era like that of Locke's seventeenth century where "science and the forces of nature appear as productive powers of capital" and the "scientific image" became identical to the image of capital itself. The identity between scientific truth and money—so nicely embodied by Sir Isaac Newton, who was both Master of the Mint and President of the Royal Society—was certainly ideological, but it was no less compelling for it, even though the poverty-stricken character of the popularized mechanistic "scientific world view" when compared with the actual complexities and contradictions of natural philosophy had become obvious in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to practitioners in the scientific community itself.[46]

The more science became "popular" in this period, and became an tool of statecraft, the more it took on its role of self-confident simplifier of nature and, of course, self-deceiver. Newton was at the heart of the increasing distance between the ever more confident public face of mechanical natural philosophy and the ever more complex, hypothetical, and tentative reality of the actual science he practiced. This increasing tension might very well had much to do with the collapse of his scientific work in his ascendancy to the leadership of the Royal Society.[47]

Many tears have been spilt over the "bifurcation of Nature," "the disenchantment of the world," "the two tables," the "two cultures," and indeed the mutilation of bodily totalities into primary and secondary qualities in this period, but these tears were misdirected. Scientific theory did not bring about "the mechanization of the world picture," rather it was the ideological identification of scientific theory with capitalist imperatives that brought this "mechanization" about. For "Newtonian science," as any unprejudiced reading of the *Principia* and the *Opticks* will show, was no more mechanistic than Platonic science. But Locke's work as "under-laborer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge" also involved covering up some of the embarrassing anomalies of *both* mechanical philosophy and political economy.

Berkeley's Anti-Materialist Argument (1): Inseparability

The young Berkeley created two arguments against the primary/secondary-quality distinction designed to reveal the dependency of the "scientific world view" on mental activity through and through: (a) the inseparability argument ('it is inconceivable for extension, figure, and motion [to be] abstracted from all other qualities") and (b) the mental-relativity argument (primary or "original" qualities are as much "creatures of the mind' as secondary qualities). In either argument the Lockean distinction was criticized for trying to jump ever its own shadow. The worlds of pure political arithmetic or pure mathematical physics were literally "inconceivable," for even though the Lockes, Pettys, and Newtons spoke of point masses, geometric surfaces, average life expectancies, etc., with prefect confidence, Berkeley claimed, "they *could not* know of what they speak."

Their words, if they were to have referents, must refer to, at best, imaginative creations that intermingled so-called primary with secondary qualities. This was as true of the blind as well as the sighted, the crooked or the straight. The blind could not reason about extension, solidity or motion without a reference to the experience of touch, and touching was never a purely primary quality affair. Touching and feeling were inseparable, for just as color was inseparable from visual sensations of extension, so too heat was inseparable from sensations of tactile extension.

Berkeley's simple inseparability argument in *Principles* section 10 has been frequently misunderstood, however, because commentators are sometimes not clear as to which primary/secondary-quality distinction Berkeley was attacking There is no reason to attribute to him the claim that there were no differences between ideas like color and number. On the contrary, Berkeley pioneered an extremely careful phenomenological analysis of sensation as the *NTV*'s discussion of distance or "outness" exemplified. In fact, in this analysis he demonstrated that what is taken to be a sensory idea *per se,* e.g., size, is actually a complex relationship between tactile and visual sensation masquerading as a simple idea (*NTV* 53-65).

Berkeley challenged the very comprehensibility of the promissory note Locke and the scientific realists of the day proffered. For this future "theory of everything" must claim that there is an autonomous set of qualities (the primary ones) with causal law relations among them, independent of other sensory secondary qualities that can explain everything. Berkeley merely challenged the comprehensibility of such a future theory, because the very meaning of the words used to enunciate the theory would require the suppressed, but inevitable, inclusion of the secondary qualities in the autonomous set of primary qualities that are supposed to explain them. Just as we only see the foreground, because we both "see" do not "see" the background; so the secondary qualities that were to be "explained away" by the primary ones are presupposed by them. Thus these Lockean "theories of the future" turn out to be ununderstandable or are made for creatures with totally different sensory ideas than ours, but either way, they categorically fail to answer their promised self-description.

Berkeley insisted upon the present synthetic character of sensory experience. Consequently what is describable in some hypothetical future language is inexperienceable and unimaginable. Swift's *Gul-*

liver's Travels is an elaborate commentary on this point, for whatever the distortions and transformations of human sensibility Gulliver experiences, the same fallible human nature abides. The fantastic beings Gulliver meets at immense distances from home (either in time or space) are merely residues of our own wretched selves and all attempts to specialize sensation and abstract out the primary from the secondary end in social catastrophe (as Laputa shows). Smells of honeysuckle are no more abstractable from the matrix of sensation than is a one cubic meter cube. The young Berkeley and the elderly Swift were early appreciators of the "fullness of experience." Berkeley might have granted different locales of centrality to sensory qualities given different practices and interests, of course, but he refused to allow for their detachment or "abstraction" from the totality of that experience. The detachability of words from each other should not be viewed as evidence of the detachability of ideas from each other, even though an insistence on a homology between words and ideas is a fatally attractive principle. He damned the enterprise of setting up a totem of qualities to represent the "real world"—behind or below experiences—as another degenerate product of the abuse of language.

Berkeley Anti-Materialist Argument (2): Mental Relativity

His second argument against the primary/secondary-quality distinction depends upon the mental relativity of primary qualities. It takes each of the primary quality ideas and shows that they are as sensitive to changes in the state of the perceiver as are secondary quality ideas. The arguments are brief and shopworn, but all reveal the willfulness of primary quality attributions. The most telling one is his critique of number as being "really in bodies." Locke claimed that in his future perfect model:

> The particular bulk, number, figure and motion of the parts of fire or snow are really in them—whether any one's senses perceive them or not and therefore they may be called really qualities, because they really exist in those bodies. But light, heat, whiteness or coldness are no more really in them than sickness or pain is in manna. (E II, viii, 7)

But, we might ask in a Berkeleyan query, what is the number of the parts of fire or snow? Is the number independent of the choice of what constitutes a "part"? And is the choice of what characterizes a "part of fire or snow" inevitable? Surely without such a specification, the instantiation of numerical attributes in a body is arbitrary, as philosophers from Socrates to Wittgenstein have demonstrated.[48]

"Number," Berkeley asserts, "is so visibly relative, and dependent on men's understanding, that it is strange to think how anyone should give it an absolute existence without the mind" (*P* 12). Locke obviously believed in the unquestioned ontological conclusions of a future microphysical theory which would make the notion of "part of snow or fire" glaringly obvious. Berkeley refused the gambit. There was no finality, uniformity, and inevitability in any past or future scientific theory constructed along the lines of Newton's *Principia*. The physicist must bow to God's decision to behave in a distant solar system in a radically different way He behaves here and now (*P* 106).

The Lockean scientific realism Berkeley attacked is an example of the seventeenth-century scientific community's totalizing will, so that it appeared as a will-less truth, an inevitability, a future-past. This monstrous confidence is implicit in Petty's "political arithmetic" as well, viz., that what is to be counted and computed in the analysis of wealth is not open to question. The fundamental unit is money *qua* gold or silver which for Petty is "universal wealth." All other commodities are limited both in terms of time and esteem, but "Gold and silver . . . are not perishable . . . but are esteemed for Wealth at all times and all places: whereas other commodities are riches but *hic et nunc*."[49] Yet Berkeley refused to give special ontological status to Petty's posit as much as to Locke's and Boyle's. For these theoretical presumptions hid the volitional mental acts that posited them, giving the universes of corpuscles and of gold and silver *qua* exchange value an objectivity they did not have. There was a hubris in Locke's or Petty's setting up a world of autonomous objects and laws leading to a forgetting of the will (divine or human) both in natural philosophy and political economy. This, of course, was a willful forgetting, for the exceptions were glaring both in the natural and the social world. Economic crises like the South Sea Bubble and natural phenomena like the gravity-defying "perpendicular growth of plants and the elasticity of the air" (*P* 106) were anomalies that could only be forgotten by the most stubborn of intellects.[50]

The Querist focused on the mercantilist Prejudice whereas *De Motu*, fifteen years before, subverted the mechanist methodological dream. There are many parallels between them. But whereas Newton was Berkeley's antagonist in *De Motu*, in *The Querist* he is joined by Locke and Petty. Berkeley's first move in *The Querist* was to query Petty's mercantilist unit of wealth and to pose another one which cannot be dealt with by a primary/secondary-quality ontology.

> I. 7. Whether the real end and aim of men be not power? And whether he who could have everything else at his wish or will could value money?

Industry, activity, action, appetite, and will to power are the core of political arithmetic, according to Berkeley, and these "things" were not directly measurable, by definition, for they were not things, only their effects are measurable. The problem of political arithmetic was more serious than the statistical errors and crudities that Petty has always been saddled with, for the most basic posit of the discipline, wealth, is actually activity, an innumerable, unweighable and unmeasurable "non-thing." For Berkeley, what "lies behind" the "veil of sensation" was not a manifold of measurable sensory qualities but a realm of activities, intentions, volitions, etc. These activities and agents could be stimulated to action and were open to suggestions from the world of ideas, but they were not reducible to ideas. The function of money was not so much as a measure of activity but a "conveyance" or a medium of credit. Money was the "it" of intersubjective mutual agreement and trust:

> I. 21. Whether other things being given as climate, soil &c. the wealth be proportioned to the industry; and this to the circulation of credit, be the credit circulated or transferred by what marks or tokens soever?

There was a problem posed by the "theoretical character" of natural philosophy and political economy for Berkeley, which was missed by the primary/secondary quality distinction The primary quality world of Boyle, Locke, and Petty was unimaginable *and* inconceivable; it was, in a word, impossible. The productive activities (divine and human) permeating and founding natural and social reality were perfectly con-

ceivable but they were unimaginable, according to Berkeley. Natural philosophy and political arithmetic committed the same ontological error in attempting to set up a truncated facsimile of sensory reality as "real" in order to account for our total sensory experience, But this is simply to misinterpret the problematic of theory which cannot be solved by giving priority to some sensory ideas over others, for all ideas (primary or secondary) were "creatures of the mind" and any choice of priorities would be equally arbitrary and relative to practical interests. There can be no ontologically grounded inevitability concerning these facsimiles or simulations.

Natural philosophy, political arithmetic, and mathematics in general all arise out of practice and attempt merely to serve "the sustentation and comfort of ourselves and fellow creatures" (*P* 109). If they were kept within their limits and they treated their "models" exactly as models, i.e., distorting, but useful sensory "representations" of an unrepresentable reality, then all would be well. But there was a sort of original or primary sin of the mind, a hubristic drive to go beyond the pragmatic and proper sphere of the sciences to a universal proclamation. As Berkeley expressed it, "a sort of omniscience is much affected by the mind" or there is an "eagerness of the mind, whereby it is carried to extend its knowledge into general theorems" (*P* 106). This totalitarian desire is at the root of the primary/secondary-quality distinction, and it is an eternally frustrated one.

The hubristic tendency is aided and abetted by that other product of our original mental sin, abstraction, which was based on mistaking the humanly produced world of signs for an ontologically independent realm of essences. In other words, the primary/secondary-quality distinction is the product of the hubristic and fetishizing tendency of the human mind. Consequently, the polemical effort in the other anti-Lockean arguments in Paragraphs 10–15 of the *Principles* was simply to show that some humble conditions of relativity to the mental agent apply to both "primary" as well as to "secondary" qualities. These arguments and observations might have been hackneyed and older than Sextus Empiricus, but they served to instill a measure of intellectual humility in the "free thinkers" and the eager omniscience chasers Berkeley chastised. These arguments were supposed to make their auditors more cautious and conscious of the conditionally of all sensory attribution, just as warnings of death and hellfire operated on the morally prideful:

> In short, let anyone consider those arguments, which are thought manifestly to prove that colors and tastes exist only in the mind, and he shall find they may with equal force, be brought to prove the same thing of extension, figure, and motion. Though it must be confessed this method of arguing does not so much prove that there is no extension or color in an outward object, as that we do not know by sense which is the true extension or color of the object. (*P* 15)

Once this sensory humility is accepted, the theorizing pride and the abstracting arrogance leading to the primary/secondary-quality distinction are given their proper chastisement. For let us not forget that the function of Berkeleyan polemics was not just agreement but persuasion. He did not want to only change the reader's thoughts, he wanted to change her/his action.

Berkeley the Parmenidian

With the rejection of Lockean arguments for a primary-quality ontology, Berkeley turned his attention to the epistemological status of the "solid, figured, movable substances" of the materialist universe. Even if the substances existed, how could we claim to know them and, in a Parmenidian implication, if we cannot know them, can they exist? According to the dichotomy of his day, knowledge could only have two sources: reason or the senses. But the attack on the "resemblance" theories dismissed the sensory route to knowledge of matter: "It remains therefore that if we have any knowledge at all of external things, it must be by reason, inferring their existence from what is immediately perceived by sense" (*P* 18). Inference or "illation," according to Locke, comes in two grades, for it "consists in nothing but the perception of the connection there is between the ideas in each step of the deduction; whereby the mind comes to see either the certain agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, as in demonstration, in which it arrives at knowledge; or their probable connexion, on which it gives or withholds its assent, as in opinion" (E IV, xvii, 2). Berkeley, evidently ruled by such distinctions, provided two arguments, one against the "necessary connection betwixt (bodies) and our ideas" and another against the view that "it might be at least probable there are such things as bodies that excite their ideas in our minds."

Chimerical Arguments Against Skepticism

His first argument against "knowledge of external things" was a variant of the skeptical arguments based on "dreams, frenzies and the like." In these states we are "affected with all the ideas we have now, though no bodies existed without, resembling them," but since this sometimes actually happens, then it is possible it always happens. Hence there is no necessary inference to the existence of external things from "what is immediately perceived by sense." This type of argument has been frequently analyzed in post–World War II Anglophone philosophy and found fallacious on a variety of grounds. At the very least, it is an invalid modal argument: from "Pa," e.g., "I thought I saw the oasis, but it was a mirage," one cannot validly infer, "it is possible that for all x, Px," i.e., "It is possible that every time I think I see an oasis, it is a mirage." At a more subtle level, the very conditions of intelligibility of the premise (a working distinction between dreaming and waking states) is violated by the conclusion.

Berkeley himself used this skeptical argument with reservations for in *Principles* (paragraphs 29–32) he answered the skeptics' thrust on the basis of his own anti-materialist philosophy. But he implied that the materialist could never deal with the skeptic, for it is vain to look for the reassurance of sanity outside the circle of sensation. To do this is to use a chimera to defeat a chimera, thus intensifying the delirium instead of curing it. We can know we are not dreaming, not by any extra-experiential criterion, e.g. by ascertaining whether our sensations are accompanied by the existence of material bodies. Such criteria of demarcation give the illusion of solidity, extra-intellectual stability and objective control . . . yet they are a madman's effort to cure his madness. A workable distinction between dream and reality is one whose parameters must be determinable from *within* the circle of will and idea, support from the "outside" is a will-o'-the-wisp.

Berkeley "abstracted" his answer to the skeptics in *Principles* 36:

> There are spiritual substances, minds, or human souls which will or excite ideas in themselves at pleasure: but these are faint, weak, and unsteady in respect of others they perceive by sense, which being impressed upon them according to certain rules or laws of nature, speak themselves the effects of a mind more powerful and wise than human spirits. These latter are said to have more reality in them than

> the former: by which is meant that they are more affecting, orderly, and distinct, and that they are not fictions of the mind perceiving them. And in this sense, the sun that I see by day is the real sun, and that which I imagine by night is the idea of the former.

This "solution" to the skeptical argument showed Berkeley's opportunistic use of skepticism as an inevitably developing degeneration of the materialist. For in his philosophical characterology, the self-confident materialists who initially stride on the stage proclaiming irrefutable proofs of material reality will, in time, despair, and, in their passion for reason, turn into skeptics devouring reason just as a lunatic eats his/her own distempered feces.

Reality was a matter of power for Berkeley. It showed itself through an order *imposed* (by a "mind more powerful and wise") within our sensory experience. The power of reality made itself known and did not call on us to first ascertain the unascertainable. Implicit in this anti-skeptical argument is Berkeley's cure of delirium: draw the madman's attention away from the "fictions of the mind" which are "faint, weak and unsteady" to impress a stream of ideas with a self-evident affect, order and distinctness. In philosophy, madness and delirium are to be found in skepticism, atheism, and freethinking and the only way to deal with them is to impose another order on thought. Berkeley, in his contribution to philosophical psychotherapy, concluded: "As it was my intention to convince skeptics and infidels by reason, so it has been my endeavor strictly to observe the most rigid laws of reasoning" (*D Preface*).

Critique of Probable Opinion and Brain Fetishism

Having seen the eventual consequences of Berkeley's argument against the necessary inference from what is immediately perceived by sense and the existence of bodies without the mind (and hence the lack of knowledge of such agreement) we now turn to his arguments against the probable opinion that such a connection exists. There are two such arguments, in fact; one in the *Principles* and the other in the *Dialogues*. Both these arguments are presented in the context of the classical picture of neurophysiological causation that has not budged in more than four hundred years. Descartes' *Treatise on Man* is still the framework of discourse concerning "mind-body" interaction. Indeed,

many of the present debates are as crude in their form now as they were in the seventeenth century (though the superficial terminology has, of course, changed and our knowledge of neurology has increased).

The mind-body problem centers on the middle term of the debate: the brain in particular or the nervous system in general. For centuries neural material has been proposed as the mediating mechanism between the body and mind; but the proposers have continually leaped before they looked, specifying causal, logical or functional relations between mental and physical, mind and body, psychology and physics long before any adequate evidence for their probability has come in. One might claim that present research clearly indicates that what happens between my ears explains more about my thinking than what happens in my pinkies, but that is far from what most of the discussants presuppose, viz., the only crucial explanatory space is brain space. Undoubtedly the reification and functionalization of thought has stimulated the development as well as the stultification of the "mind-body problem" for centuries.

This reification and functionalization of thought has intensified in recent decades, so much so that the very model of work presently entertained is the computation process and the model of "the embodied mind" is the electronic digital computer.[51] These conceptual developments spurred by the technological revolution of post-World War II production has brought a new self-confidence to the philosophical game and present-day materialists are not so frail as they were in Berkeley's time. He felt free to say that they "are unable to comprehend in what manner body can act on spirit, or how it is possible it should imprint any idea in the mind." But, on examination, the confidently claimed causal, logical or functional relations are really once again dubious promissory notes pushing payment into the scientific future or into the realm of logical possibility. Each "advance" in neurology, neurophysiology, neurochemistry, etc., leads to the generation of a new literature of hope but . . . there is always an aura surrounding these writings resembling the passages in the New Testament concerning the resurrection which are always on the verge of believability, but then move off into the hallucinations of the desperate. "Possible, perhaps," we scientific gentiles murmur, "but hardly a probable opinion."

One reason why one might not be tempted to give the label "probable" to the materialist claim that thoughts, desires, perceptions, etc. are caused by or are identical to or are functions of neural events or

states is simple. There were equally weighty arguments posed against the materialist claim ever since Descartes' formulation of the debate. For there, apparently, must be a place for the reifier, for the function's end, in the philosophical reflection of the social tension between "the forces and relations of production." In the society of the last four hundred years it is impossible to understand the basic human relations without the notions of ownership, property, command, etc. The "will" element is as essential to bourgeois society as the "fact" element. Every time the subject, the ego, or the "self" dies, it is "reborn" in a novel conceptual dress "romanticism," "lebensphilosophe," "existentialism," etc.[52] These periodic resurrections are inevitable, since the very scientific theories that provide the humus for materialism are continually stimulated and curbed by an economic, legal and moral apparatus which makes the agent paramount and independent of the material context. The mind-body debate will undoubtedly continue with every greater ingenuity, passion and boredom to the "blessed end" of bourgeois society.

Contra Brain Fetishism

Berkeley's early contribution to the mind/body debate was characteristically seminal. For he advanced an argument in the *Dialogues* against "brain fetishism" that became a staple two centuries later. It is to be found at the beginning of the second *Dialogues* where Hylas gives the standard neurophysiological account of the brain-causation of ideas:

> It is supposed the soul makes her residence in some part of the brain, from which the nerves take their rise, and are thence extended to all parts of the body and that outward objects by the different impressions they make on the organs of sense, communicate certain vibrative motions to the nerves; and these being filled with spirits, propagate them to the brain or seat of the soul, which according to the various impressions or traces thereby made in the brain, is variously affected with ideas. (*D* III, 208)

To this well-worn "likely tale," Philonous replies:

> Beside spirits, all that we know or conceive are our own ideas. When therefore you say, all ideas are occasioned by impressions in

> the brain, do you conceive this brain or no? If you do, then you talk of ideas imprinted in an idea, causing that same idea, which is absurd. If you do not conceive it you talk unintelligibly, instead of forming a reasonable hypothesis. (*D* II, 209)

Hylas complacently surrenders "I now clearly see it was a mere dream. There is nothing to it."

One wonders, however, why Philonous accepts Hylas' characterization of the neurophysiological "picture" as a dream. Strictly speaking, he ought to have argued that it is not even dreamable. For the self-representational aspects of mentality cannot be reduced to a parallel material self-representation. Berkeley uses the paradoxical idea of ideas being "imprinted" in an idea which includes the idea of itself and therefore can cause itself to be (surely another Athena born from Zeus' skull) in order to spell out this impossibility. Two centuries later Royce was to use a structurally similar argument (the "map paradox") to buttress his version of neo-Hegelian idealism while Wittgenstein used Russell's paradox, the set-theoretic version of Berkeley's brain within a brain, to defend his Viennese version of Zen mysticism.

Let us consider Royce's version to see how the argument form employed by Berkeley is pregnant with idealism. The map paradox arose in Royce's writings as "a first illustration of a self-Representative System," it was to be conceived as "a map of England, contained within England, to represent, down to the minutest detail every contour and marking, natural or artificial, that occurs upon the surface of England."[53] The result, of course is that:

> One who, with absolute exactness of perception, looked down upon the ideal map thus supposed to be constructed, would see lying upon the surface of England, and at a definite place thereon, a representation of England on as large or small a scale as you please. This representation would agree in contour with the real England, but at a place within this map of England, there would appear, upon a smaller scale, a new representation of the contour of England. This representation, which would repeat in the outer portions the details of the former but upon a smaller space, would be seen to contain yet another England and this another and so on without limit.[54]

This, for Royce, is the distinguishing feature of the self: it, like the infinitely iterated map of England within England, is "a self-representative system; and its metaphysical fate stands or falls with the possibility of such systems." But then can the Self be the brain? Not for Berkeley, for the idea of the brain cannot be a self-representative system, since such a system must have "within itself" an idea of itself *ad infinitum*, but the brain *qua* idea must be finite. Consequently, any form of identity between a mind and the idea of a brain would be undreamable and inconceivable. Similarly, of course, causal theories must fail because they would, according to Berkeley's ontological dichotomy, require either that an idea cause a spirit to be or another idea to be. Either version would be impossible, especially the latter, since it would necessitate a vicious circle, i.e., an idea of the brain causing itself to exist.

I am not claiming that Berkeley's "idealism" is the predecessor of the neo-Hegelian idealism in the period of the "crisis of the bourgeois intellectual" characterized by philosophers like Bradley, Royce and Lukacs. The social conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, of course, are not isomorphic to those of early eighteenth century Ireland.[55] But Berkeley's argument in the *Dialogues* has an undoubted family resemblance to these later critiques of the mechanization of the mind. For there is a similar refusal to allow the brain to become a *sui generis* deity—the fetish *par excellence*—so that all the secrets of the Sphinx will supposedly be inevitably discovered between our two ears.

Brain worship in Berkeley's day had not yet grown to the proportions we experience in the late twentieth century, consequently Berkeley's iconoclastic arguments were somewhat peripheral to his anti-materialist enterprise. For after noting the impossibility of self-representative ideas in general and the brain idea in particular, Berkeley concluded that the logical identity of thoughts and neurological events and the causal relation between actions of spirits and neural changes were mere "category mistakes." He had no need to step out of the materialist trap, since he would question why in the world one would fall into it in the first place. Douglas Hofstader, the pop philosopher of the "computer age," stated as one of the "Articles of Reductionist Faith," viz., "that brain processes do not possess any mystique—even though they possess more levels of organization—than say, stomach

processes." Berkeley might agree with this article of faith, but not with Hofstader's explication:

> It would be unthinkable in this day and age to suggest that people digest their food not by ordinary chemical processes, but by a sort of mysterious and magic "assimilation." [The article of faith] simply extends this kind of common sense reasoning to brain processes.[56]

One sees the distance between Berkeley's and modern "common sense," for Berkeley saw no reason to "reduce" digestion to "stomach processes" much less thinking (and other spiritual activities) to "brain processes."

Against the Localizing Prejudice

Berkeley's anti-brain fetishism argument in the *Dialogues* depended upon the inherent "logical" differences between ideas and spirits: ideas cannot be self-generative nor self-reflexive while spirits are by definition self-generative and self-reflexive. Once one accepts the Berkeleyan ontological dichotomy, the probability of a causal or a logical relation between mind and body vanishes. However, what of a more subtle "functional" relationship or, what Berkeley *cum* Malebranche called, an "occasional" relationship? The problem with such subtleties, Berkeley argued in the *Principles*, was that they violated Occam's razor.

One frequently forgets that there is an inherent prejudice in functionalist accounts that identify thought with events within the brain. They presume that a material "substratum," the brain, must exist and so the problem becomes, what is the functional relation between mind and this matter. Without this localizing prejudice, there is no reason why a functional relation should not exist between mental events with some other piece of matter. Thus the functionalists admit liberally that there is no reason why "machines" cannot "think," i.e., a functional relation typical of thought between it and a series of material states can be realized in neurons and transistor circuits as well. It is an easy step to the famous "machines can think" literature of philosophy and science fiction. But why stop with IBM? Why not include in the set of realizations of thought, planets, solar systems. galaxies, etc.? Stanislaw Lem did, e.g., in his novel *Solaris,* quite beautifully. Lem's thinking and feeling planet, which excites thoughts and feelings in the humans who

come in contact with it, goes to the core of the functionalist's problems: there is no inherent reason to chose one particular material substratum over another as the basis of thought. "My" thoughts might be a realization of the earth's, the solar system's, or the galaxy's material states just as well as being those of my inter-aural space as far as functionalism is concerned. How are we to chose and declare a limit on the physical processes allowed? Is, e.g., the moon, whose movement clearly affects the minute tidal forces in the brain's fluids, part of "my brain processes"?

Berkeley drove this point to its logical conclusion in terms of occasionalism, since *any* material system of kind K can be the substratum for a functional occasional explanation, there is no reason to believe, on the basis of mental phenomena, that any *particular* material substratum exists. We might, continue to insist that at least one such system K exists, but that would be a "very precarious" opinion "since it is to suppose, without any reason at all that God has created innumerable beings that are entirely useless and serve to no manner of purpose." Berkeley warns that once one weakens the materialist claim from the causal and logical to the functional and occasional, nothing material remains, not even the functionality nor the occasion.

The Impossibility of Materialism

Berkeley was not content to merely show that materialism is neither necessary nor probable. He also attempted an anti-materialist *coup de grace*. His argument, often referred to as the "master argument," has had a rather bad reception in modern commentaries.[57] At best it has been seen as a rather crude sophistry, at worst it has been taken as a rather bad pun. I will try to show that it deserves more attention, as a further "footnote to Parmenides" and as a preface to existentialism, post-structuralism and postmodernism. His argument begins with a challenge to materialistically inclined readers: "if you can but conceive it possible for one extended movable substance, or in general, for any one idea or anything like an idea to exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving it, I shall readily give up the cause" (*P* 22). He tempts such a reader even further by granting that "the bare possibility of your opinion's being true, shall pass for an argument that it is so" (*P* 22). Berkeley is sure, however, that in this trial of conceptual strength the materialist, even with these liberal stimulants, will fail. For it is impos-

sible to conceive a "downright contradiction," "strictly speaking," and Berkeley attempted to show that the existence of such external things is a contradiction. True, such a contradiction is sayable and may even be a "common sense" or an "ordinary language" truism, yet truisms are not always truths.

In this case, Berkeley claimed, the obvious materialist truism is not only false, it is a contradiction. How can he convince the reader? One part of his argument relied on the converse of an old mystic adage that degenerated into a scandalous sophism. The mystic adage is Parmenides'—"What is not is not thinkable [reasonably sayable or knowable]"—while the sophism is Protagoras'—"a false judgment is impossible."[58] The converse of the Parmenidian oracle is, "what is not thinkable [reasonably sayable or knowable] is not," and Berkeley tries to use this not altogether necessary principle in his discussion. For he turns to his materialist opponent: "But say you surely there is nothing easier than to *imagine* trees for instance in a part or books existing in a closet and nobody by to *perceive* them" (*P* 23, my italics). The apparent reasonability of such a statement relies on the contrast between "imagine" and "perceive," for Berkeley grants that the conditions of imagining that and of perceiving that (as well as imagining X and perceiving X) vary with the activity or passivity of the will and the vividness of imagined or perceived objects or situations. The following are possible "mental acts":

1. I imagine that Locke perceives the trees in the park but Berkeley does not.
2. I imagine that neither Locke nor Berkeley nor anyone else perceives the trees in the park.
3. I imagine that Locke imagines the trees in the park but Berkeley does not.

but is the following possible?

4. I imagine that no one, including myself, imagines (perceives, remembers or, in general, thinks of) the trees in the part.

Sentences like (4) express a "manifest repugnancy," according to Berkeley (*P* 23). Why? The imagination is a formative, willful faculty (either compounding, dividing or barely representing these originally

perceived things) consequently its self-iteration is problematic. For a constitutive element of imagining that I imagine the trees in the park is actually imagining those trees in that park. I.e., I must do what I imagine doing which is non-standard, since the imagination involves the realm of fancy, willful fiction, and, in general, the "non-existent." When I imagine that X, the situation described by "X" is not usually a fact. Thus I can hardly imagine that I am gazing at the hot midsummer sun, when I am actually gazing at that very sun. When I imagine I see, hear, feel, perceive, I am not doing any of these things, though I am imagining that I am.

But the game becomes logically vicious when we turn to negation, for when I imagine I do not see, feel, hear or perceive an object or situation, I must imagine the object or situation. This is the paradox of the censor's imagination, for in imagining a world without smut, homosexuality, and communism, the censor must imagine his/her "evils." Thus when I imagine that I never heard Bach's music I must (aurally) imagine this music. On the basis of these admittedly eighteenth-century considerations we can conclude with the following two generalizations:

(A) if I imagine that x Rs y, then I imagine y.
(B) if I imagine that x does not R y, then I imagine y.

But on substituting "I" for "x" and "imagine" for "R" we got the following:

(A') if I imagine that I imagine y, then I imagine y,
(B') if I imagine that I do not imagine y, then I imagine y.

(A') was nonstandard, but (B') appeared contradictory to Berkeley, it certainly did not follow with other iterable propositional attitude verbs like "desire" or "know."

I say "apparently contradictory" since the indirect discourse of the imagination is normally perverse, but (B') seems to square the perversity. Berkeley exploits this perversion by concluding that the materialistically minded reader's imagining that the trees in the park are with no one perceiving (imagining or thinking) them "is nothing to the purpose" since this entails that "you conceive (the trees) unconceived or unthought of" (*P* 23).

Surely Berkeley's argument is sloppy terminologically, since it passes from one use of "perceive" (as synonym of "see," "smell," and "taste") to another (as synonym of "imagine," "conceive," and "think"), but at its heart is the peculiarity of mental discourse that was noticed, once and always, in Presocratic philosophy. For thought *qua* conception and imagination seems to produce the very objects of thought, even in negativity. What is unthinkable, inconceivable, or unimaginable is apparently unproduceable (by humans or divinities) and consequently, it is not. Thought (conception or imagination) cannot go beyond itself, Berkeley echoes Parmenides, simply because there is *nothing* "beyond" it.

Berkeley and Heidegger on Alienation

Whatever the virtues or vices of such an archaic philosophical move, there is another aspect of the Berkeleyan explanation of the reasons why the reader could accept materialism as a truism that looks to the philosophical and social future. "Fetishism," "objectivism," "naturalism," "mauvais fois," "technologism," "alienated consciousness," and "reification" all have their roots in the self-oblivion, self-deception, and self-delusion of everyday life and "the scientific world picture" according to the existentialists. They located this Lethe in the bowels of the social assembly line, but Berkeley nicely observed oblivion's course in its first formative stages. Self-oblivion is the exact, presupposed inverse of idea-fetishism, for it is only when we forget ourselves can we externalize our own mental products and confront ourselves with them *qua* indifferent reality. In effect, one of the main reasons for the apparent compulsion of the materialist "truism" is our self-abstraction (caricatured by Swift in the philosophers of Laputa) through which we create an monstrous, impossible world of spiritless things:

> When we do our utmost to conceive the existence of external bodies, we are all the while only contemplating our own ideas. But the mind, taking no notice of itself, is deluded to think it can and does conceive bodies existing unthought of or without the mind; though at the same time they are apprehended by or exist in itself. (*P* 23)

The mind taking no notice of itself is deluded: these were pregnant words for an early eighteenth century cleric. Similarly, in his critique of that Newtonian abstraction—pure, absolute space—Berkeley noted that it implicitly required conceiving space without body or motion, but such a notion requires at least one body, my own: "When therefore supposing all the world to be annihilated besides my own body, I say there still remains pure space: thereby nothing else is meant, but only that I conceive it possible, for the limbs of my body to be moved on all sides without the least resistance: but if that too were annihilated, then there could be no motion, and consequently no space" (*P* 116).

Berekeley noted in these discoveries that what we know as "the scientific revolution" ended (both magical and Catholic) superstition, only to generate a more virulent idolatry which led not only to a substitution of Things for God, but, even more surprisingly, to an annihilation of the self.

Certainly, the moral psychology of the period was beginning to see in "self-regarding attitudes" (from greed to glory) the motive force of civic and personal life.[59] From Hobbes to Locke to Mandeville and beyond, the self-centered, self-interested, self-obsessed individual became the industrious demon of social reality. Crusoe and Gulliver were, in their own ways, the epitome of this total reflection of self into surrounding events, for they heightened the self's shadow in the contexts of solitude or difference. But Berkeley was noting in the above passages another side to the dialectic of bourgeois life: a growing automaticity, routine boredom and estrangement in life the average eighteenth-century cleric was unconscious of and quite complacent about. This complacency was not to last, many reactions to the "death of the self" were brewing, from the anarchistic underground Dublin Blasters and the Methodist religious "awakening" of the 1730s to the rise of Romanticism after the French Revolution. The Enlightenment was haunted by a widespread feeling that the self-oblivion Berkeley wrote about was capable of extinguishing the bourgeoisie from within. *They had to feel themselves; to wake up.* Surely Berkeley was quite early in this perception, though his correctives were straight-laced. He sermonized to the reader:

> It is on this therefore that I insist, to wit that the absolute existence of unthinking things are words without meaning, or which include a

> contradiction. This is what I repeat and inculcate, and earnestly recommend to the attentive thoughts of the reader. (*P* 24)

But he too was to feel the malaise, wander Europe and the Americas, take tarwater, and quietly despair in Ireland. Others, however, would in the course of the eighteenth century abandon the conventions and the homilies. De Sade's hypersexual asceticism and Coleridge's opium addiction were early experiments in the struggle against self-oblivion (through oblivion of the other) which their language intensified. By the nineteenth century a whole "ideology," antithetical yet essential to the development of the bourgeois order, established itself. The paradoxes of Baudelaire's *Le Voyage* and Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, for example, which recognized that the "individualism" of bourgeois society is the most insidious annihilator of the individual, were anticipated by Berkeley's discovery of the worm in the scientific image's heart.

Berkeley drew out an ironic consequence of materialism, one that Heidegger was to similarly point out to his Nazi colleagues more than two centuries later: "technocrats" were obsessed with cost-benefit analyses, and though they formally put the self in the center of the (utilitarian) universe, their methods inevitably annihilated it. This was true of their eighteenth- as well as the twentieth-century versions. But these technocrats ("projectors," in eighteenth-century parlance) were invariably materialists, and therefore they are the most selfless of thinkers. By putting the acquisitive ego forward, they more deeply forgot the wider "framing" ego; in exalting the greedy little *homo economicus*, they neglected the productive ego that literally creates and destroys worlds. The cause of this oblivion, this blindness affecting both the learned and the illiterate, was not carefully studied by the early Berkeley, but it was the basis of the mercantilist Prejudice that he subtly tried to subvert.

Conclusion

The early Berkeley's arguments against Locke's theory of the meaning of money were rooted in a rejection of Locke's semantics, his theory of abstraction, and his materialism. His critical program formed the basis of the Querist's confidence in his defetishization of gold and constituted something of an unspoken Prolegomenon of *The Querist.* For it was not enough for Berkeley to simply see one "success story" about the

use of paper money in Rhode Island. After all, there were many other "failures" in the colonies as well, and even Rhode Island's success was moot. This section's long march through the standard texts of Berkleyan scholarship was intended to show that his early philosophy was a powerful weapon of his political economy against the fetishizing Prejudice.

Berkeley's critique of Lockean mercantile economics based on the *Principles* and *Dialogues* was not enough to overcome the fears and suspicions of all of the Querist's readers. They might have been intrigued by the Querist's suggested solution to the Irish monetary crisis: adopt methods similar to the Americans in Rhode Island or the French in 1719 and 1720. But they were inevitably cautious. After all, they might have lost their inheritance in the popping of the Mississippi Bubble fifteen years before or they might have heard about the inflationary consequences of American fiat money.

Could Berkeley convince his readers (and himself) not only that gold can be defetishized, but that it was possible for Ireland to have a successful, non-inflationary, non-specie-based money supply? Such a demonstration (if anything can be demonstrated through questions) required a form of reasoning that was not available in his early philosophy: a way of organizing thought about spirits.

NOTES

1. A discussion of Berkeley's use of the Platonic dialogue as a paradigm for the *Dialogues* see Walmsley (1990: 68–81).

2. "Feitico" was a Portuguese word already in use in the fourteenth century referring to objects employed in witchcraft. But in the fifteenth century, Portuguese sailors and merchants referred to the carved figurines used by Africans in their magico-religious practice with the word. It became a technical term in the eighteenth century study of religion after Charles de Brosses published his *Du cult des dieux fetiches: Parallele de l'ancienne religion de l'Egypte avec la religion actuelle de Nigritie* in 1760. Comte in the nineteenth century called an early stage of human development where all external objects are considered to be human "fetishism." See Lima (1987: 314–17). Marx used "fetishism" ironically in *Capital* by transforming it from a term in the history of religions to a weapon in the critique of political economy: "the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things . . . I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities" (Marx 1909: 165). With this stroke, Marx poetically metamorphized

the sophisticated stock and commodity brokers of 1867 London into "primitive" people worshipping (perhaps with blood sacrifice) clay figures around a fire.

3. "On the mission of Christ" in Luce and Jessop (1955vi: 41). One of Berkeley's favorite biblical texts was Isaiah 44 which explicitly details with the production process of an idol only to better satirize its worship.

4. "Notes for Sermons at Newport (R.I.) in Luce and Jessop (1955vi: 53–55). Berkeley was embarking on an "exodus" in his journey across the Atlantic in 1728 leading his family and friends into the wilderness to found a college and a new form of life. His famous poem, "On the prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America," written in 1726 expresses the prophetic and exilic optimism appropriate to a Mosaic persona.

5. For details see Murphy (1997), Chap. 15, "A Specie-less France, 1720."

6. For a classic discussion of history of West African gold mining and trade see Bovill (1968).

7. A basic discussion of the course of Spain's precious metal experiences and the attitude toward them see Vilar (1976). According to Eli Heckscher, the classic historian of mercantilism, the contrast between Spain—"almost the only gold- and silver-producing country in the world [and which was] forced on to a copper standard"—and the Netherlands—"a tiny country without any natural advantages in production worth mentioning . . . acquire as if by the stroke of a magic wand the largest commercial fleet of the whole earth, and become superior in competition to all other nations in trade, shipping, fishing and colonial power"—"gave an extraordinary fillip to thought on economic matters in the seventeenth century," in Heckscher (1955: 315).

8. For a late twentieth-century anthropologist's connection of pre-capitalist idolatry and capitalist fetishism see Taussig (1980). Taussig writes: "Societies on the threshold of capitalist development necessarily interpret that development in terms of precapitalist beliefs and practices," in Taussig (1980: 11).

9. The reception of Berkeley's philosophy began to change on his return from the Americas in 1731. After being either ignored, attacked or ridiculed in his early days, *Alciphron* (1732) and *The Analyst* (1734) put him at the center of intellectual discussion in England and Ireland. For an account of the contemporary impact of Berkeley's philosophy see H.M. Bracken (1965), Berman (1989), and Berman (1994). Berman attributes the major change in the reception of Berkeley's philosophy to the respect he gained by going to America to begin his "benevolent project." Certainly, by the 1730s Berkeley's immaterialism and critique of abstract ideas was beginning to win converts like David Hume.

10. A fine scholarly edition of Locke's papers on money, with an indispensible historical introduction, can be found in Kelly (1990). A book-length discussion of Locke's theory of money can be found in Caffentzis (1989).

11. Locke's views on money faced criticism long before Berkeley wrote *The Querist*. Nicholas Barbon opposed Locke in the "recoinage" debate on 1696 in *A discourse concerning coining the new money lighter; in answer to Mr. Locke's considerations about raising the value of money* (London, 1696). He argued that the value of money is set by "official stamp" not by the quantity of gold or silver. For more on Barbon on Locke see Vickers (1959: 87–91). John Law had a more sophisticated critique of Locke in his *Money and Trade Considered, with a Proposal*

for Supplying the Nation with Money (Edinburgh, 1705). He pointed out that money needs to have a series of qualities to satisfy its traditional three functions—measure of value, means of payment, standard of deferred payments—but that these qualities can be realized by land money, bank notes, goldsmiths' notes as well as silver coins. Moreover, Law recognized what Murphy calls "category 2 money" that does not satisfy all the three functions of money and does not have the standard set of qualities, but it is still considered money in practice (for example, shares in certain companies or banks). Cf. Murphy (1997: 53–64).

12. Locke, after all, was often seen as the main defender of materialism and mortalism (i.e., the view that thought ends with the death of the body and resurrection requires God to literally reassemble the body). For contemporary eighteenth century ascription of Locke as a materialist and atheist see Yolton (1983: 3–4).

13. Caffentzis (1989: 123).

14. Berkeley's theory of language is discussed in most general works on his philosophy, especially since Warnock (1953). Warnock pointed out that Berkeley's "account of language" anticipated "contemporary views," including the work of Wittgenstein and Austin.

15. Ian Hacking labelled Berkeley an "idea-ist" in Hacking (1975).

16. For a discussion of the importance of the category of possession for Locke's theory of communication see Caffentzis (1989: 101–3).

17. For more on "dumb barter" see Einzig (1966: 340).

18. There is now a huge literature on the expropriation of knowledge that took place in the age of expansion and colonization. A classic in this regard is Shiva (1989); see also Weatherford (1988).

19. Marx recognized this in his "Critique on the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole" in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. He wrote: "Hegel's standpoint is that of modern political economy. He grasps labour as the essence of man. . . . Labour is man's coming-to-be for himself within alienation, or as alienated man. . . . The only labour which Hegel knows and recognizes is abstractly mental labour" (Marx 1961: 151–52).

20. Nietzsche (1967), First Essay, Section 15.

21. Smith (1937), Book I, Chapter 2. "[The propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another] is common to all men, and to be found in no other race of animals, which seem to know neither this nor any other species of contracts."

22. Let us not forget that the triad of texts of the "empiricists" are brought together by their concern with the "human": *Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Principles of Human Knowledge, Treatise on Human Nature.* This obsession with the *human* is indicative of the imperial power and anxiety these intellectuals must have felt during a period of capitalist development based on the slave trade.

23. For another discussion of Berkeley's rhetorical strategy in his critique of abstract ideas see Walmsley (1990), Part I.

24. The use of the word 'mob' is quite decisive, for it was neologism at the time and synonymous with the Biblical prostitutes and hustlers of Jerusalem, i.e., the "publicans and harlots." A generation later North remembered the origin of word in

the *Examiner*: "I may note that the rabble first changed their Title and were called the Mob in the assemblies of this (the King Head) club. It was their Beast of Burden and called first, *mobile vulgus*, but fell naturally into the contraction of one syllable," (*OED*).

25. For a classic discussion of the issue see Rosenfeld (1941). Rosenfeld, however, does not discuss the political economy of the question. Descartes's dichotomization of humans and machines (beast-machines and machine-machines) envisioned a ruling class of minds organizing the work of a class of totally robotized beings, but Locke was suspicious of Descartes' mechanistic social utopia. Locke was a true "empiricist" when dealing with questions of rule and he was not at all confident that the final word had been said as to the forms and possibilities of labor in Descartes' *Le Monde*. Locke's logical and moral "existentialism" made it clear that any attempt to substantialize "sub-human" beings would lead to a legal and social code that was not flexible enough. There were bound to be continually new forms of "deviance"—of the will (criminals), of the judgment (madmen), of the wit (idiots), of the body (monsters)—and their appropriate forms of confinement, exploitation, and execution. Not all "defective" sub-human machines were defective for the same reason, and a key need in managing them was the creation of a sensitive diagnostic tool that he hoped his *Essay* would stimulate. For example, judges making the decision to either transport or execute a convict needed such a tool. Moreover, in dealing with the Americas, the prime laboratory of labor power of the period bringing together Africans, indigenous Americans and British convicts, Locke, as the chief member of the Board of Trade (and Plantations), applied his thought in advising the King to direct the colonial governors to strictly enforce "the acts for increasing the number of white men in their colonies" like the South Carolina "deficiency law" that provided penalties for plantation owners who failed to keep a 1:6 white/black ratio on their establishments. 1:6 was not an arbitrarily chosen proposition, nor was it eternally fixed, it was the product of a kind of thought (later called "empiricist") Locke was engaged in and wrote the *Essay* to propagate. For an account of Locke's work on the Board of Trade see Laslett (1969). For an important study of Locke's subtle thoughts on the possibilities of labor power in the Americas and his actual work on the management of the Carolinas see Arneil (1996: 148–50). For more on the complex conditions of alliance and conflict among the "sub-humans" in America see Allen (1975).

26. For a discussion of the social and class roots of geometry in Egypt and Greece see Sohn-Rethel (1978: 90–103).

27. For an introduction to the Platonic "reform" of geometry spearheaded by Eudoxus see Boyer (1989: 101–6).

28. Alfred Sohn-Rethel writes of this "radical transformation from the Egyptian art of measuring to the geometry of the Greeks": "The geometry of measurement thus became something quite different from the measurement itself. The manual operation became subordinated to an act of pure thought which was directed solely towards grasping quantitative laws of number or of abstract space. . . . We reason that this could result only through the generalisation intrinsic in the monetary commensuration of commodity values promoted by coinage," Sohn-Rethel (1978: 102).

29. For an account of the Down Survey see Andrews (1975).

30. A discussion of land banks with special reference to John Law's three land bank proposals directed at the English, Scottish and French governments between 1704 and 1707 can be found in Murphy (1997: 45–66).

31. Quoted in Murphy (1997: 50).

32. The dialectic between land and money is shadowed by their claims on the social surplus: rent for land and interest for money. Marx's analysis of the frequent ideological confusion between rent and interest is particularly acute. See Marx (1966), Part VI, Chapter XXXVII, "Transformation of Surplus Profit into Ground-Rent: Preliminaries."

33. Marx (1909: 724) writes of this "agrarian model" as a chapter of history written in the "fire and blood" of the enclosures and "[l]ike all [of capitalism's] other historical advances it bought these also by pauperizing the direct producers." Robert Brenner brought about a small revolution in Marxist studies of the development of capitalism by focusing on the importance of the "agrarian model" in Brenner (1976). For an important study of the students of rent, interest, and taxes from Petty to Smith in the light of Brenner's work, see McNally (1988).

34. The problems provoked by Berkeley's bifurcating geometric concepts into tactile and visual ideas and his identification of the objects of geometry with tactile ideas in *NTV* have often been criticized as not providing a solution satisfying to mathematicians For example, George Warnock in his Warnock (1953: 209) complains that "It seems clear that Berkeley is really committed to wreaking more havoc in geometry than he recognized." But these criticisms do not contextualize the social and technical crisis in the practice of geo/metry Berkeley was responding to. For a discussion of Berkeley's views on geometry see Atherton (1990: 201–7; Brook (1973: 67–76).

35. Berkeley's geometric-diagram refutation of Locke's theory of abstraction has been a favorite of commentators. For example, Pitcher (1977) does not note the self-reflexive aspect of geometric proof which the early Berkeley valued over the "proofs" in arithmetic and algebra. Pure arithmetic involved the manipulations of "denominations" and algebra involved the manipulation of "denominations of denominations" and not the "things" themselves. Hence they had a lower epistemic value.

36. This often happens in formal studies, where a specific interpretation of a theory is crucial. For example, in the completeness theorem for formal logic the "identical" interpretation is crucial. Also, the standard interpretation of arithmetic in the realm of whole numbers is crucial for Godel's theorem.

37. For a discussion of the relation between Berkeley's nominalism and his idealism see Muehlman (1992: 73–76).

38. The classic sociology of science application of the Weberian "spirit of capitalism" thesis is to be found in Merton (1970), especially chapter 2.

39. Wallis (1970: 223).

40. The quotations are from Boyle (1970). Seventeenth-century Mechanical Philosophy had two incompatible variants: Descartes' identification of matter with extension and Boyle's and Hobbes' updated version of classical corpuscularism. Book II of Newton's *Principia* includes a definitive mathematical annihilation of Descartes' vortex theory of planetary motion and as a corollary Descartes' mechanism. But the *Principia* did not valorize classical contact corpuscularism

either, because gravity required the recognition of forces acting at a distance. Locke's *Essay* was published in 1690, four years after the *Principia*, and he must have been aware of the problematic consequences of "the incomparable Mr. Newton's" achievement.

41. During a period of "scientific realism" (as U.S. philosophy experienced in the post-WWII period until the energy and ecology crises of the 1970s) such a promissory note was not easily questioned. But in a mood of reflexive "scientific skepticism" we might ask why the mechanical philosophy could appear intelligible, simple, and extensive enough to be the hallmark of reality.

42. McCann (1994: 86) argues that "Locke's leading claims, therefore, are not backed by a promissory note of future scientific success; they are put forward simply as accounts of the world as it must appear to us, given our (good, bad, or indifferent) commonsense view of things." But McCann just begs the question by attempting to bury it in "*our* common sense." One would have thought that this century's long sociological labor in examining "the construction of the normal" would have penetrated the neighboring walls of academic philosophy by now. For a useful survey of this work as applied to Boyle's and Locke's England see Shapin (1994), especially chapter 1. To be fair, McCann does recognize that Locke's analysis of body is hardly consistent with seventeenth-century "common sense" (taken with due caution) and required God to provide lawful regularities between bodies and the creation of secondary quality ideas in the mind.

43. Exchange value is not sensuous for two reasons: (1) exchange-value arises from an open-ended set of comparisons of a commodity with other commodities, as Marx pointed out, and (2) the use-value of most commodities is temporally incompatible with their exchange-value, since it is only enjoyed after it is exchanged, as Sohn-Rethel pointed out. For Marx see Marx (1909i: ch. 1), and for Alfred Sohn-Rethel, see Sohn-Rethel (1978: 22–29).

44. McLellan (1977: 363–64). This theme has been developed by many feminist historians of science in more and less Marxist ways. Cf. Merchant (1990).

45. Metallism or Bullionism was still the "average" monetary ideology of the seventeenth century. As Eli Heckshe wrote in Heckshe (1955: 176): "There are few mercantilist writings that are not mainly preoccupied with what is usually known in English as 'treasure,' which was without exception synonymous with money or precious metals. . . . Consideration for precious metals was the constantly recurring motive of economic legislation and administration. It also influenced, more or less openly, the three closely allied fields of foreign policy, colonial policy and voyages of discovery. In fact, the hope of discovering gold and silver mines became one of the chief driving forces in the expansion of European peoples to other parts of the world."

46. An interesting discussion of the poetic popularizers of Newtonian science see Jones (1966). For a discussion of eighteenth-century poet-popularizers of Newtonian science like David Mallet, see Jones (1966: 96–105).

47. The ill-fitting mathematically surveyed clothing of Laputa and the collapsing "scientifically designed" houses of Lagado were Swift's contribution to a small but spirited literature satirizing science as reviewed by Jones (1966: 65–78). The distance between Newton's actual science and the popular scientific image can be measured by the ratio of Newton's unpublished, covert to his published, overt work.

48. Wittgenstein (1968), paragraphs 48–49.

49. Petty (1963: 259–60).

50. In post-Kuhnian philosophy of science, this forgetting is often called a "paradigm."

51. An early and prescient skeptic of this equation was, ironically, one of the founders of electronic digital computers was John von Neumann, see von Neumann (1955).

52. The latest round of this revival in philosophy is associated with John Searle, see Searle (1995). The work being done in the intersection of quantum mechanics and the theory of consciousness is now beginning to revive a number of Berkeleyan themes as well, see Penrose (1994).

53. Royce (1959: 504).

54. Royce (1959: 505).

55. For a discussion of the "crisis of the bourgeois intellectual" in the early twentieth century, see Federici (1980).

56. Hofstader (1979: 571–72).

57. See Pitcher (1977: 110–14).

58. An acute discussion of the logic of the relation between knowledge to being can be found in Anscombe (1981: 3–8).

59. See Hirschman (1977) for a discussion of "interests" and "self-love" in the eighteenth-century discourse on the conditions of a capitalist society.

Chapter 4

The Querist's Solution

SECTION 1
THE QUERIST'S SECOND CONCEPTUAL REVOLUTION

> the of which zoantholitic furniture,
> from mineral through vegetal to animal,
> not appear to full up together fallen man
> than under but one photoreflection of the
> several iredals gradationes of solar light
> James Joyce, *Finnegan's Wake*

Berkeley's negative, defetishizing program was at best a Prolegomenon to the Querist's conception of money. Philosophically, the major problem Berkeley faced in his confrontation with the cynically content Irish cottiers (and the libertine graziers) on returning to Ireland as a bishop was the excitation (and taming) of their spirits, respectively. Could some form of money excite the cynically content Irish into industry and tame the besotted Anglo-Irish graziers into frugality? As we have seen, these were vital questions for Berkeley and his Church, but his early philosophy was not able answer them.

The young Berkeley was ironically trapped by his own form of "spirit skepticism." For in creating a beautiful machine to confound skeptics of God and idolaters of matter, he conceived a monstrously new form of skepticism that undermined his own philosophical goals as well. The sharp dichotomy he drew between spirits and ideas implied the impossibility of accurate descriptions of the spirit's activities. The reason for this failure is simple. One describes complex ideas by unpacking and combining the words that refer to the simpler ideas that

compose them. For example, one might describe a triangle as being composed of three pair-wise intersecting lines. But words cannot describe spirits, according to Berkeley, as they can be used to describe complex ideas, since spirits are neither simple nor complex ideas. They have *nothing* to do with ideas. Hence, descriptive knowledge of spirits, besides the bare recognition of their existence, was something of a mystery for the early Berkeley.

This mystery might have been sufficient for a young clergyman traveling in the train of men and women of affairs and sermonizing on Sundays. But once the tasks of social organization confronted the mature Berkeley, beginning with his *Plan* and ending with his *Bank*, he was forced to re-evaluate his assumptions. Was there not a way to describe and strategize about the terrain of the spirit? If not a mechanics of the spirit, which had been the butt of Swift's satire, could there not be a dynamics to deal with the "laws" of human *momentum* as he queried at the end of *The Querist*?

As with much else in philosophy, once the desire established itself, a philosophical innovation soon followed. But Berkeley did not present his new philosophy as new. It took shape slowly in Rhode Island, London, and Ireland between 1729–1738, in response to his immediate, and changing, political and social objectives. It appeared in a number of subtle, even disingenuous, ways, for example, as revisions of previous texts, in responses to controversies in mathematical analysis, in presentations before magistrates, and in a book of a thousand and one questions. Berkeley was so subtle, he even tricked many of his most acute commentators into thinking that his later philosophy was identical to his early one.

Perhaps Joyce was right in presenting Berkeley as a trickster in *Finnegan's Wake*. Berkeley was "pidgin fella Balkelly," the "archdruid" sent to befuddle and confuse St. Patrick with "his hetcromatic sevenhued septicoloured roranyellgreenlindigan mantle." Was the intellectual world of London and Dublin the scene of Bikilly-Belkelly's pidgin? A skeptic confuting skepticism; an intellectual transvestite; a Jacobite loyal to the Hanover Georges; an opponent of capital punishment for common criminals, but a Draco when it came to libertines—no wonder, as one of his commentators pointed out, despite (or perhaps because of) his many efforts to explain his thoughts, they "have often been poorly understood."

Joyce's joke on Berkeley would offend the supporters of the

standard view of the philosopher. From their perspective, Berkeley certainly was neither a trickster nor an intellectual magician pulling principles and notions out of an empty hat. At worst, he has been considered something of an "amiable fool," in the vein of the "stage philosopher." In the main, however, Alexander Pope's judgment of Berkeley as having "every virtue under Heaven" has been echoed by his major twentieth-century biographers. Luce, for example, praised Bishop Berkeley as a "man of affairs, sane, shrewd, efficient" and his writing for its directness: "he wrote plainly and simply, because he thought clearly and knew exactly what he wanted to say."[1] Berkeley's most recent biographer, David Berman, differed from Luce's totally bourgeois characterization of Berkeley by finding, along with "worldly wisdom," the "(seemingly) incompatible" virtue of childlike innocence."[2] But neither innocence nor worldly wisdom are the traits of the trickster.

In this section I will show that Joyce's intuition is correct: Berkeley was something of a trickster and magician. One thing that a trickster rarely does is reveal his/her secret faints to the audience. They are to pass unnoticed or, if half noticed, forgotten in the bustle of the act. Could it be that Berkeley managed to transform his ontology without anyone noticing? Certainly when one compares his earliest (almost anti-metaphysical) works like the *Principles* and *Dialogues* with his last major work, *Siris: A Chain of Philosophical Reflexions and Inquiries Concerning the Virtues of Tar-water and divers other Subjects connected together and arising One from Another*, his 1744 effort to support his tar-water panacea with a Neoplatonic, proto-Romantic metaphysical system, there is much evidence that somewhere between 1709–1713 and 1744 his system was transformed.

Siris has always been an uncomfortable, even embarrassing, end to the chain of Berkeley's works for his admirers. It is a book commentators rarely explain; most often it is merely ignored. Ian Tipton, for example, called *Siris* "that puzzling work" at the beginning of his *Berkeley: The Philosophy of Immaterialism* and never refers to it again in almost four-hundred pages of commentary.[3] George Pitcher refers directly to it once, in order to confirm what he claimed to be an earlier view of Berkeley, viz., unperceived objects are not sensed by God, but rather are conceived by him.[4] A. C. Grayling simply solved the problem by never referring to the doctrines of *Siris* and stating, without argument, at the beginning of his *Berkeley: The Central Arguments* that

"the writings we have do not contain changes of outlook over time; Berkeley was remarkably consistent in his views, and in *Alciphron* and *Siris* the doctrines of *Essay on a New Theory of Vision*, *Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues* are still in all essentials maintained."[5]

But many who have studied *Siris* have concluded that Berkeley's writings did "contain changes of outlook over time" and have given Berkeley the privilege granted to most great philosophers: an intellectual development. For example, the early twentieth-century editor of Berkeley's *Complete Works*, A. C. Fraser, claimed:

> [Berkeley's] early sensuous Nominalism is now modified and supplemented by a transcendental Idealism, in which are discerned uncreated necessities of reason that cannot be pictured in sensuous imagination, but by which the evolutions of the world, and the individual mind, should be regulated. This Idealism is dimly present in *Siris*. Here the Ideas are not, like those of Locke, or like the sensuous "ideas" of the *Principles* and *Dialogues*, "inert, inactive objects of perception." They are self-existent, necessary, uncreated.[6]

Fraser discerned the final center of Berkeley's philosophy to be in the "Constructive Theism" of the *Siris*, rather than in the powerful and paradoxical arguments of his youth; but, he suggested, a veil of discredited tar-water therapeutics and a thick coating of Hermetic references obscured Berkeley's conceptual shift.

In the 1930s John Wild saw in *Siris*:

> not so much a single, inclusive system, as the transition from one such system to another, not so much contemplation or theory as that struggle through theory in which Berkeley's reflective life essentially expressed itself. We find in *Siris* not so much a new stage or "conclusion," as a correction of past stages brought about by this struggle, not so much a different philosophy but a philosophy of these philosophies.[7]

Wild defended this somewhat confusing assessment of the place of *Siris* in Berkeley's development by providing the beginning of a scholarly analysis of its complex textual sources. For his austere earlier works were almost void of direct references to ancient writers, while *Siris* is

intertextually rich, overtly including references not only to Plato, Aristotle, the Presocratic and Neoplatonic thinkers, but also extensive quotations from "Egyptian" Hermetic texts (that had been so crucial to Renaissance philosophy and so scandalous to Descartes and his followers).

Finally, Gabriel Moked, in the only book-length study of *Siris* in English, recently demonstrated that Berkeley underwent a "radical change of mind" in *Siris*, at least on the issue of corpuscularianism. Whereas in his early work, he identified corpuscularian philosophy with the Lockean theory of "real essence" and totally rejected it, the Berkeley of *Siris* saw corpuscular bodies "as links in the Neoplatonic 'great chain of being' in which the 'substance of light' (named also 'invisible fire' or 'aether') fulfills the role of an all-pervading pneuma."[8]

Siris, thus, has played the role of a deconstructive, marginal presence in Berkeley studies in the face not only of the rigid indifference of Berkeley's more analytically minded commentators, but also of those close students of Berkeley's life like Luce and Jessop who have tried to preserve the "Unity of Berkeleian Philosophy" by interpreting *Siris* (published in 1744) as reaffirming "every general doctrine, and virtually every particular doctrine, of his *Principles* (1710)."[9] Jessop listed nineteen separate "doctrines" of his early work that are found in *Siris*, but he recognized that "in *Siris* they are accompanied by new statements that sit strangely with them; they are projected into a context so different from their old one that they seem at first sight to lose in it their original meaning and force, and some of them even to be contradicted by it."[10] The "new statements" that fit this description include:

> *S* 161. In the human body the mind orders and moves the limbs: but the animal spirit is supposed the immediate physical cause of their motion. So likewise in the mundane system, a mind presides: the immediate, mechanical, or instrumental cause that moves or animates all its parts, is the pure elementary fire or spirit of the world.

> *S* 258 . . . All those motions, whether in animal bodies or in other parts of the system of nature, which are not effects of particular wills, seem to spring from the same general cause with the vegetation of plants—an aetheral spirit actuated by a Mind.

among many others. One finds a whole cosmos of mediating entities,

like aetherial and animal spirits, in *Siris* that are neither the "inert" ideas, nor souls, nor God, which comprised the spare ontology of *Principles*. The Beckettian desert landscape of the early Berkeleyan world is transformed into *Siris'* complex jungle of entities and dense network of textual tendrils.

But this mediating realm did not spring full-blown in 1744, for such a fundamental change was the result of a sequence of conceptual anomaly, crisis and revolution. When did this sequence occur? There is no better time to place this transformation than in Berkeley's second period of intellectual creativity, 1732–1738, when he published a number of major texts (*Alciphron, Theory of Vision Vindicated, The Analyst, A Defense of Free-Thinking in Mathematics, The Querist*), a number of minor ones (*S.P.G. Sermon, Primary Visitation Charge, The Irish Patriot, Discourse addressed to the Magistrates*) as well as revisions of *Principles* and *Dialogues*.

Berkeley's second conceptual revolution rejected the precise ontological dichotomy—ideas/spirits with nothing in between—so crucial to his early philosophy. Berkeley's most powerful arguments in his early work (as we saw in the previous chapter) depended upon this dichotomy, and they were indispensable to his critique of Locke's semantics, materialism, and abstractionism. Indeed, as a polemical tool, the early system was so effective that philosophers to this day are still trying to dismantle his arguments before they explode scientific realism once more. We saw how effective they could be in defetishizing political economy's mercantile idol: specie.

But this very effectiveness was Berkeley's problem; for it made the investigation of how humans actually did learn to make connections among ideas in order to create a social and moral world almost impossible. If suggestion and not judgment, if suggestibility and not rationality, were to be the basis of the human response to the intense flood of signs, God and other finite creatures (via God) emanate, then something more was needed to show how this was done, how it could be done better, and, if it was not done, why. The Querist's notion of money would not have been possible without this conceptual revolution against the ontology of the early work. For Money was designed to play in the social world of *The Querist* what the vital aether and animal spirits were later to play in the natural world of *Siris*. As the following table of homologies indicates, *The Querist* presaged in the Body Politic the instrumental role of *Siris'* intermediaries:

Human body	Mundane System	Body Politic
Mind	God	Legislature
Animal Spirit	Aether, Fire	Money
Limbs	Material parts	Industry

The Legislature excites the Industry of Mankind with the instrument of Money just as God "actuates and enlivens the whole visible mass" with "the vegetative soul or vital spirit of the world" (*S* 152).

But in order to "catch" Berkeley's ontological metamorphosis in the making I will analyze four fundamental transformations and their impact on the Querist's project in this section: (a) from ideas to notions (or praenotions), (b) from geometry to algebra, (c) from a mysterious, ineffable will to a sociophysics of excitement, (d) from a pejorative to a positive view of principles and prejudices. Berkeley deconstructed his polar dichotomy of ideas/spirits in response to the social problems he faced on returning to Britain and Ireland after his attempt to play Prospero on Bermuda failed. He found an intermediary realm of principles, prejudices, praenotions, notions, rules, grammars which were not the ideas, finite souls or God of his early ontology (and which presaged the aether of *Siris*.) This realm opened a space of political action, since it could be affected by experience of nature and society, by sensation and rhetoric.

The logical danger of this deconstruction was obvious. Would it invalidate his early arguments against representation, materialism and abstraction that were central to the rest of his philosophy, including the defetishization of specie?

From Ideas to Notions

In the Fall of 1729 Berkeley received a letter from Samuel Johnson in Stratford, Connecticut, concerning his early philosophical works. Johnson was an ambitious intellectual, whom Berkeley was anxious to cultivate, since Johnson had converted to Anglicanism from Congregationalism in 1722 at some risk to his career. This conversion seemed to be a sign that Berkeley's religion might have a future in the Americas. Consequently, Johnson's queries and criticisms needed a response, especially the last ones dealing with spirits and minds:

> Is the substance of the mind the substratum to its ideas? Is it proper to call them modifications of our minds? Or impressions upon them? Or what? . . . What is the *esse* of spirits—you seem to think it impossible to abstract their existence from their thinking. . . . Is then the esse of minds nothing but percipere, as the *esse* of ideas is *percipi*? Certainly, methinks there must be an unknown somewhat that thinks and acts, as difficult to be conceived of as matter. Can actions be the *esse* of anything? Can they exist or be exerted without some being who is the agent? (W, ii, 276–77)

Though Berkeley responded to many of Johnson's queries, he was rather short with the ones about the *esse* of spirits in his two extant philosophical letters to Johnson. Instead, he responded to Johnson's questions about the promised Part II of the *Principles* (which was to display, according to Johnson's anticipation, "the usefulness of this doctrine more particularly . . . in the further application of it to the arts and sciences" including "pneumatology," or the doctrine of spiritual beings.) Berkeley rather cavalierly wrote to Johnson: "As to the Second Part of my treatise concerning the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, the fact is that I had made a considerable progress in it; but the manuscript was lost about fourteen years ago, during my travels in Italy, and I never had leisure since to do so disagreeable a thing as writing twice on the same subject" (W, ii, 282). This dismissive comment must have struck a peculiar cord in Johnson, who had just finished reading the *Dialogues* whose "Preface" includes the following: "But before I proceed to publish the Second Part [of the *Principles*], I thought it requisite to treat more clearly and fully of certain principles laid down in the First, and to place them in a new light. Which is the business of the following *Dialogues*" (W, ii, 167–68).

Berkeley's cavalier attitude went into crisis when he began to turn his attention from merely dueling with libertines, atheists, and free-thinkers to curing the diseases of the body, human and political, in Ireland. His early philosophy was a deft weapon in conceptual polemics. Negation, refutation and paradox were its hallmarks. At best it could detect conceptual diseases, but it offered no framework to even formulate the causes of disease, much less assist in devising cures.

One of the main problems of Berkeley's early philosophy was simply that it questioned the possibility of describing spirits. Ideas are passive, unthinking things, whose existence "consists only in being perceived"

(*P* 139). Spirits are active, willing, and thinking things that are never perceived, but are perceiving. The core prohibition of Berkeley's "anti-fetishism" is that there cannot be an idea of a spirit. Ideas can be described (i.e., words can not only signify them, but can describe a complex set of associations, relations, similarities and identities.) But can spirits be described? Beyond their broadest characteristics, e.g., existence and natural immortality, it is not clear how one can describe them. What are the associations and relations of spirits? Can spirits be similar to each other? How can spirits affect each other, if they cannot perceive each other? What, if any, is the relation between spirit X's willing and spirit Y's imagining? These were open questions for the youthful Berkeley. But for what one cannot *describe*, one cannot *prescribe*.

The failure of the College of the Bermudas posed an existential challenge for Berkeley. He was forced to return eastward to an "Age and Clime/Barren of every glorious Theme," and a Europe breeding decay, disease, and pedantry. He urgently required a philosophical response to the dilemma of description and prescription, in his roles of prescriber for sick nations and souls.

The most obvious sign of this response was in the 1734 revisions of the *Principles* and *Dialogues*. Berkeley introduced new vocabulary of notions in these texts to signal a recognition of a realm of reality (what later would be called the "psychological") that he had formerly slighted.[11] The dominant theme in these revisions involved the discourse of the spirit and answered the query: "Words can signify and describe ideas, but can they signify and describe spirits?" Spiritual discourse was significant and had to be, if the sermonizer, the political projector, and the psycho-pharmacologist (all roles he was to perform by duty and inclination) were to be no more than Machiavellian manipulators of effects. But if spiritual words were significant, *how* were they?

In the previous section I showed that Berkeley developed a much more sophisticated model of significance than Locke's "idea-backing" theory. This model emphasized the emotive, performative, and propagandistic uses of words:

> Besides, the communicating of ideas marked by words is not the chief and only end of language, as is commonly supposed. There are other ends, as the raising of some passion, the exciting to, or deterring from an action, the putting the mind in some particular

> disposition; to which the former is in many cases barely subservient, and sometimes entirely omitted, when these can be obtained without it, as I think does not infrequently happen in the familiar use of language. (*P* 19)

But Berkeley also pointed out that since there can be no ideas of spirits (nor, indeed, ideas of relations, since they require "acts of mind"), mind-words and relation-words cannot signify ideas. What then do they signify? The answer is: Notions. In one of the more thorough 1734 insertions, Berkeley wrote:

> We comprehend our own existence by inward feeling or reflection, and that of other spirits by reason. We may be said to have some knowledge or notion of our own minds, or spirits and active beings, whereof in a strict sense he have not ideas. In like manner we know and have a notion of relations between things or ideas, which relations are distinct from the ideas or things related, inasmuch as the latter may be perceived by us without our perceiving the former. To me it seems that ideas, spirits and relations are all in their respective kinds, the object of human knowledge and subject of discourse; and that the term idea would be improperly extended to signify everything we know or have any notion of. (*P* 89)

Berkeley sketched this "strict" use of the word "notion" in the other insertions, where he also took pains to distinguish it from his "strict" use of the word "idea." This concern was understandable, since "notion" and "idea" were often used interchangeably in seventeenth and early eighteenth-century English.[12]

The importance of the distinction between ideas and notions was often neglected in Berkeley commentary, but there has been something of a conceptual revolution in Berkeley studies due to the "discovery of the notion" in the 1970s.[13] In its wake, a major debate has developed concerning the ontological status of the notion in Berkeley's thought. Was the notion a new item in Berkeley's universe along with ideas and spirits, or was it just a way of saying that one understood a word, even though the word does not signify an idea? The first alternative was developed by Flage who argued that notions are "intentional acts" and are elements in the universe of operations of the mind like willing, loving, and hating.[14] Moreover, with the introduction of notions as

intentional acts, there inevitably follows the introduction of intentional objects that can be intentional acts themselves, and the problems and paradoxes that these infinitely self-reflexive acts entail.

Woozley developed the second alternative. He was anxious to preserve the spare ontology of Berkeley's youth by interpreting "notion" in the following way: "saying that I have a notion of x is saying that I understand or know what is meant by 'x,' where 'x' cannot be cashed denotationally." This approach does not introduce any new entities, acts or objects, because it includes the possibility of treating the word "mind" and the names of its operations ("willing," "loving," etc.) as terms like "the root of a negative square" (in algebra), "force" in physics, "grace" in Christian religious discourse, i.e., theoretical terms. But with this difference, though "the root of a negative square" does not signify anything from Berkeley's point of view, "my mind" is a phrase that does denote something that I am immediately familiar with, viz., my mind.

Either approach has its problems, of course. Flage, on the one side, imposes on Berkeley a whole new set of operations of the mind that he apparently forgot to mention before (except obliquely in *Principles* and *Dialogues*), while Woozley, on the other, has Berkeley treating the mind, willing, and perceiving as analogous to purely fictional entities, which they clearly are not. Both approaches, however, capture something very important as well: Berkeley's mid-career interest in providing descriptions for and creating a discourse about the realm of spirits and their interactions, without reintroducing abstract entities.

The problem with Flage, Woozley, and the other participants of the notional debate since the 1970s is that they are unconcerned with *why* Berkeley chose to reprint the *Principles* and *Dialogues* in 1734 and to insert the new passages on the notion in the first place. One might have thought that Berkeley's works (like *The Analyst* and *The Querist*) and the problems he was facing in that period (like his new appointment as Bishop of Cloyne) might have been of especial interest to the debate. But the methodology of these commentators is totally ahistorical and non-contextual.

In this section I will try to show how a more historical approach helps to solve this especially crucial interpretational problem. I will show that a major weakness of Flage's "autonomy of the notion" approach—the meager number of textual references to notions (besides the additions to the 1734 editions of the *Principles* and *Dialogues*)—

can be corrected. For, as will be shown, Berkeley's interest in notions was part of a larger conceptual revolution that included in the notional domain money, mathematics, and morality. This second conceptual revolution ultimately made it possible for Berkeley to transcend purely ideological polemics and address the significant social issues of his day.

From Geometry to Algebra (The Analyst)

Debates about abstraction and the discourse concerning general names was not only of technical concern for philosophers in Berkeley's time. They were basic to the investigation of the monetary system from the point of view of the eighteenth-century political economy. From a semantic perspective, barter is a set of individual or particular exchanges indicated by demonstratives—*this* heap of cotton for *that* pair of boots—but the introduction of money immediately led to a new level of generality. The generality of money had a two-fold character for Locke, the "Whig" philosopher of money *par excellence*, as the idea of "one crown" is not the idea of any particular coin, rather it is a complex combination of a mixed-mode as well as of a substance idea.[15] I have argued that it is this very duplicity that forced Locke to become a "metal-ist," because mixed-mode ideas were extremely arbitrary and mixed-mode names are often learned without a clear idea matching them. The idea of "one crown" needed a substance idea as a component; otherwise, Locke feared, the monetary economy would become as vulnerable to misunderstanding and confusion as the rest of the mixed-modal moral or legal world of his day.

However, the early Berkeley was a bitter critic of both general or abstract ideas as well as ideas of material substances, and hence of Locke's theory of money. We have dealt with these anti-abstraction and anti-material substance arguments which were first fully developed in his *Principles* (1710) in the last chapter, but it is relevant to point out that Berkeley had just resurrected these arguments in *Alciphron* (1732) three years before taking the lead in writing *The Querist.*[16] A crucial point in the plot of *Alciphron* comes after Berkeley's mouthpiece, Euphrenor, concludes that abstract ideas were impossible. Alciphron, Euphrenor's antagonist then poses the following question, "if general names do not stand for abstract ideas, then what do they stand for . . . nothing?" Since Euphrenor is arguing with a proto-libertine, the card table came up as a likely example:

> *Euph*. . . . Words, it is agreed, are signs, it might not therefore be amiss to examine the use of other signs, in order to know that of words. Counters, for instance, at a card-table are used, not for their own sake, but only as signs substituted for money, as words are for ideas. Say now, Alciphron, is it necessary every time these counters are used throughout the progress of the game, to frame an idea of the distinct sum or value that each represents?
>
> *Alc*. By no means; it is sufficient the players at first agree on their respective values, and at last substitute those values in their stead.
>
> *Euph*. And in casting up a sum, where the figures stand for pounds, shillings, and pence, do you think it necessary, throughout the whole progress of the operation, in each step to form ideas of pounds, shillings, and pence?
>
> *Alc*. I do not, it will suffice if in the conclusion those figures direct our actions with respect to things. (*AL* vii, 5)

That is, when it came time for Berkeley to present activities relevant to abstraction during the composition of *Alciphron* both in Rhode Island and London, the monetary realm, from gambling to budgetary calculations, seemed especially appropriate. But in this passage there is gap between counters as "substitutes" for values and the Querist's query that "whether the true Idea of Money, as such, be not altogether that of a Ticket or *Counter*?" (I 23, my italics). In *The Querist* this example is trumped, so that the substitutes for the counters in the card game become counters in the larger game of Money. What took place between 1732 and 1735 that might have emboldened Berkeley *qua* the Querist to make this move?

Aside from the actual "material conditions" he faced on taking over as Bishop of Cloyne, Berkeley initiated a debate that was to have important consequences on his thinking concerning ideas in general and monetary ideas in particular. With the publication of *The Analyst* (1734) and *Defense of Free-thinking in Mathematics* (1735), he returned to a discussion of geometry and algebra which will be important for our questions concerning *The Querist* and the notional debate.

Geometry had provided the early Berkeley with one model for generalizing ideas without committing him to the existence of abstraction. In the Introduction to the *Principles* Berkeley confronted

the traditional realm of abstraction: geometry. After quoting and ridiculing at length Locke's "general idea of a triangle, which is neither oblique, nor rectangle, equilateral, equicrual, nor scalenon, but all and none of these at once" (*P Intro* 13), Berkeley confronted the obvious problem posed by Locke's triangle: "how we can know any proposition to be true of all particular triangles, except we have first seen it demonstrated of the abstract idea of a triangle which equally agrees to all?" (*P* 16). Berkeley's answer was presented and discussed at length in the previous section: "a black line of an inch in length, this which in itself is a particular line is nevertheless with regard to its signification general, since as it is there used, it represents all particular lines whatsoever" (*P Intro* 12). But geometric ideas are model *reflexive signifiers*, since they can signify all ideas of type X, only if they are of type X. They are not the only reflexive signifiers, of course, as Berkeley pointed out in another 1734 insertion in the *Principles* that did not directly invoke the notion:

> And here it must be acknowledged that a man may consider a figure merely as triangular, without attending to the particular qualities of the angles, or relations of the sides. So far he may abstract, but this will never prove, that he can frame an abstract general inconsistent idea of a triangle. In like manner we may consider Peter so far forth as man, or so far forth as animal, without framing the forementioned abstract idea, either of man or of animal, inasmuch as all that is perceived is not considered. (*P Intro* 16)

In other words, geometric ideas simply provide a paradigm case for both signification and demonstration in general, i.e., for man and animal as well as for triangle.

But Berkeley also recognized another, non-reflexive model of signification, the algebraic, which he used to "give a farther account how words came to produce the doctrine of abstract ideas." In this model, there is no need for the names to refer to particular ideas (reflexive or not) at all. As in algebraic equations, the "x's" and "y's" need not have specific signifiers (and often cannot have signifiers unless one has "solved" the equation). Though "a particular quantity be marked by each letter, yet to proceed right it is not requisite that in every step each letter suggest to your thoughts, that particular quantity it was appointed to stand for" (*P Intro* 19). Indeed, the letters in an

algebraic equation need have no re-presentational relation at all to these quantities.[17] But Berkeley pointed out that this algebraic model of signification is most obvious "in reading and discoursing, names being for the most part used as letters are in algebra," for as you are reading this book you undoubtedly are not producing a parallel series of ideas.

The geometric and algebraic models solve the problem of general signification and demonstration quite differently. In the former, the general word "A" signifies a particular idea @ which "equally stands for and represents" all A-ideas and hence @ is A; also one demonstrates that all A's have property B, by using in the demonstration, A —> (A' —> (A"—>(A'"—>B))), particular idea @'s properties A', A", and A'" that are shared by all other A-ideas. In the algebraic model, the word "A" "marks" or is "appointed to stand for" a particular idea @, but there no claim that idea @ represents all A-ideas and there is no need for one to continually check on the idea @ during the each step of an algebraic manipulation. Indeed, it is in the nature of algebraic discovery what the variables signify are questionable "unknowns" until the equations are solved, if they are solveable.

The differences between algebraic and geometric models of signification exist on a number of planes. First, Berkeley emphasized the arbitrariness of the algebraic model compared to the geometric one (for to be "appointed to stand for" or to "mark" something, word "A" does not require any capacity to "equally stand for" a set of A-ideas).

Second, the geometric model of demonstration requires a continual intercourse with ideas that the algebra short-circuits. Algebra (which was a form of "meta-arithmetic" for Berkeley) is much more a notional "creature of the mind" than is geometry.[18] For in geometry there is only a limited set of particular ideas that are triangle ideas, but almost any idea can be a "one," "two," or "three" idea and any idea can "appointed to stand for" such an arithmetic idea. Therefore Algebra is notional (or even meta-notional, or syntactic) in a way that Geometry is not. Since algebraic signification is immediately involved in an arbitrary operation of the mind—i.e., in the decisions to identify a particular idea with a specific number and a specific algebraic sign in an equation—that geometric signification is not. Moreover, there is a formalistic and game-like character in algebraic (and arithmetic) equational transformations that requires only the operations of mind interacting with its own creatures, the algebraic signs, whereas geometry confronts the realm of geometric ideas, which are often passively received in sensory

perception.

Third, though the semantics of Geometry and Algebra are triadic, the path to their ultimate objects fundamentally diverge. In Geometry there are three elements: (a) the geometric sign ("triangle"), (b) the geometric signified (a particular triangular idea), and (c) the set of all triangular ideas. The semantics of arithmetic, however, are two-fold: (a) the arithmetic sign and (b) the numbered things. In other words, arithmetic "signs" are the immediate objects of arithmetic while the "things" are its mediate objects, and consequently, algebraic signs are signs of signs and not signs of ideas.

Berkeley's "meta-mathematical" view of arithmetic disposed him to discourse on the evolution of the notation of arithmetic as being crucial to understanding the science itself (*P* 121), and to emphasize the importance of action (not theory) in its constitution:

> In arithmetic therefore we regard not the things but the signs which nevertheless are not regarded for their own sake, but because they direct us how to act with relation to things, and dispose rightly of them. (*P* 122)

What is crucial for Arithmetic is its capacity to help us to compute so that "we may be able rightly to sum up, divide, and proportion the things themselves that we intend to number" (*P* 121).[19] If Arithmetic is a language of signs, then Algebra is meta-linguistic. Its signs signify arithmetic signs, which do not have a self-reflexive relation to the property demonstrated. Whereas in Geometry (a), (b) and (c) can (and in the standard cases will) all have the same relevant property, this is definitely not true of the "x" and "y," the "5," "V," "II," and "2," and the sets of balls one confronts in the algebraic problem: "If you add this number of balls to the original set you get 6 balls, if you subtract this number of balls from the original set you get 2 balls, how many balls are in the original set and what is the number of balls added and subtracted?"

These contrasts between Geometry and Algebra were crucial for Berkeley not only because of their importance for the philosophy of mathematics, they also affected, through his theory of meaning or signification, the whole range of his philosophical efforts. For example, these two models were essential for Berkeley's notion of money, since gold and silver are reflexive signifiers (like geometric lines) while

tickets, tokens and counters are most definitively not reflexive (they are more like the "x's" and "y's" in algebraic equations). That is, a gold coin can signify other coins or other commodities of a one pound value, because it reflexively signifies, i.e., it is worth a pound, and through this reflexive signification it can become a standard (and store) of value while the one pound paper note is not itself worth a pound.

Clearly there is great power and a sense of "groundedness" in reflexive signification and the geometric model of signification took precedence over the algebraic one in the closing of the Introduction to the *Principles* when the reader was asked (almost paradoxically) to "clear the first principles of knowledge from the embarras and delusion of words" (*P Intro* 25). Though Berkeley had rejected his early pose in his *Philosophical Commentaries* as an empirical Savanarola, he was clearly ambivalent about his discovery of the autonomy of language. He was still obsessed by the feminine "veil of words" and their capacity for "deception." Words were still the Eves that "blind the judgment and divide the attention." Berkeley asked us to "draw the curtain of words" and to undo, in a "manly" way, the expulsion from conceptual paradise. As long as one had a definite idea before one's mind, then one could generalize far beyond any finite set of ideas and still not fall into error. Indeed, the "geometric" reflexive model of signification and demonstration made it possible for Berkeley to save much of geometry from the critique he made in his unpublished youthful *Philosophical Commentaries*.[20]

He had experimented with a strict empiricism in these *Philosophical Commentaries*, taking as his methodological axiom: "Sense rather than Reason and demonstration ought to be employ'd about lines and figures, these being things sensible, for as for those you call insensible we have prov'd them to be nonsense, nothing" (*PC* 466). He noted that lines are not infinitely divisible, but are constituted by minimum sensibles (i.e., the smallest discernable extention); consequently, most Euclidian theorems, which rely on infinite divisibility of a line and "irrational" magnitudes, would be false in Berkeley's sense-geometry. For example, the Pythagorean theorem would be false: "One square cannot be double of another," because it would require the construction of a line that would not have a fixed whole number of minimum sensibles.

But the doctrine of reflexive signification (in the *Principles*) allowed Berkeley to evade the Draconian elimination of most of Euclidian ge-

ometry required by his critique of infinite divisibility (in the *Philosophical Commentaries*). For a line "but of an inch long, must be spoken of, as though it contained ten thousand parts, since it is regarded not in it self, but as it is universal; and it is universal only in its signification, whereby it represents innumerable lines greater than itself, in which there may be distinguished ten thousand parts or more, though there may not be above an inch in it" (*P* 126). For example, one centimeter line which might have 100 minimum sensibles can represent a million kilometer line with ten trillion minimum sensibles. Consequently, all the Euclidian theorems (like the Pythagorean), though literally false of sensible ideas, can be seen as true approximations in the large.

Thus the geometric model of signification was firmly rooted in Berkeley's early sensory nominalism. But this model was infected by the metaphysical problems of geometry itself, which were not totally cured by the "approximative" interpretation of Euclidian theorems. These problems exploded in the 1730s, in the midst of the crisis of the Whig Ascendancy, when, as the Analyst, he analyzed and, as the Querist, he queried the heroes of the Whig intelligentsia: Locke, Halley, and Newton.[21]

The object of Berkeley's critique in *The Analyst* (1734) and *Defense of Free-thinking in Mathematics* (1735) was called "analysis" (what is often called "calculus" in the contemporary undergraduate mathematics curriculum). It was the most exciting branch of mathematics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, since it was irrevocably linked with the recent advances in mathematical physics and was developed by thinkers of the caliber of Descartes, Leibniz, and Newton.[22] But what was "analysis"? It appeared to be a new branch of, or an extension of an old branch of, geometry; as the analysts' frequent and essential use of geometric diagrams suggested. Consequently, the rules of geometric signification should apply to analysis, i.e., it should employ reflexive ideas that could be the basis of generalization and demonstration. Thus the diagrams of analysis, just as the diagrams of regular geometry, are not "aids" to the imagination, but are ideally the objects of consideration.

Berkeley, early on in *The Analyst*, reviewed the criteria for good geometric reasoning:

> It hath been an old remark that Geometry is an excellent Logic. And it must be owned, that when the Definitions are clear; when the

> Postulata cannot be refused, nor the Axioms denied; when from the distinct Contemplation and Comparison of Figures, their Properties are derived, by a perpetual well-connected chain of Consequences, the Objects being still kept in view, and the attention ever fixed upon them; there is acquired an habit of Reasoning, close and exact and methodical: which habit strengthens the Mind, and being transferred to other Subjects; is of general use in the inquiry after Truth. (*A* 2)

But "our Geometrical Analysts" feigned to keep the "Figures" in view, but at a crucial point in their demonstrations their attention was "divided." That indeed was the problem with the analysts, according to Berkeley. They did not present their efforts as interesting, and even true, results in physics produced by a symbolic method, rather they claimed to root their work on a new conception of geometric objects as being in continuous local motion.

Newton, in his *On the Quadrature of Curves*, asserted that this new view of geometry and geometric diagrams evaded the ancient problems of "the extremely small" by seeing mathematical quantities as "generated by a continual motion." Hence diagrams are "snapshots" of motion, not fixed ideas with definite properties:

> Lines are described, and by describing are generated, not by any apposition of Parts, but by the continual motion of Points. Surfaces are generated by the motion of lines, Solids by the motion of surfaces, Angles by the Rotation of their Legs, Time by a continual flux and the rest. These Geneses are founded upon Nature, and are every Day seen in the motion of Bodies.[23]

Newton believed that his "mechanization" of geometry had forever transformed the eternal, silent stillness of Euclidian points, lines and planes into fluent fluxes in eternal motion. Consequently, the Zenoian problems of the "extremely small" would not arise, while the very character of geometric intuition would be transformed into a generating vision of motion.

Berkeley's critique of Newton's ontological revolution was two-fold. First, he rejected the new jargon of "nascent and evanescent quantities" and the ratios of these quantities, "primo and ultimo fluxions" as being unimaginable, and hence ungeometical. He pointed

out that velocity and motion must be analyzed in terms of space and time:

> But we have no notion whereby to conceive and measure various degrees of velocity beside space and time; or when times are given beside space alone. We have even no notion of velocity prescinded from time and space . . . When therefore a point is supposed to move in given times, we have no notion of greater or lesser velocities, or of proportions between velocities, but only of longer or shorter lines, and of proportions between such lines generated in equal parts of time. (*A* 30)

Newton's attempt to transcend the ontology and semantics of geometry was therefore null and void, for the geometrical diagrams used by analysts were not mysterious traces of even more mysterious entities. If they were to represent motion, they were simply lengths measured over time. Consequently, Newton's new quantities, velocities, and ratios, since they could not be so measured by finite intervals, were "unintelligible." In his desperate attempt to escape the still point, Berkeley concluded, Newton invented a realm of kinematic illusion.

Second, the actual reasoning involved in making deductions in analysis was inconsistent. For example, in Newton's attempt to determine the fluxion of a flowing quantity x and its powers, he assumed that by flowing, x became x+o (*A* 12-16). This "o" was then used to add, multiply and divide as if it were a real quantity. But then there came a point in Newton's reasoning when suddenly this quantity vanishes and becomes zero. This mathematical magic produced the "correct result," but as a form of reasoning it is inconsistent:

> Nothing is plainer than that no just conclusion can be drawn from two inconsistent suppositions. You may indeed suppose any thing possible: But afterwards you may not suppose any thing that destroys what you first supposed: or, if you do, you must begin de novo. (*A* 15)

Berkeley, therefore, rejected the analysts' efforts to put geometry on a new "mechanical" basis, for they showed how the very strength of geometric reasoning (the tight connection between the "Figure" and the Objects "kept in view throughout the demonstration"), can be sub-

verted. Berkeley revalued the mathematical disciplines due to the analysts' peculiar use of geometrical diagrams On the one side, geometry is shown to be open to "false principles and inconsistent reasonings" and to many suspicious queries, especially about the function of geometrical diagrams, e.g.:

> Whether the considering geometrical diagrams absolutely or in themselves, rather than as representatives of all assignable magnitudes or figures of the same kind, be not a principal cause of the supposing finite extension infinitely divisible and of all the difficulties and absurdities consequent thereupon? (*A Qu.* 17)

On the other, algebra was revalued and shown to be no more open to misreading than the supposedly self-evident geometry, e.g.,

> Whether in the most general reasonings about equalities and proportions [i. e., in algebra] men may not demonstrate as well as in geometry? Whether in such demonstrations they are not obliged to the same strict reasoning as in geometry? And whether such their reasonings are not deduced from the same axioms with those in geometry? Whether therefore algebra be not as truly a science as geometry? (*A Qu.* 41)

The self-reflexive guarantee presumably offered by geometric signs had proved to be delusive in the development of analysis under the influence of the Authority, the late Master of the Mint and instigator of the early gold standard, Isaac Newton. Consequently, the geometric model for general naming lost its remaining reputation in Berkeley's eyes. Indeed, when writing *The Analyst* he put forth the challenge of a more general form of general naming and reasoning about proportions and equalities that would fully validate the algebraic model.

Thus when the Querist came to dealing with the appropriate model for understanding value a year later, the algebraic model was endorsed. In the opening discussion of the true Idea of money, the Querist queries:

> I. 24. Whether the Value or Price of Things, be not a compounded Proportion, directly as the Demand, and reciprocally as the Plenty?
> I. 25. Whether the Terms Crown, Livre, Pound Sterling, &c. are not

to be considered as Exponents or Denominations of such Proportion? and whether Gold, Silver, and Paper, are not Tickets or Counters for Reckoning, Recording, and Transferring thereof?

The Querist here is appealing to the science of proportion mentioned in *The Analyst* and is directly insinuating algebraic terminology to designate the appropriate semantic model for the true Idea of Money. For "exponent" in early eighteenth-century mathematical terminology was typically an algebraic phrase when dealing with ratios and proportions such that "Exponent of the Ratio or Proportion between two Numbers or Quantities, is the Quotient arising, when the Antecedent is divided by the Consequent. Thus 6 is the Exponent of the Ratio that 30 was to 5" (OED).

This connection between algebra and counters undoubtedly had some deep reverberations in Berkeley's mind, for his first publication in 1707 was *Miscellanea Mathematica* which included "De Ludo Algebraico" an algebraic board game. It is in this text, the first the Berkeley published, that we can find the key to the relation between questions and money. For there is an immediate relation between questions and algebra, indeed algebraic equations *are* "questions" for Berkeley. For the game Berkeley invented for the entertainment of undergraduates was a way to randomly generate a set of algebraic equations (or "questions," in the parlance of the day) that had to be solved competitively. His aim was literally to create something like an "algebra hustler," i.e., someone who can respond to any set of questions quickly and effectively and make money in the bargain. In describing his board game the youthful Berkeley wrote:

> *Algebraic problems consist of given equations, which in determinate questions bring out sought quantities equal to a number.* But each equation consists of two members, connected by a sign of equality, in each of which are for consideration, first, the sorts, whether they denote given or sought quantities then, the signs by which they are connected. It is our object, then, to contrive that all these come out, to produce questions from chance, and a game, as well from the formation of the questions as from their solution. (*LA* 214)

In other words, the mature Querist poses "questions" just as the

youthful player of the Algebraic Game finds chance has posed for him or her "questions" in form of algebraic equations. The Querist's solution is to be found in the algebraic movement of the spirits which have been released from the delusion that their pegs and counters are the "solution" to their question, rather it is their activity that is the solution. The Irish economy, then, had to be ludified if the solution to final question of *The Querist* was to be found, according to the Querist.

Therefore the dominance of the algebraic- over the geometric-semantic model in *The Querist* had important implications for the interrogative character of the text. For the pedagogical form of algebra, with its variables, unknowns and quizzical "to finds" is directly echoed in the semantic revolution that Berkeley was insinuating into the very Idea of Money. Certainly, the axiomatic-tabular form of presentation typical of the Enlightenment or "the Classical Age," with its "given"s and "to prove"s, that was to continue to be the standard, ideal form in political economy and which patterned itself on Euclid's *Elements* and Newton's *Principia*, with their pretensions to a priori self-evidence and deductive progression would have no weight in the Querist's mind.[24]

From Ineffable Will to Sociophysics (The Querist)

One of the most problematic items in the early Berkeley's ontology was the will. He was committed to the existence and effectiveness of the will, but the will, along with the other divisions of the spirit, faced the descriptive skepticism created by his idea/spirit dichotomy. In his earliest writings, the *Philosophical Commentaries*, he wrote of the will: "The grand Cause of perplexity & darkness in treating of the Will, is that we Imagine it to be an object of thought (to speak with the vulgar), we think we may perceive, contemplate & view it like any of our Ideas whereas in truth 'tis no idea" (*PC* 643). But if the will is not "an object of thought (to speak with the vulgar)," how could one describe it in a non-vulgar fashion? If one could not describe an individual's will, how would one hope to describe the social coordination of wills required by social theory and practice? The early Berkeley rejected Lockean or Hobbesian social contract theories, but what other account could he give of the cohesion of society, or indeed, of a society of wills at all?[25]

By the time Berkeley began to write the last part of *The Querist* he clearly had developed a notion of society and its motion which he provocatively called "Momentum." He queried the definition of "the

Momentum of the state" and its relations to wealth in the following questions (where the word "momentum" is always italicized in the text):

> III. 308. Whether the Sum of the Faculties put into Act, or in other Words, the united Action of a whole People doth not constitute the *Momentum* of a State?

> III. 309. Whether such *Momentum* be not the real Stock or Wealth of a State; and whether its Credit be not proportional thereunto?

Indeed, the final part of *The Querist* is a triumphant chorus eulogizing Momentum. Indeed, penultimate query is, in fact, about social momentum:

> III. 323. Whether as many as wish well to their country ought not to aim at increasing its *Momentum*?

One can see why Berkeley was anxious to define an integral of social interaction, for activity *per se* can lead to nothing:

> III. 314. Whether the particular Motions of the Members of a State, in opposite Directions, will not destroy each other, and lessen the *Momentum* of the Whole; but whether they must not conspire to produce a great Effect?

But how do millions of separate spirits "conspire" to act together "to produce a great Effect"?

This was a troubling question for the early Berkeley. The ontology of *Principles* and *Dialogues* made it difficult not only to describe one's own will and understanding (in a non-vulgar fashion), but it also put the existence of other spirits in question. Berkeley argued that material bodies could neither be the source nor even the "occasion" of our sensory ideas. Only a spirit or spirits can cause sensory ideas to be excited in our mind. And since "they have . . . a steadiness, order, and coherence . . . in a regular train or series" (*P* 30), the author must be wise, benevolent, and, most importantly, *one*.

Some like Jonathan Bennett have tried to hoist Berkeley on his own petard, however, for if God did not need material bodies to guide his

sensory idea production in us, then God equally had no need for the volitions of "other minds" to determine the signs (spoken or written) or actions we experience.[26] God can just as well produce word-ideas directly without the labor of creating additional billions of garrulous and voluminous spirits. "Berkeley ought to say," said Bennett of other minds, "'I do not need that hypothesis.'"

The early Berkeley had a defense against such an attack, but it was bought at a high price: our knowledge of other minds was based on the others' error, sin, and failure. For God produces all sensory ideas in us, but God only produces an order in a subset of these ideas, viz., the natural order. The natural order is immense but not total, there are linguistic and ethical data with order enough to suggest the existence of at least one non-infinite spirit producing this data, for if they were purely random they would not deserve the name of "linguistic" or "ethical" in the first place. This order, however, is not of a "constant uniform working." There are breakdowns of any given linguistic or ethical order that, far from showing the "goodness and wisdom of a governing spirit," shows the evil and shortsightedness of a finite spirit. Also, there are and can be many different kinds of linguistic and ethical orders (*and* disorders) indicating a multiplicity of spirits. God creates the sensory content of these orders (words and deeds *qua* sensory ideas) but he does not create their order *and* disorder. If he did, he would not be God.

Error, Sin, and Failure are meta-signs of the Other, for if human spirits were all perfectly "programmed" to be pious, pre-Babel, hard-working do-gooders, then Bennett would be right. The linguistic and ethical would merge with the natural and there would be no reason to infer the existence of other spirits. Human freedom and evil make it possible for one to use the "data" to infer the existence of other finite spirits on the basis of the following syllogism: God does not commit grammatical errors or ethical sins, but grammatical errors and ethical sins exist, therefore, someone *else* must have committed them.

But it is a long conceptual march from proving the bare existence of at least one other finite spirit in the *Principles* (1710) to suggesting a monetary plan to increase the momentum of millions of spirits in *The Querist* (1735–37). The key to this transition was Berkeley's development, through a number of stages, of an *analogy* between a society of spirits and a system of bodies in Newtonian natural philosophy. This step was far from unusual in a period when Newton's "system of the

world" was having such an impact on disciplines as widespread as geology, pornography, and poetry.[27] Although it might appear somewhat surprising for Berkeley, who was a critic of Newton's methods in natural philosophy and mathematics. The train of this analogical thought can be traced from an early 1713 essay in the *Guardian*, "The Bond of Society," through *De Motu* in 1720 to *Alciphron* in 1732.

Berkeley began by arguing that there was "a certain correspondence" or "similitude of operation" between spirits and the bodies of Newtonian natural philosophy in "The Bond of Society." This *analogical* relation was crucial, because there was no direct way:

> to speak of [the nature and operations of the mind], in terms *borrowed* from sensible ideas. For example, the will is termed the *motion* of the soul: this infuses a belief, that the mind of men is as a ball in motion, impelled and determined by the objects of sense, as necessarily as that is by the stroke of a racket. Hence arise endless scruples and errors of dangerous consequence in morality. (*P* 144, the first italics are mine, the second are Berkeley's)

The analogy he developed in "The Bond of Society" was not the simple Hobbesian "borrowing" of terms from mechanical philosophy he criticized in the above passage.[28] Rather he analogized "a principle of attraction" among humans who are "drawn together in communities, clubs, families, friendships, and all the various species of society" similar to Newtonian gravity. This "uniting instinct" is obstructed by "private passions and motions of the soul" [sic!] which are analogous to "the rectilinear [inertial] motions." The combination of rectilinear, centrifugal and attractive, centripetal forces in Newton's *Principia* account for the orbits of "the several great bodies which compose the solar system."[29] Analogously, the "reciprocal attraction" among humans must be balanced against their "private passions" to create a semi-stable system of relations and interactions.

The early Berkeley did not employ this sophisticated analogy to further any political project. It remained something of an idle and abstract insight. Indeed, in *De Motu* (1720) he seemed to call a halt to this kind of analogical thinking by re-emphasizing the differences between the inertial bodies of mechanical philosophy and the active mind—which had the "faculty of altering both our own state and that of other things, and that is properly called vital" (*DM* 33). He highlighted

"the wide distinction between soul and bodies" to the point of contrasting the mind, which is a principle of motion, with bodies which "do nothing" when moved (*DM* 26). How could an analogy between these two kinds of entities, minds and bodies, or between society and mechanical philosophy be of any interest?

Berkeley's renewed skepticism concerning such an analogy was perhaps due to the apocalyptic level of social degeneration he experienced on passing through France and arriving in England in 1720, the Year of the Bubbles. *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* (1721), which he wrote immediately after *De Motu*, projected a society whose "bonds" had broken. The "reciprocal attraction" among humans had mysteriously vanished, while their inertial "private passions" were tearing the social solar system apart. The problem of the day was no longer simply the *balancing* of the "private passions" with the "unifying instincts." The passions seemed to have overwhelmed the sociability of the spirits and created a chaos of greedy atoms in the moral void.

Consequently, the "solar system" model of society was inadequate, since its gravitational force could not be simply assumed as a given.[30] It had to be reinvented. This recognition brought Berkeley in the 1730s to look more carefully at the *link* between spirits, instead of short-circuiting thought by classifying it as an "instinct." Two models suggested themselves as substitute analogies to the Newtonian "system of the world" in *The Querist*: the "political Body" and a freely mobile system of material bodies. We shall examine the former at greater length in the next section, but the latter evoked an new analogy between society and mechanical philosophy.

To get a sense of the properties of freely mobile system of bodies that were important for the Querist let us consider a set of free masses m, m', m'', m''', etc., with velocities v, v', v'', v''', etc. The *momenta* of each mass is mv, m'v', m''v'', m'''v''', etc. and the *total momentum* of the system is the sum of the momenta. A system might appear very "energetic," but its total momentum can be zero (if, for example, there are two bodies in the system, m and m', and their velocities, v and v', are directed in opposite directions and v/v'=m'/m.)

Moreover, if the total momentum is zero, it cannot be increased by any internal forces, since, according to Newton's Third Law, if some mass, say m', exerts a force q on another, say m'', then m'' will exert a force -q on m', and q +(-q)=0. Changes in the momentum of a system

are thus determined exclusively by *external* forces, that is, by forces which agents *outside* of the system exert on its parts. This is the law of the conservation of momentum which had its roots in medieval physics, but was first clearly (but badly) formulated by Descartes.[31] As Newton put it later, "the quantity of motion [total momentum] suffers no change from the action of bodies among themselves."[32]

Berkeley chose to identify the sum of a set of people's actions with their *momentum* in *The Querist*, because he saw that important features of collective action were analogous to the total momentum of a free moving system of bodies. His queried premises were that "I 7. Whether the real End and Aim of Men be Power?" and "I 9. Whether Power be not referred to Action; and whether Action doth not follow Appetite or Will?" Individual human action, which yearns for power and is directed by the will, is *The Querist's* starting point, just as Newton's *Principia* begins with the individual body and its *vis insita* and its complex mixture of passivity and activity:

> [Definition III. *vis insita* is the] power of resisting, by which every body, as much as in it lies, continues in its present state, whether it be of rest, or of moving uniformly forward in a straight line. . . . And the exercise of this force may be considered as both resistance and impulse: *resistance*, insofar as the body opposes the impressed force in order to maintain its present state; *impulse*, insofar as the body endeavors to change the state of another body by not easily giving way to the impressed force of the other.[33]

This comparison between *individual* spirits and bodies is problematic, but on the *collective* level the analogy gives returns. For the sum of very large momenta might be equal to zero, depending on the *direction* of the velocities, but similarly:

> III. 313. Whether the particular Motions of Members of a State, in opposite Directions, will not destroy each other, and lessen the Momentum of the Whole?

Therefore, it is important for a State not simply to excite the actions of its people haphazardly in the hope of "stimulating" its Momentum. *For increased activity, if not properly directed, can actually reduce its Momentum.*

The conservation of momentum law gave crucial analogical information at this juncture for one who desired to increase the State's momentum. The law suggested that a system's momentum cannot be increased by internal activity, for every increase in the force or action of one part of the system on another will only be answered by an "opposite and equal reaction" returning it to its *status quo ante*. This analogy gave a precise rendition of the socio-economic stalemate of classes in Ireland and the law's corollary was equally prescient: only an *external* force affecting the links between the spirits can change the total momentum of the state. Berkeley rejected the Mandevillian transformation of "private vices" into "public goods," not simply because of ethical scruples. Mandeville's transformation could not work because it tried to solve the problem of economic stagnation "from the inside."[34] If the analogy had any strength, only a wise "Prime Mover" affecting the interstices of the State could solve the problem of the collective will posed by eighteenth century Ireland. As the Querist quizzically concluded:

> III. 318. Whether the immediate Mover, the Blood and Spirits, be not Money, Paper or Metal, and whether the Soul or Will of the Community, which is the prime Mover that governs and directs the Whole, be not the Legislature?

Thus Money becomes an intermediate Mover which can excite action in the same way that principles and prejudices can control thought.

From a Pejorative to a Positive View of "Prejudices" and "Opinions" (Discourse)

The early Berkeley's iconoclastic philosophy not only hampered his career, it posed serious difficulties for his conceptual growth. The philosophical hiatus of two decades—between the *Dialogues* (1713) and *Alciphron* (1732), relieved only by *De Motu* (1720)—was due to a conceptual crisis centered on the nature and laws of the spirit: could he overcome his own "spiritual skepticism"? As I have shown in this section, Berkeley began to make progress in resolving this crisis in the 1730s. The climax of this resolution is to be found in an unlikely text: *Discourse Addressed to Magistrates* (1738). In the final chapter I will describe the political context that joined *Discourse* to *The Querist*, but

in this section I will show how Berkeley openly displayed his second conceptual revolution.

Berkeley's *Discourse* was not simply a Country-party, High-Church Jeremiad, like his 1721 *Essay*. It marked the climax of a major terminological revision in his work. The simple ontological division of ideas and spirits which proved central to the anti-abstractionist and anti-materialist arguments of the early works opened to a revalued realm of mediating terms like "notion," "principle," "belief," "opinion," and "prejudice." "Prejudice," of course, was the most surprising revision, for "prejudice" had often in his earlier writings been a short-hand term for "false doctrine," as, for example, in this capsule theory of learning he proposed after comparing belief in infinitesimals with transubstantiation:

> Ancient and rooted prejudices do often pass into principles: and those propositions which once obtain the force and credit of a principle, are not only themselves, but likewise wherever is deducible from them, thought privileged from all examination. (*P* 137)

Similarly, "opinion" was synonymous with an ill-considered but popular position, e.g.:

> But let us examine the received opinion. It is said extension is a mode or accident of matter, and that matter is the substratum that supports it. (*P* 16)

> From the opinion that spirits are to be known after the manner of an idea or sensation, have risen many absurd and heterodox tenets. (*P* 137)

Consider also the most conspicuous use of this sense of the word in the *Principles*:

> It is indeed an opinion strangely prevailing amongst men, that houses, mountains, rivers, and in a word all sensible objects have an existence natural or real, distinct from their being perceived by the understanding. (*P* 4)

"Notion" had already been revalued in the decisive 1732–1734

period, i.e., between the first edition of *Alciphron* and the second edition of the *Treatise* and the third edition of the *Dialogues*. For in 1712–13, "notion" was used as interchangeable with "idea," but by the 1734 revisions, "notion" was used in contrast with "idea," as a way of speaking about speaking about spirits (finite or infinite). For the young Berkeley had used his simple ontological dichotomy between inactive ideas and active spirits with great effect, but this dichotomy led to an apparent dilemma. If spirits are not ideas, how can they be known or even spoken *about* if words refer to ideas?

There is now a substantial literature on the transformation of the notion of notion in the later Berkeley, and we have seen that this revaluation parallels the revaluation of algebra over geometry and the rhetoric of questions and hints over proofs and conclusions.[35] A similar transformation of terms like "opinion," "belief," "principle, and "prejudice" has not been much commented on, even though both transformations arose from Berkeley's need for a social vocabulary that would not only allow for the bare existence of other minds, but also help him formulate methods for their "taming":

> Man is an animal, formidable both from his passions and his reason; his passions often urging him to great evils, and his reason furnishing means to achieve them. To tame this animal, and make him amenable to order, to inure him to a sense of justice and virtue, to withhold him from ill courses by fear and encourage him in his duty by hopes; in short, to fashion and model him for society, hath been the aim of civil and religious institutions; and in all times, the endevour of good and wise men. (*Dis* 88)

This taming process required that "good principles be propagated in the mind," "a certain system of salutary notions, a prevailing set of opinions . . . embraced rather by the memory than the judgment . . . these are prejudices; inasmuch as they are therefore neither less useful nor less true, although their proofs may not be understood by all men" (*Dis* 89–90). The notions, opinions, principles and prejudices that one "embraces," determines one's action, for, Berkeley claimed, "such as are men's notions, such will be their deeds" (*Dis* 91). Thus the free-thinkers' attempt to criticize "prejudices" as unconsidered, probably false, opinions is itself prejudiced (in a pejorative sense): "the difference between prejudices and other opinions doth not consist in this; that the

former are false and the latter true; but in this, that the former are taken on trust and the latter acquired by reasoning" (*Dis* 91).

Moreover, every moral precept cannot be the product of reasoning; there must be prejudices taken on trust and faith, since the "bulk of mankind" cannot be philosophers even as adults, and most childhood "rules and opinions" inevitably become the most powerful determinants of our future behavior. Here Berkeley takes the "twofold philosophy" of his antagonists, deists like Toland and Collins—which divides the human race into the credulous, superstitious mob filled with false prejudices and the intellectual elite arriving at reasoned conclusions—and defangs it, by pointing out that prejudices and reasoned conclusions can have the same propositional content.[36] Moreover, the freethinkers' utopian impulse to found a rational morality without religious notions, opinions, beliefs, principles and prejudices invites catastrophe. Such a rational civil society would quickly become an uncivil monstrosity, since the freethinkers have not provided for the inner religious "prejudices" that would curb vice and spur worthy conduct.

Certainly, any actually existing monarchical, hierarchical society could not survive without obedience; and obedience could not be assured simply by the fear of punishment of a Hobbesian state, since Leviathan's multiple eyes cannot peer into the "inward ways of thinking, which at times will break out and shew themselves paramount to all laws and institutions whatsoever." To obey, as Berkeley showed in *Passive Obedience*, is not a simple, self-evident matter; obedience must proceed from a principle or rule of selection that, Berkeley claimed, can only be provided by religion. He laid out the terrain of his new social vision (which had been concretized in *The Querist*) through the use of an analogy.[37] The series, God-Nature-Industry, is analogous to the series, God-the realm of principles and Divine impressions-Government. God provides in the language of nature "materials for food and rainment," but human industry is necessary to transform these materials so that "mankind may [not] perish with cold and hunger," analogously, God influences human minds "by instinct, by the light of nature, by his declared will," and these "Divine impressions" (paralleling the sensations) provide the material for salvation, but they must be cultivated and encouraged by human government. One can no more expect fields of ripe wheat in autumn without labor (even though the seeds, soil and weather were in perfect combination) any more than one can expect tame humans without careful governing (even though each

person had within them all the necessary principles, instincts, and reasons to perfection).

The project of governing required, therefore, a discourse of the spirit and the ability to describe the workings of the passionate animal's mind which must be tamed.

The Coherence of the Early and Late Berkeley

Instead of redeploying the logical battering ram of his youth, elenchus, Berkeley relied on the trickster's rhetorical strategy of "occasional discourse" to suggest a major conceptual transformation in his later philosophy. A number of commentators have noted the dramatic rhetorical difference between the *Principles* and *Dialogues* and his work from *Alciphron* to *Siris* (with *The Querist* in the midst of the later period), but they have not noted that the "message" has changed with the "medium."[38] Does this change, so subtly wrought, violate the logical coherence of Berkeley's philosophy?

To answer this question let us first determine the nature of the doctrinal change. Berkeley recognized in the 1730s the need for a domain of items like notions, monetary systems, algebraic equations, and principles situated between ideas and spirits. They were not ideas, since they were not perceived, nor were they spirits, since they were neither perceivers nor creators of ideas. But were they brought together merely by what they were not? Do money, algebraic signs, notions, and principles have anything of interest in common?

Berkeley did not give a unified account of this product of his second conceptual revolution. At best we must we must search for the "analogies, harmonies, and agreements" within this domain. Inductively, we can conclude that the root among them is the Notion, for money is notional, as are algebraic equations and principles. The key to this answer is the examination of the probable source of Berkeley's distinction between Ideas and Notions: Locke's discussion of Mixed Modes in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.[39] Locke introduced the Notion in the following way:

> if we attentively consider these ideas I call mixed modes, we are now speaking of [e.g., "obligation, drunkenness, a lie"—CGC], we shall find their original quite different [from simple ideas]. The mind often exercises an *active* power in making these several combinations. For,

> it being once furnished with simple ideas, it can put them together in several compositions, and so make variety of complex ideas, without examining whether they exist so together in nature. And hence I think it is that these ideas are called *notions*; as if they had their original, and constant existence, more in the thoughts of men, than in the reality of things. (E II, xxii, 2)

Mixed modes or notions are not abstractions, because abstractions are products of the mind's analytic activity working on given ideas, while notions are products of the mind's synthetic and creative capacities. Notions, according to Locke, are especially parasitic on language and social interest, because mixed-mode names efficiently synthesize complex ideas "in one short breath." Moreover, they allow humans to invent (i.e., to have an idea of something in mind before it ever existed) and to explain the names "of actions we never saw, or motions we cannot see" (E II, xxii, 9). Locke noted that the kinds of simple ideas that have been the greatest source of notions or mixed-mode ideas are "*thinking* and *motion* (which are the two ideas which comprehend in them all action) and *power*, from whence these actions are conceived to flow" (E II, xxii, 10). Finally, the names of mixed-mode ideas or notions "would . . . make a dictionary of the greatest part of the words made use of in divinity, ethics, law, and politics, and several sciences [including pure mathematics]" (E II, xxii, 10 and E IV, iv, 5-10, for the statement in brackets).

The later Berkeley, of course, rejected the Lockean conflation of ideas and notions "in a strict sense," but he accepted much else in Locke's account of notions. Let us take them in turn:

1. For Berkeley notions, proper, were the "objects" referred to by names for spiritual substances like the self and its activities and faculties like willing and understanding.[40]
2. For Locke, money was a complex idea bringing together material substance ideas with mixed-mode notions, whereas for Berkeley money was a mixed-mode notion stripped of any essential dependence on material substances. Its purpose was to stimulate and regulate action, not to measure and store a quantity of specie.[41]
3. Algebra, for Berkeley, was a notional branch of mathematics, since it did not deal with ideas (as did geometry), rather, it was a science of relations. Relations included an "act of the mind," so that "we

cannot so properly be said to have an idea, but rather a notion of the relations or habitudes between things," including numbers (*P* 142).[42]

4. Principles and prejudices in the mind were notional in the sense that, though they are not ideas, they differentiated acceptable from unacceptable thoughts and ideas *before* they are perceived. They were primary examples of the action of the mind in its shaping of experience.[43]

The notion and the notional, for Berkeley, were crucial for the same disciplines and discourses that Locke found to be the domains of mixed-mode ideas: divinity, ethics, politics, law, mathematics and many other sciences that dealt with thinking, action and power, e.g., political arithmetic and economy. However, for Locke, mixed-mode ideas (or notions) were contrasted with ideas of substance. Hence notions had a rather clearly defined domain in the geography of ideas: between simple ideas and ideas of substance. But with Berkeley's definitive rejection of material substances, the older barriers in Locke's ontology broke down and new ones arose. The primary divisions in Berkeley's ontology increasingly became those between notion and idea, between action and passion, between activity and passivity, between the mind's synthetic capacity and its receptive faculty. These contrasts posed the possibility of making analogical leap from one side of the dichotomy to another. Most importantly, it gave Berkeley a terminology to think, plan, and conspire with others about the world of human action.

Did this new notional domain cohere with the arguments of his youth which were so crucial to the defetishizing program of *The Querist*? Did they effect the anti-materialist and anti-abstractionist arguments and his rejection of an "idea-backing" semantics? Berkeley never presented a spirited defense of the coherence of his second conceptual revolution with his first, largely because he never openly declared its existence. But we can easily see, in a thumb-nail sketch, how he could have managed such a defense. First, the idea of matter as causally efficacious is a contradictory, and therefore unconceivable, idea; the existence of notions would not effect this argument at all. Second, his critique of abstract ideas would not be effected by the existence of notions, if he could show that they were not abstract ideas coming through the back door of the mind, which they clearly were not, since they were not ideas at all. Finally, his critique of "idea-backing"

semantics would be unaffected by the existence of notions, simply because words can signify notions, but such signification is totally different from the way words signify ideas. Consequently, Berkeley could look to the new notional domain as a basis for a positive program for mathematics, political economy, and medicine . . . as long as he could preserve the often effervescent difference between notions and ideas.

NOTES

1. Luce (1949: 224).
2. Berman (1994: 211–12).
3. Tipton (1974). See p. 4 for Tipton's "puzzling" comment.
4. Pitcher (1977: 176).
5. Greyling (1986).
6. Fraser (1901: 126–27)
7. Wild (1936: 422).
8. Moked (1988: 2).
9. Jessop (1953v: 12).
10. Jessop (1953v: 13).
11. The insertions are in P 27, P 89, P140, P 142, and D 232–34.
12. For a discussion the role of "notion" in the philosophical English of the period see Winkler (1989: 278–82).
13. It is hard to say who is responsible for the "discovery of the notion," of course, although Desiree Park in Park (1972) and A. D. Woozley in Woozley (1975) are good candidates for being pioneers in settling the rather thin territory. Flage (1987) is the first book-length elaboration on the 1734 insertions. Since the 1970s writers on Berkeley's general philosophy took a new interest in "notions" and "spirits," cf. Greyling (1986: Chapter 3, passim); Dancy (1987: Chapter 9); Winkler, (1989: Chapter 9); Muehlmann (1992: 234–48).
14. Flage (1987: Chap. 5). For example, "I have shown that Berkeley identified notions with actions of the mind and I have argued that it is reasonable to contend that these are intentional acts that relate a certain cognitive content to a certain object or state of affairs. I have shown that this reconstruction is consistent with this repeated contention that there is a close relationship between notions and linguistic meaning, and I have shown that there are several texts in which Berkeley appears to identify notions with mental acts" Flage 1987: 192–93).
15. For a discussion of Locke's theory of money see Cafentzis (1989).
16. For a recent collection of articles on Berkeley's anti-abstractionism see Doney (1989).
17. Two useful accounts of Berkeley's views of algebra and geometry are to be found in Brook (1973: Chapter IV) and Jesseph (1993: Chapter 3).
18. Jesseph makes this point in the following way: "In the Berkeleyan scheme, algebra is a science of signs with an even higher level of generality than those of

arithmetic. Berkeley claims that algebraic letters are signs for numerals, which in turn are signs for collections of objects, making algebra a kind of 'meta-arithmetic': 'Algebraic Species or letters are denominations of Denominations. Therefore Arithmetic to be treated of before Algebra' (Commentaries, 758). In this formalistic scheme, the truths of algebra are to be interpretated as general statements about the relations between numerical signs in arithmetic. For example, the Berkeleyan interpretation of the algebraic identity $(x+y)^2=x^2 + 2xy + y^2$ would be that the theorem is a general truth which holds for all numerical signs substituted for x and y in the algebraic formula," Jesseph (1993: 114).

19. Brook has a valuable discussion of Berkeley's notion of arithmetic in his Brook (1973: 147–55), which presaged Jesseph's formalistic interpretation of Berkeley's Philosophy of Mathematics.

20. For a discussion of Berkeley's changing attitude towards geometry from the *Commentaries* to *The Analyst* see Jesseph (1993: Chapter 2), "Berkeley's New Foundations for Geometry." Bertil Belfrage has an extensive discussion of Berkeley's transition from "image-pictures" to "sign-images" in the Manuscript Introduction to the *Principles*, see Belfrage (1987: 35–45).

21. There was a sense, at the time, of the political nature of *The Analyst*. Apparently Philalethes Catabrigiensis, the pseudonynomous author of *Geometry no friend to Infidelity, or a defence of Sir Isaac Newton and the British Mathematicians*, saw in *The Analyst* the stirrings of a religious pogrom on the Whig intelligentsia at the bottom point of Walpole's fortunes in the 1730s and accused Berkeley of percolating a witch-hunt: "For God's sake are we in England or in Spain?" "Is this the language of a familiar who is whispering an inquisitor, &c.?' "Let us burn or hand up all the mathematicians in Great Britain, or hallo the mob upon them to tear them to pieces every mother's son of them, *Tros Rutulusve fuat*, laymen or clergymen, &c. Let us dig up the bodies of Dr. Barrow and Sir Isaac Newton, and burn them under the gallows" (F 9). Berkeley evaded some of the charges while verifying others. For example, he claimed the right to be silent about his timing (F4) and then divulged that Addison was the source of the claim that at least one great Whig mathematicians (read Halley) was an "infidel" (F 7).

22. There are many useful historical introductions to analysis in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for example, Boyer (1989: chaps. 16–20).

23. Quoted in Jesseph (1993: 144).

24. For a discussion of the axiomatic-tabular presentation of discourse in the "Classical Age" see Foucault (1970).

25. The literature on Berkeley's social and ethical philosophy is rather thin and it focuses on his *Passive Obedience* (1713). For a useful selection of the prominent articles in the field see Clark (1989).

26. Jonathan Bennett in Bennett (1971) argued that, at best, Berkeley could be a "duo-ipist," i.e., presenting arguments for the existence of two beings: the self and God. Since then Berkeley's "other minds" arguments have become popular termini in the standard tours of his thought. See, for example, Winkler (1989: 284–86), or Urmson (1982: 61).

27. A useful overview of this development is Leary (1989). The cross-disciplinary impact of Newtonian natural philosophy has been the subject of many scholarly efforts. For Newtonianism in pornography see Jacob (1993); for Newto-

nianism in poetry see Jones (1966).

28. Newton's *Principia* marked at once the triumph of mechanical philosophy as well as its demise. For Newton demonstrated that the model of mechanical philosophy devised by Descartes and employed by Hobbes was totally inadequate as an explanation of "the system of the world" and much else. All doubts as to Newton's often anti-mechanical attitude began to vanish after Keynes' revelation of Newton's alchemical manuscripts in the 1940s. For a discussion of the new look in Newtonian studies see Shapin (1996: 155-158) and for a bibliography pp. 210–11.

29. Newton's "system of the world" was far from stable. Perturbations from the comets that passed through the orbits of the planets always threatened to destabilize the system and sending the planets into the sun or into stellar space. Swift satirized Newtonian anxiety and gloom concerning the prospects of the solar system in *Gulliver's Travels.*

30. The "solar system" model of social rule was a tempting one for eighteenth-century divines because it was tailor-made by Newton to describe the hierarchical relation between God, the Pancrator, and the system of the world. For an excellent discussion of the "God's Present Duties in the Cosmic Economy" according to Newton, see Burtt (1932: 288–93).

31. For a general discussion of the development of the concept of momentum see Holton (1952: 288–90). For a discussion of Descartes' notion of momentum see Dugas (1988: 160–62). Leibnitz challenged Descartes' conservation of momentum law and initiated the *vis viva* controversy. A set of basic documents for this controversy can be found in Magie (1963: 50–58).

32. Quoted in Holton (1952: 290).

33. For an excellent discussion of Definition III of Newton's *Principia* see McMullin (1978: 33–43).

34. Mandeville is often taken to be a precursor of the *laissez-faire* tradition in political economy. He insisted in Mandeville (1954)—his response to Berkeley's criticism in *Alciphron*—that "skillful Management" was crucial for the transformation of private vices into public benefits. Characteristically, his example of "skillful Management" is the law: "if a Felon, before he is convicted himself, will impeach two or more of his Accomplices, or any other Malefactors, so that they are convicted of a Capital Crime, he shall be pardon'd and dismiss'd with a Reward in Money" (p. 43). Hirschman in Hirschman (1977: 18), like Berkeley before him, obviously did not find this example convincing, because he concluded, "Since the modus operandi of the Politician was not revealed, however, there remained considerable mystery about the alleged beneficial and paradoxical transformations." For an attempt to textually supply these modus operandi, see Horne (1978).

35. For a sampling of this literature see Woozley (1989); Flage (1987), *passim*; Muehlmann (1992: 235–40).

36. For a sophisticated discussion of the deists' "twofold philosophy" see Harrison (1990: 85–92).

37. Berkeley increasingly relied on analogical reasoning as he developed his social and theological thought. Analogy was used in the "solution" to the "other minds" problem as well as in the determination of God's attributes. Thus in (*AL*, iv, 17–22) he criticized the "negative theology" of his Anglo-Irish colleagues Archbishop King and Bishop Peter Browne for their improper deployment of

analogy in arguing that God's attributes, like wisdom or knowledge, cannot be understood literally and that they are unknown and unknowable in this life. But "no-attributes=no-existence" was an ontological shibboleth for Berkeley, thus King and Browne have inadvertently analogized God out of existence! To examine what went wrong, he had his mouthpiece Crito turn to the scholastic distinction between metaphorical and proper analogies—e.g., roughly between "my love is like a red, red rose" (metaphorical) and "this engine has 500 horse power" (proper)—in order to point out that King and Browne confused these two kinds of analogies; the purely metaphoric analogies would not give us knowledge of God's attributes, but a proper analogy would. For a further discussion see Berman, (1994: 140–44). An interesting analysis of analogy in *Siris* is to be found in "The method of inductive analogy," Chapter 12 of Walmsley (1990: 157–72).

38. Walmsley (1990: 143), for example, contrasts the "teasing mystification" of the introduction of *Siris* with the frank and open manner that Berkeley stated his objective in the *Principles* and *Dialogues*.

39. For a discussion of the seventeenth-century philosophical genealogy of the "notion" see Winkler (1989: 279–80, footnote 2).

40. For a further defense of the autonomy of the notion see Adams, (1989). An acute analysis of the philosophical crisis of Berkeley's nominalism in 1734 can be found in Muehlmann (1992: 235–46). Neither Adams nor Muehlmann note the fact that Berkeley's notions function beyond the realm of "mental acts" by including mathematics, morality, and political economy.

41. See Caffentzis (1989: 78–88).

42. Berkeley rejected the Cartesian identification of unknowns with line segments. As Boyer in Boyer (1989: 377) points out, though Descartes' notation in *La geometrie* looks modern, "There was nevertheless, an important difference in view, for where we think of the parameters and unknowns as numbers, Descartes thought of them as line segments".

43. For an alternative eighteenth-century development of the notion of notion see the selection from Bolingbroke's *Philosophical Works* in Berman (1989: 346–49).

SECTION 2
TICKETS, BANKS, AND QUESTIONS

> We next went to the school of languages, where three professors sat in Consultation upon improving that of their own country. The first project was to shorten discourse by cutting polysyllables into one, and leaving out verbs and participles, because in reality all things imaginable are but nouns.
> Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels, Book III*

Berkeley laid the rhetorical and philosophical frame of *The Querist* subtly and gently. The Querist's solution to the complex problematic and constraints confronting his and his allies' project of "increasing the Momentum" of Ireland had to be equally subtle and gentle. Certainly, Dean Swift's and Archbishop King's efforts in the 1720s to end the Irish monetary crisis through confrontations with the Walpole administration ended in stark failure. Their agitation against the introduction of a National Bank in 1721 and of Wood's "half-pence" in 1724 left the country with even less circulating currency than before. By 1725, Primate Boulter was urging London to authorize the use of the new Portuguese gold coin as legal tender.

This currency crisis met the repeated harvest failures and cold winters in the last half of the 1720s and each exacerbated the other.[1] The situation had degenerated to the point that the Irish Parliament was forced to pass into law a series of acts to deal with immediate questions of famine and poverty. They included, beside the Tillage Bill, already mentioned in Chapter 2, laws for "improving" the workhouse system, for regulating the baking industry and the coal trade. These laws were intended to respectively insure that "sturdy beggars" could have a place of incarceration for the four years of hard labor they were sentenced to, and that bakers and coal dealers would not use crop failures and unusually cold winters to profiteer.[2]

But these laws against profiteering and beggary were clearly stop-gap measures. A more general strategy was required that was not dependent upon lifting the "mercantilistic restrictions on trade" imposed on Irish capital by the English state. Three elements of the problematic had to be dealt with, preferably simultaneously and interdependently: the indolence of the "native" Irish working class (or better, for

Berkeley, non-working class), the vanity and enslavement to "foreign-fashion" of the Anglo-Irish establishment, and the disastrous views about money and trade prevailing among the ruling circles of England and Ireland. The Querist's solution was elegantly simple, but it required the satisfaction of the following conditional:

> *If* the Anglo-Irish kept their capital at home and spent it on domestic luxury-consumption and local investment and *if* the "standard of living" of the amenable part of the Irish proletariat was raised, while the recalcitrant part was put to work in a form of "legal slavery" to rebuild the physical infrastructure of the state, *then* Ireland could be transformed into a prosperous "closed" economy, not competing with Britain.

The Querist's way to satisfy the antecedents of this conditional, besides tightening the legislative net around the natives' indolence and the gentry's vanity, was through a new form of money and the creation of new institutions, an Irish National Bank and Mint, that would issue money in the form of bank notes or paper currency and small change. Theoretically and practically, using paper money as "tokens" or "tickets" based upon local needs could kill two economic birds with one "notional" stone. First, the import-based consumption of the Anglo-Irish gentry (who were "absentee" even when they did not leave Irish soil, through their purchases of imported luxury commodities) would be hindered, for the bank notes or paper currency issued by the National Bank would either not be accepted by foreign traders or, if they were, then any attempt to redeem them would involve the purchase of commodities produced in Ireland. Second, the National Bank and Mint could create an greater money supply which could allow for an increased monetary wage and this, in turn, would stimulate the poor "natives'" wants, while making wage-less slavery for criminals (in lieu of execution or transporting to the Americas) an even more disincentivizing experience.

In this section I shall examine the Querist's strategy in some detail, to show how the projected National Bank and Mint was to operate and how the Querist legitimized it through the results of Berkeley's second conceptual revolution.

Questionable Money Machines

On first reading, the three pamphlets making up *The Querist* seem to totally reject the axiomatic and tabular structure that Michel Foucault claimed to be a special feature of the "classical" age.[3] The Querist's anti-axiomatic philosophy of composition was reflected in many of the meta-queries located throughout *The Querist* like, for example, "III. 88. Whether, in order to make Men see and feel, it be not often necessary to inculcate the same thing, and place it in different Lights?" Not only was repetition essential for "making Men see and feel" (both literally and figuratively), but there must also be variations on the repeated theme. Consequently, each pamphlet seems to repeat the same themes, though in different proportions, sequences, emphases, pitches and syncopations. They all include queries about:

(a) queries;
(b) the conception of money;
(c) the experiences of banking in Ireland, England, France, Amsterdam, Venice, Genoa, Hamburg, and the Americas;
(d) the need for a National (public) Bank and Mint in Ireland;
(e) the social composition of Ireland (native/gentry, men/women);
(f) the need for sumptuary laws, the development of an "internal market," and an economic strategy of "import substitution;"
(g) social anatomy and physics.

This method of presentation, of course, would make no sense to the axiomatic-tabular mind. For, although these themes were handled differently in the pamphlets that were published yearly, why publish the same thing over and over again? That is, why publish three different pamphlets saying roughly the same thing in three successive years? If each pamphlet presented a different part of the argument, then the segmented publication would have made sense to those with Lockean tastes. "But," one can hear the irritated "man of reason" query, "if the whole 'argument' is simply repeated three times, what is the point?"

Assuming that Berkeley's meta-queries were hints to the reader, then one can see a *musical*, instead of an axiomatic, sense of composition at work in *The Querist.*[4] By evading the declaratory, deductive framework of philosophic and projecting language, the Querist presented melodically, suggestively, and repetitively. This "musicality" of

Berkeley's thought was not only due to his oft-noted passion for music-making, nor to the increasing, though still secondary status, of music-making and appreciation in the pleasures of the British and Anglo-Irish ruling class' imagination.[5] It was rooted in the crisis of the Lockean theory of language that Berkeley helped provoke. For if Locke's rigid, but arbitrary "idea-backing" model of word signification was rejected, then two routes were open for the semanticists of the eighteenth century: either construct a research program aimed at discovering a closer, more structural relation between language and ideas or a program recognizing the "emptiness" of words and their dependence on the response of the audience.[6] Though the former path was by far the most popular, the latter provided an important counterpoint from the mid-century eighteenth century on.[7] *The Querist* was, perhaps, the most sophisticated early text in a tradition that welcomed the "notion of the 'empty' sign" and emphasized the importance of the uncertainty and freedom of interpretation in the creation of meaning.

The initial readers—after decades of the projecting bombast satirized by Swift in Book III of *Gulliver's Travels*—probably found it intriguing. In 1735 one read the first part, considered it, questioned some of the queries, objected to others, and wondered for him/herself where it was leading. Then in 1736 Part II appears, with more questions that most likely "answered" some of the questions and questioned in a new light some of the objections, but keeping the conclusion open . . . for the reader. Similarly, the 1737 Part III answers, queries and "ends" in the "grand finale" of social cohesion and momentum. Just as at the end of an organic and powerful piece of music one can be moved to action (although one does not know why or to what end precisely), so too *The Querist* is a series whose last step is not to be more words but decisions and action.

As a consequence, the logical, argumentative structure of *The Querist* is not easily presented. This difficulty does not lay in its lack of logic, argument or structure; rather, these elements are organized in another key and words relate to action in Berkeley's philosophy quite differently from the Cartesian and Lockean model of deliberation and utilitarian action.[8] This "rhetorical" difficulty affects not only the presentation but the very concepts themselves. In this section, the Querist's conception of money and his projection of a National Bank and Mint will be studied not only as the solution to the Irish political-economic problematic and constraints, but as the inevitable products of

Berkeley's approach to concepts and projects.

The Querist has "earned a place" in the history of monetary economics, because it focused attention on "the medium-of-exchange function of money" and showed "the examination of monetary circulation became more important than a sterile preoccupation, in the earlier regulatory mercantilism fashion, with the acquisition and protection of a supply of gold and silver."[9] The standard method of "demonstrating" this claim in the "history-of-ideas" literature on *The Querist* is to pick out one or another query, de-interrogate it and list it as evidence. This approach is tempting since there are apparently few constraints in the relation of one query with another, to the point that there is little apparent "*intra*-textuality." But this rhetorical effect is not surprising, for in Berkeley's rhetoric, all connections between ideas are activated by spirits, including the reader's.

What is surprising, however, for a text placed in the history-of-money tradition, is its paucity of queries about Money itself. Relatively speaking, the bulk of queries in the (anti-)text are about (i) banks and mints (historical or projected); (ii) the need for sumptuary laws, an "internal market," "import substitution," and targeted "export policy;" and (iii) class behavior in Ireland. Indeed, type (i), (ii) and (iii) queries come in connected series themselves and make up roughly 90 percent of the text. The other 10 percent involve meta-queries, queries about psychic, anatomical and natural philosophic terms as well as the famous queries about money. These miscellaneous ones which appear so quantitatively marginal, however, perform a crucial role in the rhetorical economy of *The Querist*. They initiate, punctuate, and terminate progressions, and this is certainly true about the money-queries.

The Querist begins with a number of context-setting questions and then proceeds to Money between queries I. 21 through I. 50. The explicit money-theoretical theme largely disappears while the Querist takes up economic policy issues (I. 50–198), the Bank project (I. 199–288), and class issues (I. 289–311). A number of Money-queries are accented throughout the long series in Part II devoted to previous banking systems, especially the Law system (II. 9–149). Finally in Part III, after again hearing the money queries briefly throughout the long progression on Banking (III. 8–109), and again on Coin and the Mint (III. 133–195), there is a crescendo of these queries indicating the end of the effort (III. 280–295). This rough census of the text should indicate that argumentative structure does not rule here: for nothing is

proved and nothing is given. There is no irreversible logical direction either in *The Querist*, in the Querist, in Berkeley, or in Ireland.

Well, then, what is the Querist's conception of money? Ontologically, given the mature Berkeley's trichotomy, Money must be either an idea, a notion, or a spirit. Money was obviously not a spirit, for Berkeley. The dominance of monetary relations in the eighteenth century had not grown to such a point that autonomy and subjectivity could be granted to Money or a monetary economy (as was to happen in the nineteenth century).[10] Was money, for Berkeley, an idea or a notion? The key difference between ideas and notions is that, "strictly," one cannot have ideas of spirits and their actions whereas one can have notions of them. Therefore, Berkeley's ontology of money reduces to the question, "Does money signify spirits and their activities?" If the answer is positive, then money was notional; if the answer is negative, then money was ideational.

To answer the question, let us consider a few of Berkeley's "Money queries" in responding to the question:

> I. 21. Whether other Things being given, as Climate, Soil, &c. the Wealth be not proportioned to the Industry, and this to the Circulation of Credit, be the Credit circulated or transferred by what *Marks* or *Tokens* so ever?

> I. 25. Whether the Terms Crown, Livre, Pound Sterling, &c. are not to be considered as Exponents or Denominations of the [compounded proportion, directly as the Demand, and reciprocally as the Plenty]? and whether Gold, Silver, and Paper, are not *Tickets* or *Counters* for Reckoning, Recording, and Transferring thereof?

> I. 49. . . . Whether to facilitate these Conveyances, to record and circulate this Credit, they would not soon agree on certain *Tallies, Tokens, Tickets or Counters.*

> III. 176. Money being a *Ticket*, which entitles to Power and records the Title, whether such power avails otherwise than as it is exerted into Act?

> III. 181. As Wealth is really Power, and Coin a *Ticket* conveying Power, whether those *Tickets* which are the fittest for that Use, ought not be preferred?

The Querist's Money was a ticket, a counter, a token, a tally, or a mark. "Ticket" was certainly his most common characterization of money in *The Querist*. In fact, queries III. 181 and III. 176 have the distinction of being the only ones of the 895 that do not begin with an interrogative ("whether," "what") or a hypothetical ("if," "supposing," "provided"). Thus the first clauses of III. 181, "Wealth is really Power, and Coin a Ticket conveying Power," and III. 176, "Money being a Ticket, which entitles to Power and records the Title," are literally the only assertions the Querist makes. Clearly, the Querist is committed at least to Coin and Money being a "Ticket conveying Power."

"Tickets," "counters," "tokens," "tallies," and "marks" were not synonyms in eighteenth-century English, however, though they all participated in different ways in the realm of substitutes, simulacra, and deferment.[11] The urban proletariat and bourgeoisie throughout England, Ireland and Scotland were familiar with the use of tickets as small change. "Ticket" was also a term used to describe variously as a pay warrant, especially a "discharge warrant in which the amount of pay due a soldier or sailor is certified" (OED), and as an IOU, i.e., "a note or memorandum of money or goods received on credit" (OED). Most obviously, a ticket was, first, a sensory embodiment of a (future) permission to a (future) experience or action; then, second, the ticket became a stimulus to memory of the (past) experience or action. The Querist's reference to tickets immediately deflated either the natural magical or the infinite representational aspects of gold and silver *qua* money.

"Ticket" did not have the aura of sham, fraud and counterfeit that "counter" often had—e.g., Swift in *Drapier's Letters*, ii, "Does Mr. Wood think, we will sell him a stone of wood for a parcel of his counters not worth sixpence?"—nor did "ticket" have "counter"'s implied mathematical proportionality between a certain quantity of counters and a quantity of money the counters represent. Though both terms were used as money-substitutes (e.g., "ticket" as pay-warrant, "counter" as brass, token, or debased coins), they substituted with different effects. Tickets were largely paper items entitling the bearer for either money or a privilege while counters were durable pieces of

metal, stone, or ivory of different shapes, sizes and colors, re-usable and anonymous, which were increasingly employed in the eighteenth-century gambling industry.

A "token" was "a stamped piece of metal, often having the general appearance of a coin, issued as a medium of exchange by a private person or company who engaged to take it back at its nominal value, giving goods or legal currency for it in exchange" (OED). After the withdrawal of Wood's half pennies and farthings in 1724, for example, tokens began to appear in greater quantities in Ireland and they were generally accepted, especially in the small exchanges of waged workers and retailers. Tokens constituted a substantial part of the Irish money supply when Berkeley returned to Ireland and began writing *The Querist.* They only began to disappear in 1736 when the British Government decided to make coins from 50 tons of copper for Ireland in the Tower Mint. But tokens were periodically reintroduced into the Irish money supply whenever there was a small change shortage, as in, for example, 1760.[12]

"Mark" had a more generalized semantic deployment as well as a precise monetary one, which made it similar to "token." Both were used in monetary matters—"mark" was the name of a coin or weight of gold—and both signified indicators, signs, or evidences of specific qualities or characteristics that were not evident. Berkeley, in the Introduction of *Principles,* used the verb form of "to mark" as a synonym of "to stand for" in his discussion of the relation of words to other ideas: e.g., "names . . . do not always *mark* out particular conceivable ideas" (*P Intro* 19), "names being for the most part used as letters are in algebra, in which though a particular quantity be *marked* by each letter" (*P Intro* 19), and "the communicating of ideas *marked* by words is not the chief and only end of language" (*P Intro* 20). He was not alone, for the whole tradition of English semantics from Hobbes to Locke related or identified "marks" and "signs" (and "tokens" as well).[13]

"Tally" referred to a widely used method of recording debts in Ireland and England. It was a stick with cross notches representing the amount of a debt owing or paid; usually the stick was split lengthwise, half for the debtor and half for the creditor. Tallies were used throughout the economy in the seventeenth century, but as the use of coin and paper currency expanded in the eighteenth century their use became the sign of financial backwardness.[14]

Why then did Berkeley identify money with tickets, counters, tokens, tallies, and marks, if they had such different meanings, connotations, and uses? And how did this identification affect the ontological position of money?

The Querist certainly achieved a startling rhetorical effect by suggesting an identity between money and all these semantic, pseudonymous, and deferring entities. This scandalous rhetoric announced a revolutionary change in the philosophical attitude to money and banking. Whereas for Locke the crucial question concerning money was whether it truly *represented* a given quantity of a *thing or substance*. Berkeley substituted another query: does money efficiently *signify* and *excite* future *activity*?[15] The decisive point of the Querist's analysis was not only the rejection of the "mercantile" identification of money with gold and silver. He was just as anxious to insinuate an "excitation" model of money, for the object of money was activity and not things.

Money was clearly notional, for tokens, tallies and marks were to circulate *Credit*, tickets were to convey *Power*, and counters were to record *proportions* between Supply and Demand, since Credit, Power, and proportions are notional:

(a) credit was simply the right of one spiritual being to be believed by another;
(b) "there is nothing of power or agency included in [all our ideas, sensations, or the things which we perceive, by whatsoever names they may be distinguished]" (*P* 25) for power can be ascribed only to spirits;
(c) proportions are relations and "we cannot so properly be said to have an idea, but rather a notion of the relations or habitudes between things" (*P* 142).

Monetary signs signified the spiritual actions and powers of oneself and others, and therefore required their interpreters to have notions of these actions and powers.

A correct understanding of money required an ability to do in the social world what the ideal Berkeleyan natural philosopher did in the natural world: s/he did not confuse passive things with active, efficient spiritual causes. The apparent mechanicity of the capitalist economy was just as false as the apparent mechanicity of nature, from Berkeley's

perspective. Neither Political Arithmetic nor Mechanical Philosophy could discover "the true, efficient causes of things" (*DM* 34), however totalitarian their aspirations and "happy" their discoveries, for they were doomed to the limited precincts of ideas within nature and society. They needed to meditate and reason about the notional level to begin to found a "first philosophy or metaphysics" of nature and society that would determine first causes.

Our ontological conclusion—money signifies spiritual powers and activities—is challenged, however, by a number of passages like:

> I. 23. Whether Money is to be considered as having and intrinsic Value, or as being a Commodity, a Standard, a Measure, a Pledge, as is variously suggested by Writers? And whether the true Idea of Money, as such, be not altogether that of a Ticket or Counter?

> III. 89. Whether it doth not much import to have a right Conception of Money? And whether it's true and just Idea be not that of a Ticket, entitling to Power and fitted to record and transfer such Power.

Or is it? One might dismiss these troublesome queries simply by assuming that Berkeley dropped the over-precise ontological distinction between ideas and notions he introduced in the 1734 revision of the *Principles* in a popular work like *The Querist*. After all, Berkeley wrote of and implicitly criticized the "Notion of a National Bank" (I. 226) proposed in a 1734 pamphlet published in Dublin. Why was a national bank a notion while the true idea of money was a ticket?

Such a dismissal, however, would illegitimately reduce Berkeley's semantics of money into its ontology. Though money was notional—i.e., money essentially signified spirits, their actions, and powers—tickets, counters, tokens and marks were not notions, they were monetary signs. Notions neither can be sensed nor can they be used as signs, while tickets, counters, tokens and marks must be both sensed *and* used as signs. Let us review the matrix of relations in Berkeley's semantics in order to establish his ontological division of labor.[16] Signs (e.g., words, geometric diagrams, portrait paintings, coins) must be ideas. Ideas have at least two semantic relations: resemblance and significance. Ideas can *represent* or resemble ideas, but they cannot represent or resemble spirits and activities. Ideas can *signify* other ideas

and they can also signify one's own or others' spirits and activities (if one has a notion of them). Therefore, Berkeley's "true Idea of money" required his determination of the paradigm monetary sign. His choice of tickets, counters, tokens, tallies, and marks (instead of pieces of gold or silver) makes it clear that he was committed to a totally signifying (non-resemblance and non-self-reflexive) relation between money signs and the spiritual activities and powers they are to record, convey, and entitle to.

One way of determining this commitment more precisely is to examine the views Berkeley contrasted it with. Discussion on this point is often rather simplified by being portrayed as one between a "mercantile" bullionist versus a cartelist conception of money.[17] But the Querist clearly saw a more complex field of possibilities, as we read in I. 23. Money can be considered as either:

- having an intrinsic value; or:
- being a Commodity;
- being a Standard;
- being a Measure;
- being a Pledge

whereas the "true" Idea of Money ("as such" and "altogether") is contrasted with all these. There is no argument to be found in *The Querist* systematically eliminating these possibilities, but the Querist presented them as things to meditate about. For the "intrinsic Value" approach, which is still often confused with a "mercantilist" view, had its adherents in the eighteenth century; while the conception of money-as-representation of value, which was implicit in the commodity-standard-measure-pledge characterization of Money, is often confused with the Querist's Idea.[18]

One might contrast these views, using Berkeley's philosophical investigations as a screen, along a temporal dimension: future, present, past. For a ticket conveying Power clearly is nothing "as such" in the present. Its role is purely future-oriented, for it conveys a Power which of necessity has not yet been actualized. Indeed, at the very moment of actualization, its role as ticket is nihilated. This futurity view is to be contrasted with the commodity view of money. A commodity's value is to be found in its contemporary exchange relations in the present, while the monetary pledge simply states that the pledger guarantees the future

will be identical to the present. As Foucault characterized this view:

> To say that money is a pledge is to say that it is no more than a token accepted by common consent—hence a pure fiction; but it is also to say that it has exactly the same value as that for which it has been given, since it can in turn be exchanged for that same quantity of merchandise or the equivalent. . . . Money is material memory, a self-duplicating representation, a deferred exchange.[19]

Indeed, in both these views, as well as those taking money as standard and measure, a representational function is imputed to money. That is, value exists independently of the sign in order to be *re*-presented.

Finally, the intrinsic value concept of money is identified with the past, for an intrinsic value must be independent of time and hence, for temporal creatures, one that originates in the past.

The Querist recognized that gold and silver can function as tickets and therefore as money, of course, but they constituted a notorious mixture of solidity and seductiveness that made them all too easy to abuse. Their temporal durability and chemical stability seemed to realize the promise of a vehicle that can assure an equal and universal exchange through time, while their seductiveness held out the magic power of universal fulfillment. These aspects of money *qua* a rigid designator of value and *qua* an analog of the highest conceivable value seemed to make the problematic the Querist faced intractable. The Irish cottier "cynics" looked at the gleam of intrinsic values and the play of representations in the market place as an empty show; they did not move them. The Anglo-Irish gentry "hedonists"—like De Sade masturbating before a pile of golden coins—saw in money a magical embodiment or rational representation of pleasure.[20] Berkeley needed a conceptual "shock" that could simultaneously move the cynics and control the hedonists.

"Ticket," "counter," "mark," "tally," and "token" had the right deflating rhetorical effect and, philosophically, they were ideas in Berkeley's sense, i.e., things which in themselves had no power nor value and did not re-present or resemble anything they signified. Moreover, paper theater tickets and brass grocer's tokens were hardly things to excite a Sadean libertine!

Even further, the "ticket, counter, token, tally or mark idea of Money" emphasized Power and the Future in a way that gold and silver

did not. Since a ticket, for example, was nothing *in itself* but a stub of paper that represented no-thing; money could only have meaning, *if* it resulted in action. For if a ticket conveyed a Power that was never to be exerted, the ticket would have been nothing as well. Powers are not hidden structures in matter in Berkeley's philosophy, they are capacities of immaterial spirits that logically must end in action.[21] The implication being that those who use money either to hoard it or those who use it to simply, wastefully, and absolutely consume are violating the very *notion* of money. Money must be a means, never an end in itself either in the sense of Scrooge or Bataille.

Also, since tickets represent nothing in the past or present, their proper understanding requires the development of a sense of futurity, i.e., that the future will *not* be like the past. This is crucial in order to deal with the "bad [temporal] infinity" the Irish cottier cynics generated within themselves. For they lived an eternal stalemate, where the positing of an A would immediately produce a not-A, and then an A . . . forever more. Tickets, by entitling one to power, immediately made it possible to act, hence to create something new, even if it be the purchase of shoes or beef. They held out the promise of a break-out from the vicious cycle of infinite nullity.

This vision of money not only had a rhetorical impact, its contemporary conceptual shock could be appreciated by giving Foucault's epistemological archaeology in *The Order of Things,* some credence for a moment. For if, with Foucault, we still insist on seeing homologies between the "general grammar" and the "analysis of wealth" of the "Classical age" of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, then *The Querist* was definitely a deconstructing presence in this tale.[22] The Name was the "central and privileged entity" of the Classical theory of languages and it always signified an idea. If it is to be mapped into monetary symbols to preserve the Classical structure, then monetary signs must signify ideas (e.g., a certain weight of gold or silver or a certain commodity).

The Querist definitively broke with this Foucaultian homology, for *if there is any element of language that has a behavior similar to the Querist's conception of money, it is the question itself.* A question represents nothing, it is neither true nor false. A question, unlike a name, is not autonomous, since it fundamentally must stimulate another to respond or it is not really a question. Finally, it is the very vehicle the Querist used as a ticket to our monetary imagination.[23]

The Querist's idea of money began to accomplish its "conceptual therapy" on the reader by opening her/him up to the necessity of new possibilities. Berkeley asks the reader to throw off the heavy, golden weight of the past (at least in the mind), within the first fifty or so queries of Part I. Next followed a lengthy series of queries on the contemporary situation of Ireland and some policies that might improve matters (I. 50–198). It is only then that the Bank project is introduced (I. 199–288) while the querying of previous experiences with Banks dominates most of Part II (II. 9–149) and again it and a National Mint takes up most of Part III (III. 8–195).

Yet the shocking radicality of the "true idea of money" posed some serious problems for the Querist in presenting the notion of its institutional form: the Bank. Just as Berkeley's anti-materialist philosophical system could easily be the butt of many jokes, however much it claimed, with counter-intuitive insistence, to be on "the side of the Mob," and to support the illiterate, so too the Querist's Bank of tickets could easily be satirized. Perhaps Samuel Butler's "musical banks" in *Erewhon* were more than a century late. In fact, the complex problematic that Berkeley's National Bank had to solve seemed to leave it hovering on the edge of multiple contradictions and catastrophes. For a start, there was, of course, something conceptually incongruous with the notion of a "Bank" for tickets. It was a questionable Bank indeed. For Banks had always tried to ideally identify themselves with stolidity and gray stone impregnability harkening back to their role as a storehouse of wealth in divine precincts. But the Querist's Bank was supposed to store much of nothing.

Yet, on examination, *The Querist* suggests that the queried Bank can have silver in it:

> I. 263. Whether there are more than two Things, that might draw Silver out of the Bank, when its credit was once well established, to wit, foreign Demands and small Payments at Home?

This suggestion as well as one that stuffs it full of Hemp or Linen—

> I. 267. Whether Paper-Money or Notes may not be issued from the national Bank, on the security of Hemp, of Linen, or other Manufactures whereby the Poor might be supported in their Industry?

—is often taken as a Querist's contradiction by sophisticated readers.[24] Others have pointed out that the Querist's queried Bank was not as "radical" as it appeared, since it seemed to follow John Law's land-bank scheme in *Money and Trade Considered*, first published in Scotland 1705 and republished in London in 1720. Just as Law projected an identity between money and land:

> What I shall propose is to make money of land equal to its value, and that money to be equal in value to silver money, and not liable to fall in value as silver money falls. . . . Land is what in all appearances will keep its value best, it may rise in value, but cannot well fall: Gold and silver are liable to many accidents whereby their value may lessen, but cannot well rise in.[25]

it appears that the Querist queried the same thing:

> I. 233. Whether the Notes ought not to be issued in Lots, to be lent at Interest on mortgaged Land, the whole Number of Lots to be divided among the four Provinces, rateably to the Number of Hearths in each?

Was the Querist's money identical to land? Was the Querist still a crypto-representationist, obsessed about equality of representation over time (what has been called "the monetary pledge") as Law was in the above 1707 passage and, according to Foucault, during the days of his system?[26] That seems hardly likely coming from George Berkeley, the strictest anti-representationist of the eighteenth century. I can detect no pathos of deferred identity in *The Querist*. But then why these queries about land, silver, hemp and linen being "security" for the Paper-Money issued by the Bank?

One reason for such "security" was simply based on political practicality. Berkeley was faced with a diplomatic problem which World Bank and IMF officals confront when they try to introduce structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in Third World nations: "ownership of the policy." That is, how to persuade people and classes in the "adjusting" nation to abide by and forward not only the letter, but the spirit of the SAP, even though many would be immediately hurt economically by its implementation. Berkeley's solution to the problem was very similar to

the World Bank's and IMF's today: include in the SAP extra incentives for those classes that might lose income when introducing the policy. In Berkeley's case, the Anglo-Irish landed gentry would find Berkeley's Bank and monetary form unfair to them because instead of receiving gold and silver coin as rent payments, which are negotiable around the world, they would be forced to receive paper notes as rent payments, which would be legal tender only in Ireland. This would constitute an immediate, dramatic fall in their income, while whatever positive benefits that would come from Berkeley's plan would only be seen, if at all, a number of years later. Berkeley's land bank proviso, as Patrick Kelly suggested to me, would incentivize the landed gentry's "ownership" of his policy, because it would, in effect, be a vehicle for securing reliable, low-interest loans that would ease the transition. Similarly, the commodity stores of linen and other manufactures of the Poor which were to secure Berkeley's money would have something of the effect of the "micro-credit" schemes of the contemporary Grameen Bank in Bangladesh (and its many imitators). For artisans and small manufacturers might lose income in the transition to Berkeley's monetary system through the loss of foreign outlets and suppliers, but these stores controlled by the National Bank would provide these artisans and manufacturers with a "buyer and lender of last resort" until a vibrant internal market is introduced.

The Querist's Bank project must be seen not only as a tactic for solving the immediate socio-economic conundrum posed by cynical natives, hedonistic gentry and absentee overlords through the simple presentation of a banking mechanism and an incentive scheme that would inject liquidity into a depressed economy. To pose it that way would make the matter quite simple. The national Bank and Mint, through the issue of paper money and small coin, would stimulate industry in the cynical poor and control the consumption of imports in the hedonistic, libertine rich. This stimulation and control should lead to greater enterprise, work effort and the increase of credit-worthy individuals and activities. The Bank would key the growth of the supply of paper-money to the growth of Industry and the often conflicting needs of landed and moneyed interests. Since the paper-money would circulate on the basis of local credit, the focus of economic activity would be domestic, hence reassuring the King and Parliament in London that the Irish would not need to compete with English exporters on the world market.

The Bank machine notion itself was simple enough, and if the "ticket idea of money" were understood, its operation could be as plain as day. But the Querist recognized a number of forces that the very machine and notion of money would excite in the course of their operations that had to be dealt with as well. For the Bank must overcome the Prejudice it will encounter at the beginning, it must control the Abuse which its very radicality invites, and it must tame the Fancy its success will unleash. The Querist is more concerned with this three-headed Hydra than with mathematical theorizing about the proportions between "the Quantum of Notes" and "public Demand." Let us query each in turn.

Prejudice

The Querist was most sensitive to the inertia of the mind, to its blindness and superstition. After all, it was operating on an island where the bulk of inhabitants were resisting with tremendous inertia the indications of "good sense." The Catholic "natives," undoubtedly the large majority of the population, refused to be converted to Protestantism even though both reason (given the "inherent reasonability" of Protestantism) and interest (as a way of escaping the Penal Laws) seemed to irresistibly point to conversion. Indeed, their stubborn loyalty to Catholicism forced them, poor though they often were, to pay a double tithe: the legal one to the Church of Ireland and an illegal one to the Catholic Church. The Anglo-Irish gentry joined in this blindness, but with opposing results. Their anti-tithe agitation left them without incurring any serious financial obligations to their church. But in the process, they undermined their own legitimacy, since their shirking of the tithe of agistment showed that they are not willing to support a major pillar of their own Ascendancy.

Berkeley had a duty to proselytize among the Catholics in his diocese and country, and he took that duty seriously. But as Jerry Falvey pointed out, even the ever sanguine Bishop in his *Primary Visitation Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of Cloyne* (1734), where he instructed ecclesiastic subordinates on missionary work among the "Catholic natives," did not expect much in the short run. Prejudice, blindness and superstition had great powers which the wise did not directly confront.

Moreover, as I pointed out in the last section, the later Berkeley realized that prejudices not only had to be challenged, they also *had to be employed* in order to bring about social change. The best way to

introduce them or replace them was through "occasional discourse" or "free conversation" as he points out in the *Visitation*:

> Occasional discourse, I say, that imperceptibly glides from one subject to another, may be so conducted by a prudent person to those topics he hath mind to treat of, as if they naturally arose from what went before, or came by accident in the way. . . . It is certain that the very same doctrine which a man would never read in a book or hear in a sermon, may sometimes be insinuated in free conversation.[27]

The catholic "natives" were not the only prejudiced ones with respect to money, religion, and wealth; the Anglo-Irish gentry as well as the English government were equally filled with prejudices. Consequently, a monetary proselytizer must equally be capable of "occasional discourse" or "free conversation" or, even, a series of "aimless," "random" questions.[28]

But this "occasional" approach to prejudices might not only be appropriate in the domain of sermons and salvation, perhaps it should be respected in the realm of action as well? The Querist wondered about this in a later miscellaneous query:

> III. 131. Whether, nevertheless, the first Beginnings of Expedients do not always meet with prejudices, and whether even the Prejudices of a People might not to be respected?

while in almost the mathematical midpoint of *The Querist* we find the following:

> II. 138. Whether there should not be great Discretion in the uttering of Bank Notes, and whether the attempting to do things per Saltum be not often the Way to undo them?

> II. 139. Whether the main Art be not by slow Degrees and cautions [sic] Measures to reconcile the Bank to the Public, to wind it insensibly into the Affections of Men, and interweave it with the Constitution?

Perhaps the discussion of silver, hemp, linen, and land was part of this

very rhetorical strategy in action? Is it not significant that immediately before query III. 131 we find the following?

> III. 130. Whether any one concerns himself, about the Security or Funds of the Banks of Venice or Amsterdam? And whether in a little Time, the Case would not be the same as to our Bank?

It is worth mentioning that immediately before II. 138 and II. 139 we find a series of questions concerning *Compte en Banc* (a checking account system) and the proper way to introduce it. Since the Compte en Banc is a further step away from a "supported" currency, the Querist suggests that it might be introduced after a Bank Note or Bank Bill scheme is introduced. Though he comes to no definitive conclusion about the order, the Querist warns the potential Banker to take care as he takes the path away from old prejudicial arrangements. It must be traversed slowly, insidiously.

John Law's "shock therapy" approach was definitely a recipe for catastrophe, although his Icarus-like flight was an important source of negative knowledge for monetary reformers. True, Law outwardly achieved the Querist's ideal—the creation of a specieless monetary system—for a brief moment in history. But in the process of trying to eliminate the Prejudice, the Querist suggested, Law did not introduce new prejudices that would preserve his system. On the contrary, he tried to substitute an even worse prejudice—money is stock backed by the King's pledge—for an old one—money is specie. John Law's personal and theoretical contempt for gold and silver was not enough. Moneyed men and women found new idols to fetishize on the streets of Paris in 1719 and 1720:

> II. 100. Whether the dealers in that Sort of Ware had ever troubled their Heads, with the Nature of Credit, or the true Use and End of Banks, but only considered their Bills and Actions as things, to which the general Demand gave a Price?

Law claimed to have rid France, for a time, of an archaic, inequitable, and corrupt system of public finance; but in this palace revolt, the Querist suggested, he created a class of "dealers" who were as short-sighted and corrupt as the "financiers" of the past.[29]

Consequently, if one observed the power of prejudices around

money and religion (and they are intimately connected), then the Querist's concern for material (land, silver, linen, hemp) "security" for Bank Notes during the initial period of their introduction might not be a sign of "contradiction." On the contrary, a light deductivist dismissal of the Prejudices of the People (reminiscent of Law) would have been an even more glaring contradiction in *The Querist*. Indeed, a period of transition from a monetary system "backed" by land-commodity-specie to one which "excited" Power-Credit-Industry would certainly be reasonable precaution for a philosopher who recognized that a psychological conversion from thing-centeredness to spirit-centeredness was difficult and dangerous.

Abuse

The Querist not only had a good appreciation of the powerful mental inertia monetary prejudices can mobilize against a Bank project. Another possibility naturally arose once such a Bank came into existence, viz., the willful over- or under-issuing of money. Before the existence of a Bank, an economic system might have a Quantum of Gold or Silver Money that was ill proportioned to the Public Demand. But this surplus or dearth would not be a matter of abuse, since the quantity of monetary signs within an economy was not determined by any single Will.

At worst, the government's mint might have misrepresented the amount of gold or silver within a coin by reducing the metallic content without warning. But in the case of paper-money and small coin tokens, the possibilities of abuse increased enormously. These possibilities became realities in the Law system (and for different reasons in the "South Sea Bubble" and the British American colonies as we saw in Chapter 1) with international consequences. Therefore, even if the readers of *The Querist* could be liberated of their prejudices concerning money, they might justifiably refuse to support a National Bank by citing the still-recent events of the 1720s in Paris, London and Boston. They might have argued, with some justice, that the Querist's enlightened liberation from the superstitious magic of Gold and Silver opened up so many possibilities for arbitrary, willful manipulation of the currency that it was best to stay with the old, chaotic, but relatively abuse-proof system.

This has been the oft-deployed argument of monetary conservatives since the French Revolution, but it had a long pre-history. And the

Querist had to face an early version of it and respond . . . with queries. They came in two varieties: queries on the logic of "abuse" and queries on practical solutions to the real problem of monetary "security": how is a truly secure banking system to be constructed?

The Querist asks, for example, in "I. 276. Whether an argument from the Abuse of Things, against the use of them be Conclusive?" and then "III. 55. Whether in Fact all things are not more or less abused, and yet notwithstanding such Abuse, whether many Things are not upon the whole expedient and useful?" Indeed, we have here a concept of abuse that can turn the tables on those who are frozen in fear by the very possibility of abuse. For together these queries pose the following dilemma for the conservative reader: (a) to respond "Yes" to both would be logically inconsistent, i.e., from the propositions, "All abusable things are not useable" and "All things are abusable and some things are useable," a contradiction obviously follows, (b) to respond "Yes" to I. 276 and "No" to III. 55 would commit one to affirm that either there is an non-abusable thing or all things are not useable. "Horn" (b) of the dilemma is clearly problematic, for it leads either to total inaction, "nothing is useable," or to the existence of a Thing that is absolutely unabuseable, a doubtful conclusion indeed. For "Things" are not spirits and have no will of their own, consequently, the Querist (armed with a Berkeleyan metaphysic) can query, "Whether that Thing [claimed by the reader to be useable] is not abusable?"

Although questions are neither true nor false, they have a logic based upon their possible responses. As was pointed out in the first section of the previous chapter, this logic can be relentless in its direction, if it is tied to the engine of elenchus.[30] Though the characteristic elenchus structure is not found explicitly in *The Querist*, the logical structure of a set of affirmations and/or denials of the 895 queries has an overall bearing on the "point" of the text. For, after all, not all of the 2-to-the-895th-exponent sets of answers are logically consistent, as the above point about abuse makes clear. Indeed, it is likely that most will be inconsistent, only a few of the logically consistent will be plausible. Consequently, the implication is that the thing most abused in these matters is Logic itself!

The other kind of query dealing with abuse is, perhaps, the most common in the text. On the one side, there are queries about the past instances of paper-money and banking abuse, the most glaring being the Law System (II. 67–109), on the other, there are the numerous queries

concerning the public or private nature of the Bank, the relation of its Managers, Officers, and Cashiers to the legislature, the character of oversight, etc. Indeed, *The Querist* includes a summary of banking history from the medieval Italians to the American colonists, with occasional reference to the banking experience of Ireland.[31] These are not unrelated, since "abuse" and "use" are equally informative to the inquirer, as the query towards the end of the Law-System-series suggests:

> II. 108. Whether it may not be as useful a Lesson, to consider the bad Management of some, as the good Management of others?

It might not be enough to merely point to the cases of "successful" Banks like Amsterdam, Venice, Hamburgh (although there are numerous queries to that regard) because at the core of the Querist's Bank are not Things at all, but spirits; and Things cannot provide true "security" in the realm of spirits.

The question before us is, "what is the Querist's suggested solution to the problem of achieving true 'security' in an era when money was a ticket?" Perhaps the following query might help:

> III. 90. Whether the Managers and Officers of a National Bank ought to be considered otherwise than as the Cashiers and Clerks of private Banks? Whether they are not in effect as little trusted, have as little Power, are as much limited by Rules, and as liable to Inspection?

Though money, as it radiated out from the National Bank, was fundamentally based on trust-creation and aimed at the development of Power—the opening of new spaces for activity and greater real freedom in all the social members—the agents at the center of the monetary web were to be treated inversely. Rules, Inspection, Suspicion, and Restriction were their suggested fate. Money is only as secure as the money managers, and they cannot be given the possibility to act from their private interests. Consequently, the Legislature ("the Soul or Will of the Community") can direct them, provide them with rules, put them under total surveillance, punish or reward them on the basis of their actions, and continually make them aware that the ultimate Power within the Community is aware of all they do.

The Querist's National Bank officers would have been the most scrutinized bankers of the time. Berkeley described this procedure in the anonymously *Plan or Sketch of a National Bank* (1737), published immediately after Part III of *The Querist.*:

> VI. That there be twenty-one Visitors; one Third of these, Persons of great Office for the Time Being; the rest, members of either House of Parliament, some whereof to go out by Lot, and as many to come in by Ballot once in two Years.
>
> VIII. That such Visitors visit the Bank in a body four Times every Year; and any Three of them as often as they please.
>
> X. For the better administring of this National Bank to the Content of all Persons, it will be thought expedient to add divers Regulations about the Number and Choice of Visitors, and other Officers concern in so great a Trust, into some Share whereof it may not perhaps altogether seem improper to admit the Deputies of great Corporations. For the same End, those several Precautions by Signatures, Cyphers, strong Boxes under divers Keys, and such like Checks, which are used in other Banks, would not be omitted in this.[32]

These methods, aimed at limiting the abuse of a useful institution, were modeled on the relation of God to finite spirits. For Berkeley's God ran a continual surveillance on finite spirits and, simultaneously, his God suggested ideational connections and rules of successful action through the creation of perceptions in these spirits. The richness of this God-created language could only be fully known, however, if the finite spirits moved, desired, tried, failed, moved again and finally succeeded. Similarly, the Legislature set down the rules for monetary creation that the Bank officials had to interpret in their daily business.

Moreover, the Anglo-Irish gentry's recognition that a Legislature, which expressed its collective will, would be imposing these grammatical rules of money on the National Bankers was crucial to the Querist's plan. For this was a period when the landed gentry was suspicious of "the moneyed interests" in Ireland as well as in England. The first cause for suspicion was the South Sea Bubble. It had ruined Anglo-Irish landowners as well as London merchants and court

officials. The South Sea Company had an office in Dublin and considerable amounts of Irish capital had been invested in it.[33] Not only were investors hurt, the disastrous decade of the 1720s began with a sharp decline in economic activity due to the credit freeze that followed the collapse of the Bubble which affected everyone.[34]

The second cause for the gentry's suspicion was the miserable track record of private banks in Ireland during the early eighteenth century. They were notoriously irresponsible in their unofficial paper issues and bank failures were continuous, even when the banks were run by responsible bankers who kept their note issues within reasonable limits. For Irish private banks were mostly local institutions, and when the local economy faced a recession, the banks often could not keep up with their obligations and a panic ensued. Public confidence in banks was especially hurt, of course, when larger, more international banks failed as was the case of "Burton's Bank" on June 25, 1733, on the eve of Berkeley's return to Ireland. This Dublin bank had an excellent reputation and its nine hundred creditors including the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin as well as the Earls of Kildare and Cavan. Indeed, this firm acted as the official bankers of the Government of the day. But still its liabilities were almost £80,000 when it crashed, leaving the original readers of *The Querist* even more leery of banks.[35]

But there were other reasons for the surveillance of money managers. The Querist implied that an era of monetary experimentation was opening up, and any attempt to evade it through belaboring the catastrophes of the recent past was logically questionable. But there was no "golden" rule that would automatically solve all the problems of the operation of a Bank—i.e., it could not be an automaton responding automatically to changes in the economic environment—because that environment stretched to the horizon of time-future, a notoriously unmechanical locale. These managers' actions could determine the health of the whole Community, thus to allow them to remain private, hidden and obscure was to introduce the elements of Abuse directly into the center of the money-creation process.

Fancy

Even if the Prejudices of the People could be gradually eluded and the Bankers' Abuses eliminated, the Querist had to deal with a final monster: Fancy. For if it turned out that the true response to query III. 132, "Whether a National Bank be not the true Philosopher's Stone in

the State?," was "Yes," then it would have fulfilled the old alchemical dream of making wealth out of nothing without, of course, the alchemical paraphernalia. Indeed, given the "quantity theorem of money," the alchemist's dream had already been shown to be an illusion by the transformation of money from being an intrinsic value into being a pledge or representation. Since a successful gold-machine would simply flood the world with mountains of gold and thus diminish the capacity of each unit of gold to represent value. The Querist's "Philosopher's Stone" would also create wealth *ab nihilo*, i.e, from no-thing, since spirits and activities were the source of value, but it would not be open to the restrictions of the quantity theorem, since the function of money was not to representation a given value-mass, but to provide an entitlement to Power which it, at the same time, helped to increase.

However, the Querist was concerned with a negative possibility in this liberation of money from its limited, material base. For, *sans* an old Philosopher's Stone, there was a finite amount of Gold and Silver on the planet to potentially represent the mass of values in the world economy. This finiteness mirrored the finiteness of human commodities and the desires they can satisfy. But once money becomes a pure "ticket to Power," a potential infinity of money-related activity would be unleashed that could become totally unhinged from the basic aim of a monetary economy: *Exciting the Industry of Mankind.*

The Querist probed this possibly inevitable potentiality of a monetary hell arising within the creation of a monetary utopia in the middle of *The Querist* (II. 112–119). This possibility was not a simple case of abuse, e.g., employing an institution or activity meant for the public good to achieve a private end. It was a case of madness—the unleashing of infinite artificial appetites and immoderate desires leading to endless pursuits and wild labyrinths. But it was a madness that arose dangerously close to the center of the money-creation process itself. For money entitled one to Power, but Power came in two species, natural and artificial. Natural Power had limited ends, but artificial Powers could be infinitely self-reflexive and self-destructive. Though Money was an artificial device meant to satisfy natural power, it could stimulate artificial powers—Fancy, above all—inordinately.[36]

For Fancy was a power of the imagination to compose and recompose the ideas of sensation *ad infinitum*. It was boundless, active, and sinister, for it knew neither limits nor laws (except conceivability). As the Querist noted:

> II. 116. Whether the Sum of all other Powers, be it of Enjoyment or Action, which belong to Man, or to all Mankind together, is not in Truth a very narrow and limited Quantity? but whether Fancy is not boundless?

It could lead to self-reflexive paradoxes and endless scenarios of delusion. The Querist, *à la* Pope's *Dunciad*, revealed to his readers a terrible vision of "Usurers, Stock-jobbers, overseers, and projectors" gripped by cruel torments and delusions as that capricious Tyrant, boundless Fancy, subverted the place of Reason. The money maniacs' folly was a perversion and inversion of ends and means, as the Querist suggests:

> II. 114. Whether, if Money be considered as an End, the Appetite thereof be not infinite, but whether the Ends of Money itself be not bounded?

The Querist reiterated that Fancy was the source of this confusion of means and ends, finitude and infinity:

> II. 118. Whether the *Ignis fatuus* of Fancy doth not kindle immoderate Desires, and lead Men into endless Pursuits and wild Labyrinths?

Fancy and folly, children of the imagination, were much studied in eighteenth-century philosophical and medical psychology. For a dominant class revaluing "the pleasures of the imagination" was also increasingly concerned with its pains and dangers.[37] The Georgian elite did not have a negative view of the imagination. On the contrary, as Roy Porter pointed out, "Mainstream epistemology and aesthetics—as articulated by Locke, popularized by Addison, and poetized by Akenside—championed imagination with increasing confidence as indispensible to generating ideas and thus as a healthy and integral operation of the mind."[38] But imagination had to be controlled by judgment and reason; otherwise madness would follow. The following Shaftsburyan passage (whose sentiments Berkeley in this case would have largely agreed with) perfectly captured this precarious, ever readjusted equilibrium:

> as long as we enjoy a mind, as long as we have appetites and sense, the fancies of all kinds will be hard at work. . . . They must have their field. The question is, whether they shall acknowledge some controller or manager. If none, 'tis this, I fear, which leads to madness. . . . Every man indeed who is not absolutely beside himself, must of necessity hold his fancies under some kind of discipline and management. The stricter this discipline is, the more the man is rational and in his wits. The looser it is, the more fantastical he must be, and the nearer to the madman's state. This is a business which can never stand still.[39]

This game played between fancy and reason can be and was often lost. Much eighteenth-century medicine devoted itself to curing the losers by recovering their minds' equilibrium between reason and fancy.[40]

Berkeley shared in his period's philosophical and medical interest in and anxiety about the imagination. Indeed, for him the imagination was the primary model for human action and power as the following passage in the *Principles* demonstrates:

> I find I can excite ideas in my mind at pleasure, and vary and shift the scene as oft as I think fit. It is no more than willing, and straightway this or that ideas arises in my fancy; and by the same power it is obliterated, and makes way for another. This making and unmaking of ideas does very properly denominate the mind active. (*P* 28)

The Querist socialized the imagination's capacity for "making and unmaking ideas" by bringing it into the center of the monetary nexus. He was not concerned about stabilizing an existing system of production, circulation and consumption, his program required a radical change in all these economic faculties. Money was to be his immediate agent in exciting Imaginative Power and Action for such change. Money could excite the imagination, because it too was the product of a vast linguistic imagination operating on a higher institutional plane. That is why fancy and the many diseases it can cause were of such concern for Berkeley. One could not rely on an external system to impose a "discipline and management" on socialized fancy. Berkeley, in monetary affairs demanded, like the Parisian '68ers, "all power to the imagination," but he was very uncomfortable about the delirium that it

could ignite.

Ignite it did in the monetary folly and mania of the 1720 Bubbles. In the midst of discussing Law's System, the Querist noted:

> II. 104. Whether, when the Imagination of a people is thoroughly wrought upon and heated by their own Example, and the Arts of designing Men, this doth not produce a Sort of Enthusiasm which takes Place of Reason, and is the most dangerous *Distemper* in a State?

he added:

> II. 105. Whether this *epidemical* Madness should not be always before the Eyes of a Legislature, in the framing of a National Bank?

The italicized phrases were not haphazardly borrowed from the medical terminology of the day. Law's System and the South Sea Bubble were symptoms of diseases, for Berkeley. The Querist suggested that the Legislature needed to think medically in creating a "frame" for a National Bank. For the Bank's laws and regulations had to incorporate a socio-therapy patterned on the best psycho-therapies of the age to prevent an outbreak of "this epidemical Madness" typical of the Bubbles without provoking social "hypochondria."[41]

We shall examine these therapies and their relevance to the body politic in the next section. But before turning to it, we will note one semantic clue the Querist dropped when examining the perversion placed in the heart of money. He used the term "counters" instead of "tickets" when discussing monetary madness. As noted above, "counters" and "tickets" were not synonymous in the eighteenth century, although there was some conceptual overlap. Thus, in the Querist's hellish vision of the tormented "usurers, stock-jobbers, overseers and projectors," they gather Counters "without knowing what they would be at, and without having a proper Regard to the Use, or End, or Nature of Things" (II. 117) instead of Tickets.

The reason for this shift was duplicitous. On the one side, the hellish perversion is more clearly connected with gambling, game playing and counterfeiting and thus with the "counters," and on the other, its cure is immediately suggested as well. Those who are involved in money-making in the Querist's sense are even more damned than Aristotle's

curse on money-making would suggest. For at least the Stagirite's money-makers, though involved in the unwise, infinite accumulation of means instead of ends, are actually accumulating *something* (gold, silver, etc.).[42] The Querist's money makers are accumulating nothing, for they value and covet Counters, and by so doing, paradoxically subvert (in the case of the France of 1719–1720) the Counters' role *as* Counters. On the other side, the Querist suggested that "Counters be referred to other Things, which so long as they keep Pace and Proportion with the Counters, it must be owned that Counters are useful." Thereby, the Querist granted a certain counterfeit referentiality to Counters which he then retracted. For a counter names nothing, it is a variable which only functions in a correlation that keeps "Pace and Proportion" with its correlative series. The solution to the potential Folly and libertine, semiotic madness implicit in his "money as ticket (or counter)" axiom was only a few queries away: "II. 124. Whether there should not be constant Care to keep the Bills at Par?" Constant Care must tame Folly.

There is no "final solution" to monetary madness in *The Querist*, for it is "always already there" when money begins to function as money. As Shaftsbury wrote of the struggle between fancy and reason, "This is a business which can never stand still." Just like the imagination, which it is based on, money-creation hovers precariously between beauty and madness. For without the excitation of the slumbering powers of the spirit, money is nothing. A successful monetary economy must stimulate spirits to create a harmonious correlation between work and reward. But if these powers are overstimulated and uncontrolled by judgment, then money is the source of political insanity. The institution of the Bank with the oversight of the Legislature can only apply this "constant Care" to limit and control the money-using public's and its own Fancy.

The Querist's Bank was not a machine, it was not a self-regulating homeostatic device, nor was it a storehouse of values, consequently when the Querist came to the solution of his problematic—a new definition of money and the project of a National Bank—there was no declarative sentence. The Bank was as questionable as its money. In fact, it was the very recognition of its questionability that made it a reasonable institution.

NOTES

1. Primate Boulter wrote in 1728, "Since I came here in the year 1725, there was almost famine among the poor; last year [1727] the dearness of corn was such that thousands of families quitted their habitations to seek bread elsewhere, and many hundreds perished." quoted in "William Wilde's Table of Irish Famines, 900-1850," in Crawford (1989: 11).

2. For a discussion of this period and the legislative strategies employed by the Irish Parliament and the English Lord Lieutenant to deal with the catastrophic situation of social reproduction in the Ireland of the 1720's see Kelly (1991–92).

3. Foucault argued that "the Classical episteme" of the seventeenth and eighteenth century as sciences that "always carry within themselves the project, however remote it may be, of an exhaustive ordering of the world; they are always directed, too, towards the discovery of simple elements and their progressive combination; and at their centre they form a table, on which knowledge is displayed in a system contemporary with itself," see Foucault (1970: 74). Clearly Berkeley and the Querist are not "classical" in this sense.

4. An very useful study of the importance of music in eighteenth century semantics see Barry (1987). Another study of the intersection of music theory with reflections on language in eighteenth-century France is Thomas (1995).

5. Berkeley did not stint in his budget for music-making and musical instruments. His most famous gift was of a grand organ to Trinity Church in Newport, Rhode Island in 1733. "The organ, the second in New England, was built by Richard Bridge of London and approved, it is said, by Handel," see Houghton *et al.* (1986: 77). But he was also careful to have, at great expense, a musician in his home, for the instruction of his children and his own pleasure. Berkeley was not alone. As James Brewer reports in Brewer (1997: 534), music in provincial social life "was often not of the latest fashion, but it was a collaborative endeavour whose satisfactions flowed as much from the sociability of music-making as from the quality of its performance, Musical talent contributed to the social pleasure of collective appreciation, to the creation of harmony." Patrick Kelly has pointed out to me that the Percevals, Berkeley's aristocratic mentors, were deeply involved with music (both as players and appreciators) and inevitably had an influence on Berkeley's musical tastes and passions.

6. Philosophy seems to have recapitulated this movement in the twentieth century. From the late Wittgenstein and Quine to Derrida and Lyotard, the common project has been to construct a non-homological semantics. Richard Rorty's work from his anthology, *The Linguistic Turn*, through, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, to his *Philosophical Papers,* have constituted an extensive commentary on and contribution to this process of de-homologizing language and reality. For the eighteenth century, see Kevin Barry's discussion of responses to the crisis of Lockean semantics in Barry (1987: 12–15). For an alternative perspective on this transformation, using the transformation from the centrality of noun to verb instead of the contrast between painting and music, see Stankiewicz (1974).

7. Kevin Barry, in Barry (1987: 16), finds in texts like Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*

(1757) and Rousseau's *Essai sur l'origine des langues* (1764) the beginning of "an alternative to the pictorial, specular analogies of lamps and mirrors and pictures." Brian Rotman in Rotman (1987: 32–46), argues that there is a more sophisticated interpretation of perspectival painting that would also give the same effect on semantics as music did, viz., emphasizing the "empty" or "zero" sign and the interpretational creativity of the viewer.

8. Peter Walmsley's study of Berkeley's rhetoric seems to leave *The Querist* in the hands of the reader. That is, he sees it as a collection of "ideas and proposals . . . not, however, presented in a coherent fashion." Rather "whatever larger message we derive from *The Querist* depends on our own willingness of respond to its open and demanding text," cf. Walmsley (1990: 142).

9. Vickers (1959: 142). For further comment in this vein see Hutchison (1953).

10. Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* could be seen as an origin of an autonomous subjectivity to a capitalist monetary economy. Hegel's successors, Feuerbach and Marx, had to therefore confront a revived as well as a new divinity: God and Money, respectively. Feuerbach attempted to de-alienate God while Marx attempted to defetisize Money.

11. Samuel Johnson (1978) has the following selected entries for these items: "Counter." A false piece of money used as a means of reckoning; money in contempt; "ticket." A token of any right or debt, upon the delivery of which admission is granted, or a claim acknowledged; "token." A sign, a mark; "mark." A token by which anything is known; a proof; an evidence.

12. For a discussion of token currency in eighteenth-century Ireland see Josset (1971: 161–62, 347–48). Johnston (1970: 67) discusses the problems and frauds attendant to token money in early eighteenth-century Ireland. George O'Brien discusses tokens and coinage in O'Brien (1977: 345–52).

13. Hobbes used the word "tokens" to refer to names in general whose deployment he divided into "marks," i.e., names used to aid memory, and "signs," i.e., names used to communicate. Locke rejected Hobbes' terminology and used "mark" and "sign" interchangeably. For more on Locke's philosophy of language see Guyer (1994) and Caffentzis (1989: 77–123).

14. O'Brien (1977: 352): "Indeed, in the more remote parts of [Ireland], the use of money was by no means general in the eighteenth century. As late as 1814 Wakefield observed that all transactions amongst the country people were effected by tally, and the circulation of either coins or tokens was almost unknown."

15. For an interesting discussion of the difference between "representing" and "signifying" in Berkeley's semantics see Winkler, (1989: 14–21).

16. A useful discussion of Berkeley's philosophy of language can be found in Land (1986: 79–130).

17. Patrick Kelly points out, for example, that the key phrase is not "ticket" but "ticket conveying Power," i.e., "Berkeley's main emphasis is not on the inert function of the medium of exchange but rather the credit creating role of the circulating medium," in Kelly (1985: 112).

18. One way to place the views rejected by the Querist is by identifying them with the two stages Foucault notes in his story of "Western episteme" from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. "Intrinsic value" is the analysis of money appropriate to the period of the late Renaissance, what Foucault called the period of

"similitude," while for the "classical" period (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) "money is that which permits wealth to be represented," cf. Foucault (1970: chapter 6). There are now numerous commentaries on Foucault's thought, but Amariglio (1988) is a useful not only for economists.

19. Foucault (1970: 181).

20. De Sade wrote in *Les prosperites du vice,* "I love gold so much that I have often masturbated before the immense pile of sovereigns, and all the while with the notion that I can do anything with the wealth I have before my eyes." Cited by Goux (1990: 205).

21. Berkeley began and ended *The Querist* with a paean to Power and Action, for example, "I 7. Whether the real End and Aim of Men be not Power?" and "III 308. Whether the Sum of the Faculties put into Act, or in other Words, the united Action of a whole people doth not constitute the Momentum of a State?" As I pointed out in the last section, Berkeley's concept of the relation between power and action changed dramatically when he realized that ideas can not only signify spirits, but that they can be analogous to spirits as well and hence open up a way of understanding social relations.

22. Foucault (1970: 200–8) sketched out "the general organization of the empirical spheres."

23. Foucault's discussion is to be found in Foucault (1970: 116–17) where one reads, "to name is at the same time to give verbal representation of a representation, and to place it in a general table," and Berkeley is questionably incorporated into "the Classical experience of Language." To get a better sense of Berkeley's deconstructive role in Foucault's plot consider James Harris' placing of questions in the structure of Language. Harris claimed that there were two kinds of sentences: sentences of assertion, based on the minds powers of perception, and sentences of volition, based on "not only on the Will, but the several Passions and Appetites, in short, all that moves to Action, whether rational or irrational." Questions are sentences of volition, for Harris, "For who is it that questions? He that has a desire to be inform'd." "The Requisitive and Interrogative Mode are distinguished from the Indicative and Potential, that whereas these last seldom call for a Response or Return, the two others at all times necessarily demand one," Harris (1968: 15, 16, 149).

24. For example, Schumpeter (1954: 288–89) argued that the Querist was a "crypto-metallist."

25. Quoted in Vickers (1957: 132). Vickers claimed that "[Berkeley's] banking proposals themselves rested on the similar suggestions of John Law, though care was taken in the case of Berkeley's bank to avoid the errors into which Law's practice, as opposed to his theory, had fallen" (p. 165). Law's critique of gold and silver currency in his *Essay on a Land Bank* (1705) and *Money and Trade* (1707), however, was quite different from Berkeley's. The sin of specie, for Law, was that it was not stable in value while, for Berkeley, the sin of specie was that it was a "drug" and reduced industry. For more on John Law's theory of the value of money see Murphy (1997: 53–59).

26. Foucault claimed, in Foucault (1970: 182), that Law remained true to his money-pledge theory throughout his life. Law's theory was first based on land and later on "by the collective consent or the will of the prince. . . . Law was obliged to

renounce [the land bank] technique in his French experiment and subsequently provided surety for his money by means of a trading company. The failure of his enterprise in no way affected the validity of the money-pledge theory."

27. Luce and Jessop (1955vii: 164). Falvery of UCC was kind enough to show me his as yet unpublished paper on George Berkeley and Roman Catholicism.

28. It is interesting that the Querist immediately follows the initial query series on the Bank with a discussion of "the catholic question." (I. 290–311) And the transitional query is: "I. 288. Whether a Scheme for the Welfare of this Nation should not take in the whole Inhabitants? And whether it be not a vain Attempt, to project the flourishing of our Protestant Gentry, exclusive of the Bulk of the Natives?"

29. An ironic description of the French system of public finances is to be found in Murphy (1997: 130–38). He writes: "The whole fiscal-financial system rested on a triad involving the minister, the aristocrat, and the financier. Bribes were paid to ministers so that they would grant tax farm leases or privileges to certain named individuals. . . . The high nobility of the sword and robe, high-ranking bishops, and aristocratic ladies, in particular widows keen to ensure that the family's wealth was kept intact, were involved in profit-making out of the state's finances. Both the nobility and the common people identified the financiers as the source of France's problems. The financiers were perceived as bloodsuckers (*les sangsues*) who fiscally pillaged the country. Yet the irony of the situation was that the financiers were just the front for the rich nobility," Murphy (1997: 132).

30. For a discussion of "elenchus" in Berkeley's work see Walsmley (1990: chapter 6).

31. Money was in use in Ireland long before the Norse invasions, but the first documented minted money was struck in Dublin by the Norse king, Sihtic III, around the year 1000 A.C.E. The Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland was followed by the establishment of a number of mints in the thirteenth century. These mints were often run by Italian merchants who were also engaged in a variety of banking activities usually involving papal taxes and revenues. An interesting discussion of these merchants and their place in the development of the Irish monetary system see O'Sullivan (1962).

32. See George Berkeley, "The Plan or Sketch of a National Bank," in Johnston (1970: 205–7). He wrote the Plan because, though "it should seem no difficult Matter to convert Queries into Propositions," the Querist was repeatedly asked for an Abstract of his thoughts. The real problem for Berkeley is not Thought but Sense of the Public Weal, "It should seem the Difficulty doth not consists so much in the contriving or executing of a National Bank, as in bringing Men to a right Sense of the Publick Weal, and of the Tendancy of such Bank to promote the same."

33. Hall (1949: 26).

34. See Cullen (1972: 46) and Carswell (1969: 207).

35. Hall (1949: 7–8).

36. The early Berkeley, in one of his *Guardian* essays (no. 49), drew a similar distinction between Natural and Fantastical Pleasures: "It is evident that a desire terminated in money is fantastical; so is the desire for outward distinctions, which bring no delight of sense, nor recommend us as useful to mankind; and the desire of things merely because they are new or foreign," Luce and Jessop (1953vii).

37. For a recent discussion of the eighteenth-century literature on "the pleasures of the imagination" versus the "sensuous" pleasures of the body see Brewer (1997: 87–91).

38. Porter (1987: 101).

39. Cooper (1963: 207–8).

40. Cheyne (1991: ii) claimed that "these nervous Disorders being computed to make almost one third of the Complaints of the People of condition in England."

41. The relation of hypochondria to hysteria and other "nervous diseases" was the source of a huge medical literature in the eighteenth century and, perhaps, an even larger late twentieth century commentary. The classic twentieth century text is, of course, Foucault (1973: 136–58). An interesting review of the history of psychiatry literature up until the early 1980s is Rousseau (1983: 61–121). Roy Porter's introduction to Cheyne (1991: ix–li) is a useful, recent contribution to the history of hypochondria.

42. Aristotle (1962: Book I, chapter 9): "So, while it seems that there must be a limit to every form of wealth, in practice we find that the opposite occurs: all those who are amassing wealth in the form of coin go on increasing their pile without limit."

SECTION 3
MOLYNEUX MAN DANCES THE TARANTELLA

> III. 107. Whether Medicines do not recommend themselves by Experience, even though their Reasons be obscure? But whether Reason and Fact are not equally clear in Favour of this political Medicine [a National Bank]?
> George Berkeley, *The Querist*

The Querist suggested a precise solution to the Irish problematic: the creation of two new Irish institutions, a national bank and mint, which would issue a new form of money aimed at "exciting and circulating the industry of [the Irish and Anglo-Irish]." But did Berkeley hint at *a direct relation* between money and the excitement to industry in *The Querist*? Though *The Querist* has generated a small sphere of textual commentary in the twentieth century, there seems to have been very little interest in this question, or, to be more exact, the commentators seemed to be more interested in Berkeley's solution to the question how money *circulated* rather than how it *excited* the Industry of Mankind. The reason for this lack of interest, perhaps, is that his commentators made an assumption Berkeley did not: the agents' problem was that they merely did not have enough money to carry on the exchanges in the economy, i.e., in Keynesian terminology, eighteenth-century Ireland suffered from a lack of effective demand. The crucial question for the Querist, however, was not what quantity of money was necessary to circulate the products of Irish industry, but rather what must be done to transform non-monetary into monetary agents, i.e., the quantity of monetary agents must be increased. For without agents trained in the use of money and excited by it to industry, a specific quantity of money, however carefully considered, would not lead to any predictable or positive result.

For Berkeley, money was a language that needed to be learned. But the language learning process in general was never straight-forward, and it was always open to diseases of the will. His modern commentators assume, however, the institution of money was a given, only its mechanics were in question.

A short review of this commentary tradition would verify my claim. Twentieth-century commentaries on *The Querist* began in earnest in the

late 1930s with the work of Joseph Johnston.[1] The revival of interest in Berkeley's philosophy of money at this time was not surprising. The Great Depression and the rise of Keynesian, fascist, and socialist economic doctrines to state power in the 1930s was accompanied by a new interest in "pre-Adamite" economic discourse. Keynes himself led a search party into the previously forgotten archives of seventeenth and eighteenth-century pamphlet literature to hunt for trophies legitimizing the rejection of "laissez-faire and all that." The question of the moment was: Was thinker X an economic liberal supporting a self-equilibrating market economy or not?[2]

Johnston was very sensitive to the textual legitimation politics of the period and Berkeley's potential role in them. He pointed out, for example, that Keynes had read *The Querist* (although Keynes had personally assured him that "he was not consciously influenced by it"!)[3] It is interesting to note the politic choice of commonalties he noted between Berkeley and Keynes. First, "Berkeley anticipates Keynes's view that an increase in the quantity of money, if used for productive purposes, would increase the volume of employment."[4] Second, Berkeley anticipated Keynes's claim that "the ultimate cause of the production of wealth and of the building up of capital equipment is not the propensity to save, but the propensity to consume."[5] Thus Johnston transformed Berkeley into a Keynesian pump primer and an advocate for increased consumption and *The Querist* became a text tying together Keynes with Aristotle in a tradition decrying "all traffic in money without industry." Johnston accepted the notion of money *per se* to be unproblematic.

T. W. Hutchison's "Berkeley's *Querist* and its Place in the Economic Thought of the Eighteenth Century," first published in the early 1950s, was the next contribution to the commentary tradition. It asked the question: was Berkeley an economic liberal and, if not, why not? Hutchison's answer was straightforward. Berkeley was a practical predecessor of Keynes: "In fact, the main assumptions, analysis, and programme of Berkeley's *Querist* are very closely similar in essential outline to those which Keynes argued for in the inter-war years: that is, much more centralized monetary management, public works, and tariffs if necessary to protect the balance of payments, all with the objective of raising the level of employment and productivity above its depressed level."[6] Theoretically, however, there was some difference between Berkeley's and Keynes's rejection of a self-equilibrating market econ-

omy. Although Berkeley anachronistically "agreed" with Keynes's recognition that the gap between savings and investment creates a permanent possibility of a less-than-full-employment equilibrium, Berkeley assumed the existence of a problem in the labor market of eighteenth-century Ireland that Keynes in twentieth century England did not. Berkeley, like many others of the period, saw a "perverse" or "back-bending" supply curve of labor (i.e., an increase of wages beyond a certain point will lead to less, rather than more labor being offered on the market) to be the norm in Ireland. Consequently, workers must be stimulated to desire a higher standard of living and to be terrorized by the possibility of "temporary servitude" in order for them to respond to the monetary signal of higher wages with the appropriate action. Money, according to Hutchison, must "convert a lively 'natural' or 'real' demand into a monetary demand adequate to give that high level of employment which is morally and economically desirable."[7] Hutchison, however, is silent about how Berkeley envisioned this "conversion" process.

By the late 1950s, a reaction to identifying the Querist with Keynes "the Water-Spider" set in.[8] With the rise and triumph of anti-colonial struggle around the planet and the intensified competition between Capitalism and Socialism to attract the allegiance of the newly liberated peoples, the problematic of underdevelopment became central and Keynesian economics proved limited. Ian Ward's "George Berkeley: Precursor of Keynes or Moral Economist on Underdevelopment?" shifted the framework of the discourse on *The Querist* from reading it as an analysis of a badly functioning "mature economy," i.e., as a predecessor to *The General Theory*, to one that examined an underdeveloped economy. Ward pointed out that the key problem Keynes faced was *involuntary* unemployment, typical of an advanced economy, while Berkeley's problem was *voluntary* unemployment, typical of "an underdeveloped area, in which the overriding problem was the 'vicious circle of poverty.'"[9] Ward claimed that "The key problems of such [underdeveloped] areas cannot be solved by monetary measures alone, such as increasing effective demand; primarily they are "real" problems, related to education, improvement in productivity and technique, increased investment and the quantity of capital, enlarged markets, and "generally more advanced economic organization" as well as "attitudes."[10] Consequently, it is not surprising that *The Querist* is largely concerned with the non-monetary aspects of Irish society. Indeed, the

monetary impact on underdevelopment in eighteenth-century Ireland was due to a "severe shortage in the quantity of money" which the projected National Bank's paper money was meant to solve. Here too we find a gap between the function of money and the attitudes appropriate to development.

Academic fashions and political circumstances have changed dramatically since the early 1960s, but the discussion of Berkeley's philosophy of money begun by writers like Johnston, Hutchison, and Ward seemed to be stagnating a generation ago. The lack of mesh in between his views on money and the rest of his economic theory remained a glaring condemnation of the field. Certainly, the triumph of Monetarism in the 1970s and the "rational expectations" revolution in the 1980s made the question "Was Berkeley a predecessor of the Keynesian critique of economic liberalism?" moot.

But theoretical changes in economic theory have begun to transform the theory of money itself away from a mere quantitative mechanics to a theory concerning the nature of monetary institutions and the epistemic needs satisfied by a system of money. The slow interpenetration of reflections on money from many different quarters—from Marxists like Rossi-Landi, theoretical sociologists like Bourdieu, post-structuralists and post-modernists like Derrida, Baudrillard, and Goux, neo-institutionalists, and neo-Austrians like Hayek—have brought the "linguistic turn" to monetary thought and have profoundly transformed this field.[11] This linguistic paradigm was not, of course, unknown in the previous studies in the foundations of monetary thought. Indeed, it was hard to escape its temptation, but philosophers of money who would apparently have been most attracted to it like Marx and Simmel resisted it.[12] But with the final collapse of the gold standard after 1971, the linguistic paradigm increasingly has become hegemonic.

Berkeley, of course, was the "original" philosopher of the linguistic turn who transformed the succession of our sensations into a language of nature spoken by God to all.[13] Not surprisingly, Berkeley's linguistic turn did not end with nature. He recognized the symbolic nature of money and he did not need to wait two and a half centuries for Richard Nixon to cut money's umbilical cord to gold. This approach to money has been noted by some of the more recent commentators on *The Querist* like Patrick Murray and David Berman who anticipated some of my interpretation of Berkeley philosophy of money in the previous sections of this chapter. Murray, for example, argued that Berkeley's

theory of money is "rooted in [his] theory of *general* signs."[14] Just as Berkeley demonstrated that visual ideas and tactile idea have no common, abstract matter, e.g., the visual circle and the tactile circular motion are not ideas "of the same thing," so money and wealth are distinct and there is no "intrinsic value" common to both. The reason why "visual language" is not taken as a language at all lies in the constancy and universality of the succession of certain visual ideas (a visual circle) by certain tactile ideas (a circular motion). Similarly, silver and gold have been the universal language of wealth and "it is not surprising that such universal and constant conjunction [between specie and wealth] should have been mistaken for necessary connection in this case as well."[15]

David Berman, in his intellectual biography of Berkeley, argued that "Berkeley looked on money as a system of operative signs." Just as Berkeley rejected Locke's theory of meaning, "so he denied that there was a necessary connection between the value of money and precious metal."[16] Berkeley's emotive theory of language, i.e. language not only communicates ideas, it has the function of "(a) raising some Passion (b) the exciting to deterring from an Action, (c) the putting the Mind in some particular Disposition" (*P Intro* 20), according to Berman, allowed him to recognize the "operative character of monetary signs" and free himself from the Mercantilist Prejudice.

Berman's and Murray's valuable insights are congruent with the larger linguistic turn in monetary reflection. However, they do not explain the relation between Berkeley's theory of money and his diagnosis of the ills of Irish society.[17] There had to be such a relation in Berkeley's estimation, since, after all, he suggested, for example, in the epigraph of this section, that a new form of money was to be the *cure* for the Irish disease. The Mercantilist Prejudice was widespread, indeed, almost universal in this period (with the exceptions of France in 1720 and Rhode Island in 1731, which proved the rule for most), but the Querist was a social physician for Ireland. Although his conception of money was general, his prescription was clearly meant for a failed and sick society. This poses a number of questions that have been largely ignored by the commentators, e.g., "What was the Irish disease?," "Why should paper money issued by a National Bank be a cure for it?," "What was Berkeley's social pharmacology and why was money his *pharmakon*?" These are crucial questions for the Querist because they are at the root of his project. Was the error of the older

system of money the cause of the disease, and will the installation of a newer and truer system of money automatically solve it?"

To answer these questions we should recognize that Berkeley not only had a language model of nature and money, but he also had a theory of language learning *and especially of language learning disorders.* An important axiom of the latter theory is: Not every language is learnable by every rational being. In other words, learning a language L has *certain empirical conditions* which, if not fulfilled, would necessarily make L unlearnable. This recognition of the *conditionality* of language learning is at the root of Berkeley's empiricism. Although he was deeply influenced by the Cartesian tradition, especially by Malebranche, he rejected the representationalist intent of this tradition. Reason cannot, on the basis of its own sovereign power, discern the meaning of all ordered systems. Human knowledge is not divine, it is dependent upon God's gifts (or data, or givens). Prime among these gifts are sensory ideas, which in the Cartesian tradition would be irrelevant distractions (and hence potential signs of a malicious power).

What were the empirical conditions that led to the Irish natives' and the Anglo-Irish gentry's failure to learn the "specie language of money"? Why should there have been any hope that they would learn the "paper language of money" any better? A stage in answering these questions is the examination of Berkeley's explanation of similar failures in learning another important language: the language of "vision." Berkeley's rejection of the Cartesian geometric analysis of vision and his deployment of a language model to account for the human capacity to judge distance, size, and situation on the basis of visual ideas is a philosophical *tour de force*. He was rightly proud of his youthful achievement and returned to defend it throughout his career.[18] It also provided Berkeley an analogical framework for understanding many non-visual phenomena as well. For example, in his first *Guardian* essay, "The Future State" (1713), he used his arguments in *A New Theory of Vision* to refute a Free-thinker's "secret" objection to the conceivability of an afterlife.[19] Similarly, as I will show, his analysis of failures in learning the language of vision gave Berkeley a model of the Irish failures with money.

Berkeley's crucial problem in the case of sight was simple: to show that the language model was applicable to vision at all. Just as money did not appear to be a language to Locke, but rather a set of complex

ideas combining substance and mixed mode ideas; so too ideas of vision did not appear to be a language to Locke, any more than the footprints on the sand are the language of the person's feet that made them. For Locke, most visual ideas are caused by things from "without" (E IV. xi. 2). At best, visual ideas might *represent* things from "without," but this is simply because these things *caused* the ideas. In Lockean semantics, words (conventionally or arbitrarily) *signify* ideas and ideas, especially visual ideas, (naturally) *represent* things that cause them.[20]

But for Berkeley, there are no things from "without," nor can ideas cause other ideas to be; only spirits can cause ideas to be and spirits are in no sense "without." Hence, visual ideas do not, in a Lockean sense, represent anything. In his analysis of vision, Berkeley shows that the mind "is wonderfully apt to be deluded by the sudden suggestions of fancy" into believing that distance, size and situation are immediately known (*TVV* 52). But actually, the perception of distance, for example, is as mediated as the perception of "shame and anger in the looks of a man." The source of this delusion of immediacy is the constant coexistence of certain ideas of sight and touch (which also include kinesthetic experiences). For example, the peculiar correspondence of the visual perception of a distant tower with the long series of kinesthetic experiences required to touch it is understood by Berkeley in a linguistic instead of a mechanical mode. Ideas might suggest each other because the mind which created them made them coexist and the mind that perceived them is suggestible. God, the cause of our sensory experiences, has given us visual ideas as signifiers of tactile ideas in order to instruct us "how to regulate our actions in order to attain those things that are necessary to the preservation and well-being of our bodies, as also to avoid whatever may be hurtful and destructive of them" (*NTV* 147).

But visual ideas and tactile ideas are heterogeneous, hence the fact that certain visual ideas suggest certain tactile ones is the result neither of ideational causation nor of any "common sensible" that visual and tactile ideas both represent. The connection between vision and touch is as arbitrary as the connection between word and idea in Locke. The sight of a circle and the circular motion of the hand are not, for Berkeley, common representations of circularity, for visual ideas suggest and signify non-visual ideas of a radically different kind. This is most clearly seen in Berkeley's study of the "Molyneux's question" as

first queried by William Molyneux, the major Anglo-Irish intellectual of the late seventeenth century, and later posed in Locke's *Essay*:

> Suppose a man born blind, and now adult, and taught by his touch to distinguish between a cube and a sphere of the same metal, and nighly of the same bigness, so as to tell, when he felt one and t'other, which is the cube and which the sphere. Suppose then the cube and sphere placed on a table, and the blind man to be made to see: *quaere*, whether by his sight, before he touched them, he could now distinguish and tell which is the globe, which the cube. (E II, ix, 8)

Berkeley answered "Not," just as Molyneux and Locke did, but he argued that his predecessors' answer was in contradiction to their belief in *common sensibles*.[21] For if Molyneux Man's new visual ideas were of the *same sort* as his older tactile ideas, then he could conceivably recognize the "squareness" in his visual ideas as he learned the squareness in his tactile ones and conclude that the cube was a cube without touching it. But if visual ideas and tactile ones were truly heterogeneous, then only prolonged experience with both kinds of ideas and their complex directions of inter-suggestion would lead the Molyneux Man to a correct differentiation of cubes and spheres.

On the basis of his analysis of vision as a language, Berkeley recognized three characters forever failing to learn the language of vision: the blind person, the Molyneux Man, the "unbodied spirit" or intelligence. Indeed, *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* is a philosophical comedy of visual errors which simultaneously carries out an epochal devaluation of vision with respect to touch. Certainly, if feminist epistemologists are correct and philosophers from Plato to the early Wittgenstein were obsessed by the visual model of thought, then Berkeley's partiality for blindness and his emphasis on an epistemology of touch definitely breaks with this obsession and puts him at a critical distance from the male thrust of philosophical tradition.[22]

Let us consider each of these failures in turn, for they will give us a structure to connect money with the diseases of the body politic. The first character in search of sight, the blind person, appears to be a straight-forward violator of a basic empirical condition required for sight: s/he has no visual ideas. But the blind had an ironic fate in Berkeley's theory of vision. Instead of being doomed to epistemic

darkness, their blindness gave them direct knowledge of "tangible" experiences which, after all, constitute the *telos* of visual language in the first place:

> Now bodies operating on our organs, by an immediate application, and the hurt or advantage arising therefrom, depending altogether on the tangible, and not at all on the visible, qualities of any object: this is a plain reason why those should be regarded by us much more than these. (*NTV* 59)

Moreover, the blind person can know all the essential ideas pertinent to spatial perception: size, situation, distance, etc. Berkeley literally rejected the visual bias in geometry and its condemnation of blindness as a prison locking the blind out of the heaven of geometry. On the contrary, blindness puts one into a state of direct confrontation with geometric ideas, which are tangible and not visual (according to the youthful Berkeley). Although he did not appeal to the blind English mathematician Nicholas Saunderson who solved geometric problems by building tangible models of the "givens," as Diderot later did, Berkeley made the existence of such a person conceivable.[23] The main function of sight, according to the Berkeley of *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision*, is not to provide geometric knowledge, but rather to allow humans to make "predictions" about future tactile (and kinesthetic) experiences like coming to the brink of a precipice or being stopped by a wall. These tactile experiences are much more vital than visual ideas, because "damage or benefit" to our perceived bodily frame are related to tangible ideas.

Berkeley's second character of failure is Molyneux Man, the man blind from birth who suddenly can "see."[24] He has two kinds of sensory ideas—the new visual ideas and older tactile ideas—but they are, for the moment, disjointed. There are only free-floating visual signifiers in Molyneux Man's mind, for the signified—the tactile ideas—have a coherence only among themselves. The famous test Molyneux envisioned was premised on this separation between visual signifiers and tactile signifieds. For in the test the recently recovered patient is placed before two objects and "to ask of the two bodies he saw placed on the table, which is the sphere, which the cube? were to him a question downright bantering and unintelligible; nothing he sees being able to suggest to his thoughts the idea of body, distance, or in general of

anything he had already known" (*NTV* 135).

Berkeley was interested in Molyneux Man's utter failure to pass the test as evidence for the heterogeneity of visual and tactile ideas. But he was also concerned with Molyneux Man's success, i.e., his long apprenticeship in weaving together vision and touch. That path is rooted in voluntary motion. Thus, Berkeley writes of distance: "I believe whoever will look narrowly into his own thoughts and examine what he means by saying he sees this or that thing at a distance, will agree with me that what he sees only suggests to his understanding that after having passed a certain distance, to be measured by the notion of his body, which is perceivable by touch, he shall come to perceive such and such tangible ideas have been usually connected with such and such visible ideas" (*NTV* 45). Berkeley made similar points about size and situation. *No important spatial information can be provided by touch without self-motion.* That is, hidden in the revaluation of touch and the devaluation of sight is Berkeley's discovery of self-willed motion as a necessary condition of geometric knowledge. *Although God has created a "language of nature" where, e.g., visual ideas suggest tactile ones in the future; these suggestions cannot be learned unless one moves.* Without this self-willed motion, Molyneux Man would never really see, even though he might perceive millions of visual ideas per hour.

The Berkeley of *An Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* in 1709, however, did not have a good grasp as to the strength of will required for a Molyneux Man to become a fully sighted person. But by 1733, at the beginning of his second conceptual revolution, he was well aware of these immense problems after reading W. Cheselden's account of the events following the "couching" of a mature Molyneux Man's eye in *Philosophical Transactions* of 1728.[25] For example, it took more than a year for the Molyneux Man to be able to have a coherent panoramic perception from one "couched" eye and this period of learning was extended even further when his other eye was successfully operated on. It was necessary for the Molyneux Man, already prejudiced by decades of tactile experiences, to undergo a complete program of visual learning that normally takes a child years of bumps and disillusions to accomplish. Therefore, the most important problem was motivational. "Before he was couch'd, he expected little advantage from seeing, worth undergoing an operation for, except reading and writing; for he said, he thought he could have no more pleasure in walking abroad than he had

in the garden, which he could do safely and readily."[26] The motivation to overcome the resistance to sight caused by the blind man's habit and his desire to avoid the pain of learning came from the fact that "every new object was a new delight, and the pleasure was so great."[27] Unless the benefits of knowing the language of vision were immediate and substantial, the Molyneux Man might never weave together visual signs and tangible signifiers and, after so much pain and trouble, might end as that comic figure *par excellance*: the blind man with sight.

The final character in Berkeley's play of visual error is "an intelligence, or unbodied spirit, which is supposed to see perfectly well, i.e., to have a clear perception of the proper and immediate objects of sight, but to have no sense of touch" (*NTV* 153). This is a comic invention worthy of Jonathan Swift, Lawrence Sterne, or Charles Johnson: a totally sighted being that cannot see! Its philosophical purpose, however, is to provide Berkeley with a *reductio ad absurdum* of the visual model of geometry and spatial perception. Such a reversal is remarkable, for it would seem that such a spirit would be the perfect geometer, but it turns out that:

> the aforesaid intelligence could have no idea of a solid or quantity of three dimensions, which followeth from its not having any ideas of distance. . . . Whence it is plain he can have no notions of those parts of geometry which relate to the mensuration of solids and their convex and concave surfaces . . . he cannot comprehend the manner where in geometers describe a right line or circle. . . . All which makes it evident our pure intelligence could never attain to know so much as the first elements of plane geometry. And perhaps upon a nice inquiry it will be found he cannot even have an idea of plane figures any more than he can of solids. (*NTV* 154–55)

All this intelligence could know is "colours, with their variations and different proportions of light and shade" (*NTV* 157). Without the sense of touch, it would be impossible for this refined intelligence to be a geometer. The mere experience of change of the sort that the intelligence would have is not an experience of self-willed motion that allows for the creation of the rudiments of geometry: distance, size and situation. Indeed, such an intelligence would be the ultimate alienated being whose visual experience would not allow it to place itself in the world of its own experiences.

This ironic conclusion rounds out Berkeley's typology of visual language learning errors. Let us review these figures of error for the moment on logical, epistemological, semantic and psychological dimensions:

(a) *the Blind:* no visual ideas, only tactile ones; no ability to predict the next tactile idea on the basis of the former; knows only the signified; oppressively centered in the world of tactile experiences;
(b) *the Molyneux Man:* visual ideas detached from tactile ones; unable to use his visual ideas to predict the next tactile idea; cannot use signifiers to signify; confused by his inability to make his experiences cohere;
(c) *the Intelligence:* only visual ideas, no tactile ones; cannot predict the next visual idea; knows only signifiers; unable to distinguish the sources of experiential change, alienated and alone.

This outing on vision's ship of folly was meant to show that Berkeley's study of language is not only directed to describing idealities. On the contrary, failure marks the bounds of a practice more precisely than the ideal application of a rule.

Berkeley used a similar method in studying the language of money in *The Querist*. Monetary pathologies were as important in his theory of money as visual pathologies were for his theory of vision. These monetary pathologies have a structure similar to those of the language of vision, simply because they share in the logical structure appropriate to the improper relations between the realm of signs and the domain of signified things. Pathologies in the realm of money, just as in the realm of vision, exhaust the logical space of semantic failure: (a) signifieds without signs; (b) signs and signified disjointed; (c) signs without signifieds. Moreover, they express the various class attitudes towards the language of money Berkeley faced in *The Querist.*

The "Usurers, Stock-jobbers, Overseers, and Projectors" behave like the *New Theory of Vision's* "intelligences," since they simply experience monetary signs for themselves without their referents. They have no interest in the semantic role of money which puts bounds on its accumulation and requires "a proper Regard to the Use, or End, of Nature of Things" (I. 116). They are interested in money for itself and they are driven by "the *Ignis fatuus* of Fancy" into an endless cycle of

"getting of Money, or passing it from Hand to Hand without Industry." They generate a paradox for monetary philosophy similar to the one that Berkeley's intelligences posed for geometry: these sophisticated money men are so single-mindedly obsessed by money as a system of signs that they are totally ignorant of money's uses. The crowds surging around Exchange Alley and Rue Quincampoix in 1720 were gripped by an "epidemical Madness" which ended in "endless Pursuits and wild Labyrinths." They experienced a delirium similar to the intelligences' immersion in a realm of signs without signifiers.

The Irish natives, like the blind, had no appreciation of the language of money. They are unmoved by the flow of monetary signs and were "cynically content in Dirt and Beggary." They were, according to Berkeley, "the most indolent and supine People in Christendom" who are therefore prone to attacks of "spleen." The Querist suggested: "II. 189. Whether Idleness be the Mother or the Daughter of Spleen?" Spleen, of course, was the traditional medical male analogue of hysteria. It was a condition similar to hypochondria or "the English malady," which had been given its most comprehensive treatment by Dr. George Cheyne in his *The English Malady*, published in 1733 when Berkeley was still in London campaigning for his bishopric.[28] *Le spleen anglais* had been the preserve of the rich in England and the product of civilization—since "property granted leisure, but maintaining investments bred anxieties, and sedentary idleness left time weighing heavily on vacant minds."[29] But in Ireland, Berkeley suggested, the idleness of the Irish poor made them as prone to spleen as England's *crême de la crême*.

Monetary signs like visual signs allow their interpreters to go beyond their immediate condition to foresee future events and to excite action. Those who are blind to these signs are inevitably lacking ambition and are disconnected from the exchange and circulation of powers in society. Instead of a "physical malady," the idleness of the splenatic Irish poor was the product of a disease of the body politic that required a drug or *pharmakon*. As he suggested:

> II. 265. Whether the sure Way to supply People with Tools and Materials, and to set them to Work, be not a free Circulation of Money, whether Silver or Paper?

The final type of monetary failure is the Anglo-Irish gentry, both

male and female, who, like Molyneux Man, experienced monetary signs disjointed from their signifiers. For them money was not "in Truth, Tickets or Tokens for conveying and recording such Power [to command the industry of others]." They used money simply to satisfy their Vanity. The Anglo-Irish women dressed in French Silks and Flanders Lace while the men demanded their bottle of French claret not because of the Health or Pleasure they provided. These imported commodities did not convey power to the gentry, rather they exhausted it in pursuit of Vanity and Luxury. Consequently, although the Anglo-Irish, who appeared to be monetary agents *par excellance*, were as blind to the true functioning of money as the Irish poor.

This feminine vanity—shared by both men and women of the Anglo-Irish gentry—disjoined money from its proper function and inevitably leads to and/or was caused by a hysterical condition.[30] As Berkeley suggested:

> II. 179. Whether she would be a very vile Matron, and justly thought either mad or foolish, that should give away the Necessaries of Life, from her naked and famished Children, in Exchange for Pearls to stick in her Hair and sweet Meats to please her own Palate?

In this picture of "a very vile Matron," the hysterical woman steps out on the Querist's stage. Eighteenth-century medicine no longer explained hysteria by uterine displacements and it was no longer strictly a "women's disease," but the classical symptoms of hysteria largely remained the same and it was still considered a feminine disorder.[31] Sydenham, the most influential late seventeenth-century commentator on hysteria, recognized those suffering from the disease as having a "propensity to anger, jealousy, and suspicion. . . . 'All is caprice,' he said, 'they love without measure those whom they will soon hate without reason.'"[32] Foucault eloquently described the transformation (and conservation) in the eighteenth-century understanding of hysteria in this way:

> For Sydenham, for the disciples of Descartes, the moral intuition [concerning hysteria] is identical [to Hippocrates' and Plato's]; but the spatial landscape in which it is expressed has changed; Plato's vertical and hieratic order is replaced by a volume which is traversed

> by incessant motion whose disorder is no longer a revolution of the depths to the heights but a lawless whirlwind in a chaotic space.[33]

One can imagine the Anglo-Irish version of this "lawless whirlwind," scattering money in buying sprees in London and Paris, returning to engage in an endless round of drunken parties, and being "absentee" to their productive responsibilities, even when they were at home. The hysteria of this social class inevitably disconnected monetary signifiers from appropriate signifieds.

Let us review these three types of Irish monetary failure on a semantic, social, economic and psychic plane as we did with the failures in the realm of vision:

(a) *the Irish poor:* knows only monetary signifieds; cannot activate his/her economic life; "cyncially content," ridden by spleenatic and hypochondriacal symptoms;
(b) *the Anglo-Irish gentry:* cannot conjoin monetary signifiers with appropriate signifieds; overactive life of consumption and disinterested in production; hysterical symptoms;
(c) *the Userers, Stock-jobbers, and other Bubble-maniacs:* know only signifiers; money has become an end in itself; epidemical madness.

From the pages of *The Querist* one can only conclude that Ireland of the 1730s was something of a lunatic asylum requiring a social physician and a social therapy. Berkeley was not alone in coming to this conclusion. Jonathan Swift deeply shared this sentiment, but he responded with "Scorpion Rods" instead of balm. His bitter and violent poem, *The Legion Club*, which I discussed in Chapter 2, mixes the metaphors of hell and lunatic asylums to depict a day in the Irish Parliament as it was repealing the Agistment Tithe.[34] The narrator is tempted to call for the complete annihilation of the Parliament, but he allows it to stand with the proviso that it be turned into a lunatic asylum. He then takes the reader on a tour of the Mad-House and prescribes his own therapy for some of the parliamentary patients:

> Keeper, shew me where to fix
> On the Puppy Pair of Dicks . . .
> Dear Companions hug and kiss,
> Toast old Glorious in your Piss.

Tye them Keeper in a Tether,
Let them stare and stink together;
Both are apt to be unruly,
Lash them daily, lash them duly,
Though 'tis hopeless to reclaim them,
Scorpion Rods perhaps may tame them.[35]

Madness was, of course, not only a metaphor for Irish politics and society for Swift, but by 1736 he had largely given up any hope to cure "the social madness" of Ireland he had diagnosed in book after book from *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) to *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). He had already turned his attention to erecting a hospital "for fools and lunaticks" by 1735 while Berkeley was writing and publishing *The Querist* pamphlets.[36]

Berkeley, unlike Swift, had not given up on Ireland, full of folly, spleen, and hysteria though it was. By taking a medical turn in his evaluation of the socio-economic problematic posed by the class conflicts of Ireland, he revealed another dimension of his theory of money, i.e., money *qua pharmakon* for madness and neurosis. The Querist's interest in madness and its cures was not new for Berkeley, however. His previous studies of hysteria were to prove very useful in the shaping of his monetary drug for the ills of Ireland. It is worthwhile reflecting on them before showing how Dr. Bishop Berkeley planned to use paper money and the National Bank as a cure for the variety of social-psychological diseases debilitating the Irish body politic.

The most intense period of these studies took place between May 5 to June 9, 1717 when he and his charge, George Ashe, went on a journey from Naples to Lecce and Taranto and back via Venosa to Naples. There is good reason to believe that Berkeley took the trip to study tarantism and the tarantella cure in their central areas, Apulia and south-eastern Italy. He apparently had discussed this trip with his good friend, Dr. John Friend, and when he returned to Naples he sent to Freind "an accurate and entertaining account of the tarantula."[37] This was the period when neurotic diseases like hysteria and hypochondria were coming to the center of medical attention and it is not surprising that Freind might want to know the facts about tarantism from a sophisticated observer like Berkeley. For the sickness associated with tarantism had symptoms similar to the "English Malady" neuroses, hysteria and hypochondria, e.g., "falling on the ground, the feeling of

exhaustion, the agony, the state of psychomotor agitation accompanied by occluding of the sensorium, the difficulty in standing upright, the stomach pains, nausea, and vomiting, the various ticklings and muscular aches, the excitation of the sexual appitite."[38] Its cause was traditionally taken to be the poison from the bite of the tarantula and the cure was music and dance. It was, however, important to find the "right" music:

> The traditional procedures involved in tarantism presuppose that a small orchestra will be assembled near the inert tarantist and begin through musical exploration to find out what will be the "right" music, that is, that of the tarantula in question; the "right" (adequate) music will be that which will set the tarantula in motion [*scazzicare*] and will do so according to the modes of the rite, that is, causing it to leave its state of inertia and to subject its psychomotor agitation to the rhythm of the music and the patterns of the dance.[39]

Berkeley interviewed people from all social levels to determine the range of opinions concerning tarantism and he witnessed a number of "cures." Some of his respondents were sceptical of the powers of tarantula bite and the dancing cure, but others were convinced of both cause and cure. For example, a priest in Barletta thinks "it is not a fiction having cured among others a Capucin whom he cou'd not think wou'd feign for the sake of dancing," while a physician in Casal-nuovo judged "the distemper of the Tarantati to be often feigned for lewd purposes."[40] Berkeley clearly studied the elaborate ceremony involved in the tarantella cure. Here is a passage from one of the more remarkable scenes he witnessed:

> The Tarantato that we saw dancing in a circle paced around the room. & sometimes in a right line to & from the glass. staring now and then in the glass, taking a naked sword sometimes by the hilt and dancing in a circle yet point at the spectators & often very near parly to myself who sate near the glass . . . his cheeks hollow & eyes somewhat ghastly, the look of a feverish person/ took notice of us strangers/red & blue silks hung on cords around the room/ . . . danced about half an hour the time or bout we saw him had danced before 4 hours and between whiles was to continue dancing till night.[41]

Berkeley clearly chose Taranto as the goal of his journey, since it was both etymologically and historically the center of tarantism. He witnessed another dance of tarantati there and spoke with The Consul who "tells me the Tarantula causes pain and blackness to a great space round the bite/thinks there can be no deceit. The dancing is so laborious/tells me they are feverish mad & sometimes after dancing throw themselves into the sea and wou'd drown if not prevented."[42]

Berkeley clearly used his journal notes (which were written in a fresh phenomenological style) as the basis of his report to Dr. Freind. These notes were by no means unequivocal concerning the cause and cure of the hysteria-like disease, but the vivacity of the writing when dealing with the tarantella is a good sign of the impression the dance made on him.

We should not be surprised if Dr. Freind directed Berkeley to Taranto, because motion was often seen in English medicine as an important element in a therapeutic program when dealing with hysteria. Dr. George Cheyne in his *The English Malady* (1733) reviewed the history of medicine from the Greeks to his contemporaries and found almost universal acclaim for Exercise: "There is not any one Thing, more approv'd and recommended by all Physicians, and the Experience of all those who have suffer'd under Nervous Distempers (since the Distinction has been made) than Exercise, of one Kind or another; and this without the least Exception or Limitation, but so far as the Strength can admit; if it is without Weakening, Fatigue, or Hurry of Spirits."[43] Certainly, the tarantella cure *qua* exercise pushed the tarantati beyond their strength, as Berkeley's account reveals, but it had within another element beyond exercise: music and dance. The dance of the tarantati clearly has a mimetic character. As Oughourlian points out, "the tarantist often crawls on his calves and heels and on his forearms, in a striking imitation of an advancing spider."[44] But the music is crucial as well in the cure, for it instigates possession and stimulates a dance of two or three days that eventually leads, if successful, to the tarantist's proclaiming that the venom has been passed.

Berkeley's earlier adventures in the therapy of nervous diseases undoubtedly had an impact on his later effort at playing physician to a nation. Not only were the symptoms of the social classes of Ireland analogous to the nervous diseases typical of the day, but the key monetary failures were caused by either too much or too little motion. Berkeley had to create a monetary system that would regulate the

action of the social classes of Ireland.[45] Just as musicians surrounding the inert tarantati must determine the "right" music to set the "tarantula within" into motion [*scazzicare*], so too the right form of money must be designed to deal with the problems of the poor, cynical and hypochondriacal native Irish, the hysterical Anglo-Irish, and the epidemically mad Stock-jobbers.

Appropriate motion, however, is not inevitable, especially for those with the major nervous diseases of the day: hysteria and hypochondria. These diseases either lead to inappropriate motion or the nihilation of motion. If Molyneux's blind-to-sighted person was ill with "the English Malady," s/he would never create a spatial world because there would be no stability and self-willed motion required for weaving together sight and touch. A similar problem would arise with a monetary language in a society where the population was suffering from these nervous diseases *en mass*. *Music and dance (instead of the manipulation of primary qualities valued by the political arithmeticians of the Enlightenment) were the Querist's models for the monetary language that can excite the industry of mankind.*

Let us examine how Berkeley's monetrary system would affect the different classes of economic failure in Ireland.

The poor Irish would break their cynical trance and begin to move purposefully because they would be integrated into the monetary system. They would receive monetary signs from the New Mint which would create a coinage consisting of a large quantity of small value coins. These coins would help turn their attention to the future. For possessing money inevitably requires one to go beyond the present and to plan for the future, at least to the extent of planning how the money will be spent. This shift in the direction of thought from cynical inactive beggary to active engagement with the future, if massively multiplied, would stimulate industry and release Ireland from the curse of "the backward bending labor supply curve." Once the poor Irish begin the dance of money, eventually the poison of political defeat will be passed out their system. But for those who refuse to dance, wageless slavery awaits them.

The vanity-obsessed Anglo-Irish would not be able to use their new monetary signs—domestically issued paper money—for the luxury consumption of imported commodities. Foreign exporters would not accept the inconvertible paper money of Berkeley's Bank, while the gentry would have to accept rent payments in terms of this currency.

Once their frenzied appetite for emulating their more well-to-do cousins across the Irish Sea is checked, the Anglo-Irish would begin to learn a new semantics of money. Instead of seeing money as a vehicle for buying things to satisfy their vanity, they would begin to use their money to stimulate industry in the country.

Finally, the Stock-jobbers and money-market players would find their desire to accumulate money as an end in itself to be blocked by the officials of the National Bank who would impose a careful correlation between money supply and industrial activity. No longer would there be money available of investment outside the realm of industrial production. The Bank officials would also refuse to make John Law's fatal mistake of mixing a national Bank with a private, for-profit corporation. As Berkeley suggested:

> II. 106. Whether, therefore, it may not be fatal to engraft Trade on a national Bank, or to propose Dividends on the stock thereof?

> I. 274. Whether the evil Effects, which, of late Years, have attended Paper-Money and Credit in Europe, did not spring from Subscriptions, Shares, Dividends, Stock-jobbing?

The Userers and Stock-jobbers would not be able use monetary signs without signfication. They would be forced to dance to a slower music, composed by the national Bank officials.

This was how Berkeley orchestrated his monetary plan. The difficulty of realizing his project should be evident. For it had to overcome complex, and interdependent structural, semantic, and social-psychological failures and resistances using purely financial means. Not surprisingly, Berkeley's Bank failed to eliminate the failures' resistance.

NOTES

1. Joseph Johnston's series of pieces include "A Synopsis of Berkeley's Monetary Philosophy," *Hermathena*, No. 55, 1940, "Locke, Berkeley and Hume as Monetary Theorists," *Hermathena*, No. 56 and "Bishop Berkeley and Kindred Monetary Thinkers," *Hermathena*, No. 59, 1940. These were reprinted in Johnston (1970) as Chapters VII, VIII, and IX respectively.

Another important commentator was Ellen Douglass Leyburn. She wrote a Ph.D. thesis on *The Querist* for the English Department at Yale University in 1937. I believe that it is the only complete book-length work on *The Querist* with the

exception of Johnston's and mine. She published a precis of her thesis as Leyburn (1937). I find no evidence that she published anything more about Berkeley's thought. Leyburn's thesis is a fine work of stylistic analysis that attempts a psycho-political explanation of a very important question: why did the 1750 edition of *The Querist* have 299 fewer queries than the 1735–1737 pamphlets?

2. See Keynes (1936). His efforts were aided by the publication of the first 1935 edition of Heckscher's *Mercantilism.* Heckscher critically commented on Keynes's attitude to mercantilism in Hecksher (1955: 340–58).

3. Johnston (1970: 98).

4. Johnston (1970: 98).

5. Johnston (1970: 99).

6. Hutchison (1953) was republished in Clark (1989).

7. Hutchison (1953: 52).

8. Keynes described himself and his friends in youth as "water-spiders, gracefully skimming, as light and reasonable as air, the surface of the stream without any contact with the eddies and currents underneath" in Keynes (1972: 450).

9. Ward (1959) is reprinted in Clark (1989: 181–90).

10. Ward (1959: 185, 188).

11. A short bibliography on the new interdisciplinary theory of money would include Rossi-Landi (1983); Derrida (1992); Baudrillard (1981) and Baudrillard (1983); Goux (1990); Hayek (1978) and his classic Hayek (1984).

12. Marx (1973: 162–63): "To compare money with language is not less erroneous. Language does not transform ideas, so that the peculiarity of ideas is dissolved and their social character runs alongside them as a separate entity, like prices alongside commodities. Ideas do not exist separately from language." Simmel echoes Marx in Simmel (1978: 167): "In short, a number of most important processes follow this pattern of the growing importance of one element leads to greater success, but the complete hegemony of this element, and the total elimination of the contrasting element, would not result in total success; on the contrary, it would deprive the original element of its specific character. The relationship between the intrinsic value of money and its purely functional and symbolic nature may develop in analogous fashion; the latter increasingly replaces the former, but a certain measure of the former has to be retained because the functional and symbolic character of money would lose its basis and significance if this trend was brought to its final conclusion."

13. The commentary literature on the Berkeley's "language model of nature" is enormous. For a start, one should read Turbayne (1970), and the very good introduction to the "world as text" theme in Dancy (1987), Chapter 8.

14. Murray (1985: 153).

15. Murray (1985: 154).

16. Berman (1994: 168–69).

17. Berman (1994: 170) claims that Berkeley distinguishes two sources of the Irish failure: (a) "a faulty notion and use of language" and (b) "fashion and appetite." But are they independent of each other? Can one rectify the language of money without rectifying fashion and appetite?

18. The major texts are *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* (1709) and *The Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained* (1733), the latter is a mature

defense of the former. The commentary literature is immense, but two useful contributions are Schwartz (1994) and Atherton (1990).

19. Luce and Jessop (1954vii: 183–84).

20. For an account of Locke's theory of signifying words and representative ideas see Land (1986) and Kretzmann (1968).

21. Margaret Atherton's discussion of Molyneux's Question is thorough, see Atherton (1990: 184–87). A fascinating discussion of the history of Molyneux's question, including its implications for Enlightenment politics, see Morgan (1977). William Molyneux's interest in blindness might very well have been excited by his wife's blindness. Three months after his marriage, Lucy Molyneux was "attacked by an illness" that blinded and pained her until her death. This "sickness unto blindness" was not unusual in the Ireland of the day, which was "a country of the blind." William Molyneux, when he watched his wife cross the room, would undoubtedly be reminded of the thousands of blind men and women in the alleys of Dublin and on the country roads. The blindness of the native Irish was attributed to malnutrition, smoke, and "fluxes." As Corkery (1967: 28) concludes: "Between the absence of windows and the ever present clouds of smoke, the people dwelt in darkness; it did not make for health, nor for quick convalescence when sickness broke out; quite commonly it lead to blindness." The native Irish intelligentsia was also prone to blindness, according to Corkery (1967: 29): "Blind poets, blind fiddlers, blind beggars of all kinds were to be seen tapping their way on every road in the country, from fair to fair, from house to house." Mathuna (1979: 30) notes that Gaelic literature "does abound in figures with impaired vision." He also points out that Gaelic word for "blind," *dall,* had an interesting secondary usage: "We now come to consider objects and aspects of the physical world which are called dall in the sense of "dark, obscure" and the like. The point here is that these objects and aspects of the physical world reverse the preceding process, as they characteristically frustrate the normal person's vision. They are cases of objective blindness or obscurity."

22. A classical article identifying the dominance of the visual model as the result of a male bias in philosophy see Fox-Keller and Grontkowsky (1983). Another classic text which links vision and hysteria is Irigary (1985).

23. For Denis Diderot's account of Saunderson's death bed discussion with a Reverend committed to converting him to a belief in God see Croker (1966). Diderot was imprisoned for this piece of writing on the blind mathematician. It should not be surprising to note that blindness (like madness) was an extraordinary sensitive subject for an age of "Enlightenment" (and "Reason") and the source of a multitude of metaphors.

24. Cataract operations were beginning to be performed in the early eighteenth century and they provided perfect models for Molyneux Man. Cheselden's surgical experiments on cataracts were widely discussed and one of his most celebrated cases was mentioned by Berkeley in his *The Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained* (1733). Needless to say, the older method of the "miraculous cure" found in the New Testament is a rhetorical subtext of Berkeley's examination of vision.

25. Much of Cheselden's article is reprinted in Morgan (1972: 19–21).

26. Quoted in Morgan (1972: 20).

27. Quoted in Morgan (1972: 20).

28. Cheyne (1991).

29. Roy Porter's discussion of spleen, hypochondria and hysteria is in Porter (1987: 84). A good selection of material from eighteenth-century medical texts can be found in Hunter and Macalpine (1963: 282–378).

30. A classic review of hysteria is Veith (1965).

31. Foucault (1965: 136–58), is still a useful discussion of the changes in the conceptual paradigm concerning hysteria in the "Age of Reason."

32. Quoted in Veith (1965: 142).

33. Foucault (1965: 150).

34. Jonathan Swift, "A Character, Panegyric, and Description of the Legion Club," in Swift (1966iii).

35. Swift (1966iii: 835–36).

36. The first chapter of Malcolm (1989) is an excellent introduction to Swift's theory, art, practice, and experience of madness. Swift had decided to devote his legacy to "to build a house for fools and mad" in 1731. By 1735, he was deeply involved in the project.

37. There is very little written about Berkeley tarantism adventures. Luce's and Jessop's useful introduction to "Berkeley's Journals of Travels in Italy," which have a remarkable history of their own, can be found in Luce and Jessop (1953vii: 231–41). A charming, but literal commentary on Berkeley's *Journals* can be found in Brayton (1946). Brykman (1971), includes a French translation of some of the *Journals* as well as comments on the phenomenon of tarantism and the biographical and historic context of Berkeley's observations. Dr. Freind, the author of the *History of Physic*, and a notorious Tory physician who became the court physician of George II is a remarkable eighteenth-century figure who has not received much attention in the twentieth. There is a short, but detailed biographical account of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

38. Di Martino (1966: 50) is quoted in Oughourlian (1991: 133).

39. Di Martino (1966: 65) quoted in Oughourlian (1991: 134).

40. Luce and Jessop (1954vii: 274, 286).

41. Luce and Jessop (1954vii: 277).

42. Luce and Jessop (1954vii: 288–89).

43. Luce and Jessop (1954vii: 288–89).

44. Oughourlian (1991:135).

45. A psychoanalytic interpretation of Berkeley's life and his theory of money (which gives prominance to Ferenczi's coprophiliac ontogenesis of the interest in money) is to be found in Wisdom (1953: 163–65). To get a flavor of Wisdom's interpretational method consider his reading of the Querist's National Bank proposal on p. 164: "The Central Bank was the great bowel capable of defecating all the money that was needed; there was a new institution with great power to produce great quantities of good faeces"!

Chapter 5

The Querist's Hope And Failure

SECTION 1
PASSIVE OBEDIENCE, THEODICY, AND THE EXCISE CRISIS

There are certain disorders in the parts which
marvelously enhance the beauty of the whole,
just as certain dissonances, when properly
used, render harmony more beautiful.
G. W. Leibniz, *Theodicy* (1710)

The Querist is an ingenious text with a conception of money that was to prove prescient when viewed from the monetary reality of the twenty-first century. But Berkeley did not write this text as an abstract analysis of economic categories, whatever his visionary pretensions. He, his intellectual circle, and his Church were confronting an emergency and his proposals were seriously put before the Dublin (and London) political Establishment as a response to a concrete problematic. Berkeley clearly had a hope that his plan for a National Bank and Mint would be given a chance to prove their power in practice. Although that hope was denied by the political reality of Irealand and Britain in the 1730s, as we shall see in the next section, what was the basis of his hope?

In this section we shall examine the two sources of the Querist's hope: the first was ethical and theoretical and the second was political and conjunctural.

The Ethical Dimensions of the Querist's Hope: Passive Obedience

One of the most important sources of the Querist's hope was the non-assertive quality of his plan. For his challenge to the mercantilist theory and practice of the day avoided Dean Swift's confrontational demand for independence from the British Parliament that nearly led to Swift's imprisonment during the Wood's Half-pence Affair. The scheme of accumulation Berkeley outlined for the Irish economy in *The Querist* violated no mercantilist law, code, or ordinance, while it simultaneously demonstrated that money—the very mechanism responsible for the evils of the mercantilist system—could be dialectically transformed into a good, "if we enlarge our view." The Querist confronted no one but himself and his fellow Anglo-Irish. He asked:

> I. 135. Whether, nevertheless, it be a crime to inquire how far we may do without foreign trade, and what would follow on such a supposition?

He called on his countrymen for a little introspection and care as to whom they vented their spleen at:

> I. 143. Whether it be not vain to think of persuading other people to see their interest, while we continue blind to our own?

Pointedly, he concluded *The Querist* with this query:

> III. 324. Whose fault is it if poor Ireland still continues poor?

Berkeley called for peace with and resignation to the British Power. He recognized that any solution requiring British imperial cooperation, given past history, would be doomed, but so would be any solution violating British law. Berkeley implicitly accepted Swift's characterization of the relation between Ireland and Britain as one of subjugation by an "absolute power." But he hinted that the Church he and Swift served had pioneered a doctrine tailored to such a circumstance: passive obedience or non-resistance to the "supreme power" even if this power acted unjustly or unwisely. Indeed, *The Querist's* form is a surpreme exercise in rhetorical passive obedience (since it asserts

nothing) and its content is the epitome of economic passive obedience (since it retreated from the world market).

Passive Obedience is a doctrine that is by no means dead in the Anglican Church. Both the white Anglican Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton and the black Anglican Bishop Demond Tutu of South Africa employed it recently to justify nonviolent resistance to apartheid.[1] In order to better understand Berkeley's theory of money, it is worth considering the vicissitudes of this doctrine from the days of the Restoration to the Robinocracy.[2]

The doctrine originated as part of the Church of England's contribution to the formation of an "ideology of law and order" in the Restoration. Its axioms included the Monarch's divine right to rule and the duty to submit to all forms of patriarchy, whether the patriarchs be judges, employers, the gentry, one's parents, or the Anglican clergy. But the Church's manual of devotion, *The Whole Duty of Man*, distinguished two kinds of obedience, active and passive:

> An obedience we must pay either Active or Passive: the active in the case of all lawful commands. . . . But when (the ruler) enjoins anything contrary to what God hath commanded, we are not to give him active obedience; we say, nay, we must refuse thus to act. . . . We are in that case to obey God rather than Man. But even this is a season for Passive Obedience; we must patiently suffer what the ruler inflicts on us for such a refusal, and not to secure ourselves or rise us against him.[3]

The doctrine does not address the patriarch, but the subject—the accused, the employee, the poor, the child and the laity—providing a rebuttal to anyone turning to a religion as an excuse for revolt (as the Puritans and sectaries had done during the Civil War). It states that whatever the dictates of conscience, active opposition to patriarchal rule is *a priori* barred.

With the sedimentation of the Settlement, both the ideology of order and the doctrine of Passive Obedience doctrine underwent a remarkable development. The new targets of the doctrine increasingly became the very people who had previously framed it: the Anglican clergy and the Tory bigwigs. The early eighteenth century in England and Ireland was one of those rare periods in history when preaching the absolute correctness of authority and the evil of resistance to state officials could

land one in trouble with these very same state officials. Why did this ironic twist occur? The doctrine's early targets were either extinct (e.g., the proletarian movements of the civil war that had illuminated their claims in divine light and acted on them in armed insurrections) or were now the Supreme Power themselves (i.e., the Whigs), while the newer movements of mass subversion operated outside a circle that could be affected by the doctrine's discourse.[4] By the early eighteenth century the Passive Obedience doctrine was largely self-reflexive and, in the mouth of a Church of England divine of the time, non-resistance had lost its old message and, rather than justifying the repression of one's rebellious lessers, it became a self-inflicted warning not to engage in Jacobite activities. But (as any policeman knows) these who have to be warned not to commit a crime are exactly those who are first to be suspected. Thus a preacher who insisted on sermonizing about passive obedience to authority was under surveillance, especially if he tried to define too precisely the "supreme power" to be obeyed.

Still in 1712, two years after the Sacheverell riots brought the Tories back to power, Berkeley gave a public lecture at Trinity College in Dublin defending the Passive Obedience doctrine.[5] His defense was novel, as it did not rely on biblical precedents and citations and it eschewed Sacheverell's rhetorical pyrotechnics. It operated on an extremely abstract level, although Berkeley hoped his results would lead to political and clerical preferment from the Tory ministry in power in London. Consequently, it was carefully constructed. And less consciously, of course, it was to lay the ethical basis for the Querist's suggestions two decades later.

His argument begins ironically with the claim that "self-love" is the bedrock of political and moral thought, but it quickly inverts this Hobbesian axiom. For what is the true self to be loved: the transient or the eternal one? He queries: "who sees not that every reasonable man ought to so frame his actions as that they may most effectually contribute to promote his eternal interest?"[6] God, "the great legislator of the world," determines the laws that would guarantee "the well-being of the sum of mankind, taking in all nations and ages, from the beginning to the end of the world." God's only interest is the interest of the eternal self. We can know God's intended rules and laws for us when, with "right reason," we discern that these rules and laws have "a necessary connection with the Universal well-being."[7] We can also see that the natural tendency of "wills of different persons to contradict and

thwart each other" inevitably leads to "one great heap of Misery and confusion" . . . a war of all against all. "Loyalty, or submission to the supreme authority, hath, if universally practiced in conjunction with all the other virtues, a necessary connexion with the well-being of the whole of mankind."[8] Rebellion is not just unwise, it is a *sin.* However, because non-resistance is a "negative precept of morality" it is not open to prudence, occasion or capacity. It must always be obeyed, since we always can not resist the supreme power as we always can not steal; although we might not be able to literally honor our father and mother, if we are orphans from birth.

With this deduction, Berkeley rejected the conceptual universe of Lockean contract theory, for he believed that a consistent Lockean (however well meaning) neglects the basic distinction between rules and actions at his/her peril. Actions must follow (or break) rules in order to be judged. We cannot judge an action on the basis of its "producing much good and no harm to mankind," simply because it is impossible for an agent to have such knowledge. Moreover, neglecting the distinction between rules and acts leaves the correctness of moral and political action to be continually decided anew on the basis of particular circumstances and interests. Such a situationist or consequentialist ethic is unacceptable, since it invites the very "anarchy" God legislates against for human well-being.

It is true that following the God-given laws of nature, like non-resistance to the supreme power, can lead even good persons into misfortune, but that is no refutation of the doctrine, since the knowledge of rules and laws cannot arise from action and its finitely observable consequences. If we are to judge by the "inflexible laws of nature and morality in the world, we must, if I may say so, go out of it, and imagine ourselves to be distant spectators of all that is transacted and contained in it." Through this "distancing" from action and becoming "dead to the world," Berkeley gives an epistemological dimension to the quietistic element of Christian theology and morality. One must become passive not only to be "filled with all the fullness of God," as St. Paul wrote, but *to know* what the divinely-determined rules of action are, including who or what is the supreme power in society.[9]

Locke, and his Whig descendants, made the state a servant which was dismissable at will, if it did not act in accordance with the interests of the subjects. But Berkeley responded, this is to reject the *divine*

character of the state—the supreme power—that is to humans what God is to the universe.

At this stage in the argument, the police informers in Berkeley's audience must have pricked up their ears. Was Berkeley preaching the "divine right" doctrine of Filmer, the pre-Settlement Tories, and the contemporary Jacobites? No. He had, along with many other Tories like Swift, separated the theory of "divine right monarchy" from the doctrine of passive obedience. In making this separation, Berkeley wrapped himself up in Locke's mantle and accepted the Lockean analogy of morality with mathematics:

> In morality the eternal rules of action have the same immutable universal truth with propositions in geometry. Neither of them depends on circumstances or accidents, being at all times and in all places, without limitation or exception, true. "Thou shalt not resist the supreme civil power" is no less constant and unalterable a rule, for modeling the behaviour of a subject toward the government, than "multiply the height by half the base" is for measuring a triangle.[10]

In order to apply such a mathematical principle one must determine with his/her senses whether, say, a particular field is triangular before calculating its area in the above manner. Whatever errors we make in such a perception, e.g., the field is actually trapezoidal, can not invalidate the mathematical principle. Similarly, we can have legitimate controversies over the proper seat of supreme power and "in such cases subjects can not be denied the liberty of judging for themselves." There is no *a priori* meta-rule for choosing the particular object of the non-resistance rule; but once it is chosen, the rule is absolute and it is our moral duty to follow it whatever the consequences.

Berkeley, of course, knew the treacherous ground he treaded and was very politic in his choice of the level of generality in *Passive Obedience* as he acknowledged in its first sentence:

> It is not my design to inquire into the particular nature of the government and constitution of these kingdoms; much less to pretend to determine concerning the merits of the different parties now reigning in the state.[11]

He excused himself from the fray of party politics because of the youth

of his audience, for it would have been "improper" to embroil undergraduates in the party-political struggles of the day. This excuse was disingenuous, however, since any discourse on passive obedience which had a pronounced anti-Lockean tone in 1712 could hardly be called nonpolitical, indeed, it could hardly be called nonpartisan either. Berkeley's lecture is a plainly pro-Tory, anti-Whig text. Yet it was more than a document of the moment, for beside being Berkeley's first public exposition of his political thought, it constituted an important development of the concept of passive obedience.

Berkeley specifically chose Locke to be his explicit adversary in *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), two years later, he trenchantly rejected Locke's contractualism as a possible basis for public order in *Passive Obedience*. The youthful Berkeley boldly presented himself as *the* Anti-Locke from epistemology to politics before the world at large and to the Tory ministry in London in particular. Berkeley claimed that just as Lockean ideas lost their primacy in the foundation of knowledge, so too the Lockean contractual defense of property cannot be the ontological basis of the state. The supreme civil power has the right, indeed, to effect alterations in property relations without the threat of a Locke-condoned revolution. The supreme power expects obedience not because of the credit it has accumulated in protecting its subjects' properties, but because its subjects' salvation depends on this obedience.

This statism was not a novice intellectual's logical innovation; it was based on a clear historical precedent. The English state (Whig or Tory), for all its pieties in the defense of property, was more stalinistic than Stalin in its actual dealings with property ownership. It imperiously gave or took away continents and, closer to home, its enclosures and expropriations of Catholic and Jacobite gentry's lands totally transformed the property owning class both in England and Ireland between the 1640s and Berkeley's day. This "modern" reality was a major material basis of the anti-contractual theories of the state; for they were not simply nostalgic ideologies dreaming of Saxon Kings or Hebrew patriarchs.

Property in general was no more sacred to Locke's cronies than to his enemies. This was especially true for the Anglo-Irish land owners, either clerical or lay. Most could trace their own property titles to specific state actions and not to some vague prehistoric state of nature or original contract. Berkeley, as a representative of a church living off

relatively new, state-granted land titles and depending upon the official repression of rival religions (both Catholic and Dissenting), hardly had the luxury to lodge the supreme power in the seats of absentee landlords or of a drunken gentry who, in an economic pinch, might even decide not to pay their tithes, as they eventually did in 1734.

Berkeley's early statism had an important consequence for his later conceptual development. In *The Querist*, e.g., he blithely advocated economic policies that would have radically affected individual property rights in Ireland. Berkeley's argument in *Passive Obedience* could justify this, because it secured the citizen to the state not by contract but by faith, for the object of obedience was not the civil magistrate, but our "right reason, which is the voice of the Author of Nature."

Continuing the comparison of *Passive Obedience* with the 1710 *Treatise*, we should note that the former rejected a social universe of individually accounted atomized behaviours for a realm of divinely crafted rational orders just as the latter refused Locke's atomistic totalitarianism of ideas for a world of unimaginable spirits creating and ruling over ideas. A coherent society, the youthful Berkeley sermonized, could not develop out of utilitarian decision theory any more than a general idea of humanity can be abstracted from the images of Tom, Jane, and Harry. Berkeley eventually deployed these insights in his work in the 1730s, but until then, they remained intriguing *apercus* of a brief but rich work that must have gratified some of Berkeley's Tory mentors who saw it as a sign that there was still intellectual breath in a doctrine treated by many as a dead dog.[12] *Passive Obedience* certainly looked more to the future than to the past. We find in it a rehearsal of the important distinction between rule- and act-utilitarianism almost a century before the advent of utilitarianism itself as well as a sketch of a social epistemology that would become the basis of Berkeley's hope a quarter century later in *The Querist*.

For Berkeley, "Passivity" and "Obedience" were not only watchwords of morality, they are also essential to social knowledge. To know society is not to know its transitory details, but its laws and rules. These laws, no more than nature's, are created to fit an occasion, as God is no casual projector. Social knowledge, for Berkeley, therefore involves a programmatic passivity and a sort of Husserlian *epoché*—to quiet the immediate "empirical" self, which is always poised for action or reaction. We must step "out of this world" and overcome the temptations of action to discover the basic rules of society. The test of such

knowledge is not more effective intervention and increased power, but the realization of acts of true obedience. Knowledge is necessary since one can not obey an incoherent rule any more than one can reasonably be asked to continue a random series of digits . . . nothing or everything is the "answer," consequently there is no "next digit." Long before Wittgenstein and Beckett, Berkeley pointed out that obedience is no simple thing.[13]

He took as his own the Circeronian tag: *Homo ortus est ad mundum contemplandum, et imitandum.* This tenet enabled him to escape Gulliver's *cul-de-sac.* For Gulliver, living in the Yahoo reality with the rational Houyhnhnmian ideal constantly before his mind's eye, is antithetical to Berkeley's moral being. Gulliver's great longing and disgust led to a frozen horror, while Berkeley's path, which begins in passivity and obedience, surprisingly ends in the possibility of action. Berkeley agreed with Swift that the Yahoos (the Walpoles, Walters and Georges) were sickening specimens, but if the supreme power is in their seats, they are divinely endowed and must not be resisted. Yet such a conclusion made action possible, for it operated with an actual rule instead of a contradiction. To waste one's self in opposition and vain complaint (as Swift knowingly appeared to do) was pointless. One can always do one's duty even in the worst circumstances with the clear consciousness that the Universal well-being is being brought forward, if one knows the rule.

In his 1712 sermon, however, Berkeley introduced a new development in the Passive Obedience doctrine while still identifying the State with God. By claiming that there is no self-evident rule for determining the seat of supreme civil power, Berkeley introduced an existential "twist" to the problem of obedience. One must "judge for one's self" what constitutes the supreme power and take the mortal risk of the judgment. For one is duty-bound to passively obey that power, whatever the consequences. In his role as educator, Berkeley was anxious to inculcate in Anglo-Irish youth a taste for a more abstract form of authority, not marked by external trappings or traditional signs. Practically (and cynically, of course), most of his audience's Tory elders learned that William III was the seat of supreme power, though James II had the undoubted divine right to rule. Yet Berkeley aimed to deepen this discovery by showing that God's suggestions in history are not brute orders. Just as in the *Treatise* (and later in *De Motu*) he gave a new and more subtle meaning to the notion of "law of nature" in

mechanical philosophy, here he asks his undergraduate audience to rise up to a greater historical sensitivity, for the Restoration's certainties were dead.

Monetary Theodicy

Berkeley's economic strategy eschewed any direct confrontation with the Walpolean authorities. Its intent was to have Ireland go its own monadic way. In response to Petty's dream of sinking Ireland into the sea, Berkeley posed his wall of brass.[14]

> I. 140. Whether, if there was a wall of brass a thousand cubits high round this kingdom, our natives might not nevertheless live cleanly and comfortably, till the lands and reap the fruits of it?
>
> I. 141. What should hinder us from exerting ourselves, using our hands and brains, doing something or other, man, woman, and child, like the other inhabitants of God's earth?
>
> I. 142. Be the regaining our trade well or ill advised in our neighbors, with respect to their own interest, yet whether it be not plainly ours to accommodate ourselves to it?

But along with the wall of brass, the Querist proposed a currency of paper. What was the origin of his confidence in such a measure? There was another source of the Querist's hope for resolving the Anglo-Irish dilemma in Berkeley's ethics. His plan for a national bank and for a new form of money was a precise, if ironic, application of his theodicic method, since it uses an object of evil, money, against evil itself. The theodicic method in general claims that apparent evil is an actual or potential good, *if one takes God's perspective*. Berkeley was a practitioner of this method from the beginning of his philosophical career. In his *Treatise* (1710), the youthful Berkeley wrote:

> As for the mixture of pain and uneasiness which is in the world, pursuant to the general laws of nature, and the actions of finite imperfect spirits: this, in the state we are in at present, is indispensably necessary to our well-being. But our prospects are too narrow: we take, for instance, the idea of some one particular pain into our

> thoughts, and account it evil; whereas if we enlarge our views so as to comprehend the various ends, connections, and dependencies of things, on what occasions and in what proportions we are affected with pain and pleasures the nature of human freedom and the design with which we are put into the world; we shall be forced to acknowledge that those particular things, which considered in themselves appear to be evil have the nature of good, when considered as linked with the whole system of beings.[15]

These words were not to remain for Berkeley, as they did for many of his readers, mere pious sentiments. They revealed his "habit of mind" in dealing with ethical, political and even medical problems.

This habit was especially strong with regard to money, for Berkeley—even in his most jeremiadic moods (e.g., *Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*)—was never against money *per se*. As a careful reader of Scripture, he knew that most Christians get the crucial Pauline passage about money (Tim. 6:7.10) wrong by equating "money" with "the root of all evil." Paul wrote:

> 7. For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we carry nothing out of it.
> 8. And having food and rainment, let us there with be content.
> 9. But they that will be rich, fall into temptations and a snare and into many foolish and harmful lusts, which drove men in distractions and perdition.
> 10. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Paul did not condemn money *per se*; he condemned the agitated universe surrounding the *love* of money, contrasting the frenzied lust for accumulation of exchange-values with contentment in use-values: "food and rainment." What a perfect, theologically sound theodicic solution, then, to the economic problems of Ireland (and of his Church) which were widely agreed upon to be caused by a lack of money or its corrupting use. Berkeley as the Querist found the answer in the very question itself, money.

Berkeley's commitment to the theodicic method is not only a clue to understanding his confidence in his own monetary scheme, it is also an

important example of a general transformation in the use of *social logical forms* occurring in Berkeley's time. "Social logical form" is a simple concept, but it does require a short explanation. The science of logic has identified an infinity of valid logical forms. This list has grown from the original Aristotelian syllogistic forms to the infinite set provided by modern mathematical logic. There is, however, no fixed set of forms given ahistorically that can be exhausted by the science of logic. For the science of logic is not an *a priori* discipline, it is rooted in the concrete argumentative behavior in societies, just as the science of linguistics must confront the evidence of speech and orthography. Surely each valid logical form is as equally valid as any other, just as every grammatical sentence is as grammatical as every other. However, in any period and social group there are statistical variations in the forms of arguments preferred. Putting it crudely, each social group has its favorite logical forms that characterize a particular argumentative practice, just as it has its favorite idioms, intonations, and words. The "social logical form" of a social group in a specific period is simply its most used and/or most distinctive argument form(s).

Berkeley's work is an important illustration of a general transformation of social logical form that occurred between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. To understand this change let us consider its historical background. Seventeenth-century English political discourse was dominated by Puritans, absolute monarchists and apocalyptic ranters with theological projects of human perfectibility which reified sin, evil, and Satan. Its literature both "high"—*Paradise Lost*—and "low"—*Pilgrim's Progress*—was a series of harrowing dialogues with the Devil, while its economics was troubled by the problematic discovery that the riotous, impulsive, "Many-headed beast," the proletariat, was the true source of wealth.

All political discourse is rife with contradictions and oppositions, but seventeenth-century England sharpened them to an extraordinary intensity. Appropriately, its prime social logical form was the disjunctive syllogism:

$$\begin{array}{c}\text{Either P or Q}\\ \underline{\text{not-Q}}\\ \text{P}\end{array}$$

Such was the logic of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, e.g.,

Either absolute sovereignty or anarchy.
Anarchy is intolerable.
Absolute sovereignty must be accepted.

Even the more "liberal" Locke subscribed to this social logical form as well. His *Treatises on Civil Government* were, among other things, the prime texts justifying the extension of capital crimes throughout the whole criminal code (the result being what Linebaugh has dubbed a "thanatocracy"). According to Locke's disjunctive logic, God gave the world "to the use of the Industrious and rational (and labour was to be his title to it); not to the fancy and covetousness of the quarrelsome or contentious."[16] The industrious and contentious were mutually exclusive species. The industrious and rational create and preserve property while the quarrelsome and contentious are irrational and produce criminals who destroy property. The State, by executing criminals, preserves property by both protecting its creators and punishing its destroyers. The Tyburn gallows was simply a minor premise in the argument.

The year 1710, however, saw the fall of the post-Settlement Whig regime. It was also the publication date of the sixty-six-year-old Leibniz's only publicly available work, *Theodicy,* and the twenty-five-year-old Berkeley's *Treatise.* Both these works featured a theodicic solution to the "problem of evil." Instead of battling with and annihilating the evil disjunct, Leibniz and Berkeley called for an analysis of the use of evil in the divine plan. Any attempt to extirpate evil would violate a divine structure, for evil—Berkeley and Leibniz agreed—is not a Manichean substance or an agent one could combat. Evil has a relative existence within a Divine Order which must be understood, otherwise in attempting to destroy the evil, one would be destroying the Order. The structural laws of nature and society require evil in the same way that English phonology requires consonants—as essential contrasts. All in all, the theodicic method commands us to look to the functionality of evil and accept its inevitability.

From a twentieth-century perspective, theodicy at first appears as a jejune philosophy, but the logic of social engineering embedded in it is still with us in the endlessly proffered "new strategies" of inter-class negotiation, crime control and "enhancement of labor productivity."[17] The strategists urge employers and governors not to repress the workers or criminals, but to examine worker and criminal behavior to

see, in the apparent dysfunctionality of labor struggle and crime, functional vehicles of development. Its logic is that of the "BArbArA" categorical syllogism where evil is the vanishing middle term:

All P is E.
All E is Q.
All P is Q.

When seen from this perspective, theodicy ceases to appear as a fantastic philosophy for pollyannas. Practical theodicy requires a keen eye for irony and a rather cynical capacity to deploy the marginal, the subversive, and the unmentionable. Its exercise provides good therapy for intellectual tunnel vision. Whenever one is confronted with an evil person, place or practice, its commandment is E. M. Forster's in *Howard's End*: "only connect." Mandeville's *The Grumbling Hive of Knaves turned Honest, The Fable of the Bees or Public Vices Public Benefits* (which not accidentally were published in this period) and many other works showed that the logic of the vanishing middle can be applied to a wide variety of social contexts. In one of his most famous applications, Mandeville argued:

Healthy sexuality requires public stews.
Public stews imply stable marriages.
Healthy sexuality implies stable marriages

Dogmatic souls, who only remember conclusions, would be happy with the argument's conclusion and happily unable to reconstruct its premises.

More directly, Mandeville argued that the old dichotomy between Vice and Virtue can not be applied disjunctively especially in economic and monetary affairs. For certain "private vices" such as self-interest or even gluttony result in "public benefits," and indeed all public benefits are derived from private vices. He compounded this irony by showing that many private virtues, if practiced assiduously by the bulk of the population, would lead to the collapse of Trade and Employments. Imagine a society of frugal, honest, and public spirited citizens, and one conceives of a poor, weak country. For some of the most horrendous of private vices—greed and money-lust—if "dextrously managed" can lead to a strong, energetic economy which can defend itself and even do

good on a grand scale.[18]

Mandeville, through his paradoxes, taught practical theodicic logic to a new century of social planners frustrated with disjunctive forms that seemed to lead only to self-defeating social contradictions. For by insisting on disjunctive methods when the social situation shows that evil and good are interwoven, as their seventeenth-century predecessors did, the social fabric is bound to be torn asunder. And after a century of bitter civil war, the eighteenth-century English ruling class was interested in a less disjunctive form of discourse.[19]

A generation later, in *Alciphron* (1732), Berkeley was to severely criticize Mandeville (in the guise of "Lysicles"), but his criticism was for matters of attitude and detail. Berkeley and most of his commentators would certainly take exception to this claim. Mandeville, in his reply to Alciphron, *Letter to Dion*, however, argued that they are closer than Berkeley understands. Indeed, he humorously suggested an alliance between them: he would scold "vicious Clergymen" who might use *Alicphron* to screen their own malpractice, while Berkeley would criticize "vile Profligates" who used *Fable of the Bees* to justify their excesses.[20]

There is a deeper identity as well. All of Berkeley's projects (including *The Querist*) were animated by a Mandevillian social logical form without Mandeville's self-conscious paradoxical style. For example, his *Proposal for the Regular Supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations* (1725) was a direct response to the Massachusetts Puritans' and southern Planters' dichotomous social logic. They considered the native Americans and the African slaves as demonic, inhuman beings, impervious to the Christian message, who consequently could be rightfully annihilated and/or severely exploited. But as Berkeley pointed out, the logic of the planters (who were known for their "avarice and licentiousness, their coldness in the practice of religion") was self-defeating:

> It would be advantage to their affairs to have slaves who should obey in all things their masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as menpleasers, but in singleness of hearts as fearing God; that gospel liberty consists with temporal servitude; and that their slaves would only become better slaves by being Christians.

Similarly, a Christianized Indian would be more tractable, "civil" and

likely to give up his "wild and roving life" to the benefit of the very Puritan settlers who, until then, could only see a devil in every "red skin." Indeed, as mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the many "good things" and "glad tidings" Berkeley brought with him in his three year (1728–31) sojourn in America was a British state clarification on the compatibility of slavery with Christianity. In 1732 he wrote quite warmly of that time:

> There is an erroneous notion that being baptized is inconsistent with slavery. To undeceive them [the planters] in this particular, which had too much weight, it seemed a proper step if the opinion of his Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General could be procured. This opinion they charitably sent over, signed with their own hands, which was accordingly printed in Rhode Island, dispersed throughout the plantations, I heartily wish it may produce the intended effects.[21]

This is a typical example of Berkeley's theodicic method in action: "find the middle term" was its slogan.

His anti-thanatocratic (hence anti-Lockean) critique of capital punishment had an equivalent social logical form. He queried:

> I. 59. Whether some way might not be found for making criminals useful in public works, instead of sending them either to America of to the other world?
>
> I. 60. Whether we may not as well as other nations contrive employment for them? And whether servitude, chains, hard labor, for a term of years, would be more discouraging as well as more adequate punishment for felons than even death itself?

Berkeley is frequently charged with being an "unrealistic idealist," but he had a good eye for criminological consequences of a regimen of low wages and thanatocracy.[22] On the one side, "the disbelief of a future state hardenth rogues against the fear of death" and without such a belief the (Lockean) irrationality of crime breaks down. To such "hardened rogues," the state can hardly dangle Pascal's wager before them and say: "If you are not caught and punished in this life, then you surely (or even probably) will be in the hereafter." On the other side,

juries when faced with capital sentences for patently petty crimes tend to acquit criminals arbitrarily:

> II. 225. Whether felons are not often spared, and therefore encouraged, by the compassion of those who should prosecute them?

To resolve the contradictory result of a disjunctive system of justice which dichotomizes the criminal and the laborer, he suggests a system of state slavery where criminals "could repair the damage they have done the public by hard labour." Criminals would not be nihilated, but in an anti-Lockean twist, they too would become productive of Property. Moreover, juries would have an incentive to convict.

> II. 226. Whether many that would not take away the life of a thief may not—nevertheless be willing to bring him to a more adequate punishment?

Berkeley not only deployed an anti-Lockean logical form in criminology. He argued that in general, if criminals, the poor, the heathens and the native Irish are all parts of God's plan for the universe, then one must understand their use and links "with the whole system of beings." To negate them would be to mistake God's plan.

But God made gold and silver too, and they were the vexing subject of the Anglo-Irish dilemma: English policies systematically drained gold and silver from Ireland and yet it appeared impossible for Ireland to flourish without specie. Could there be a series of mediating links showing their connection with a better plan?

Berkeley's God was no Newtonian *Pancrator*. He suggests and hints, rather than commanding his creatures. God speaks to us through the rich grammar implicit in the language of sensation, *if we wish to hear*, and Berkeley's principal adage is, "A word to the wise is sufficient." But who is wise? Berkeley, in *The Querist*, plays the role of God to his Anglo-Irish brethren, who are full of mercantilist and libertine prejudices, to the lazy minds of absentee owners, and to colonialists' dependency/inferiority complexes. He could not boss them into independent thought and novel actions, but he could put before them the question—"what is to be done?"—through the power of suggestion in his erotetic style. He makes no secret of his rhetorical method:

> I. 40. Whether a single hint is sufficient to overcome a prejudice? And whether even obvious truths will not sometimes bear repeating?

In conclusion, beside his banking and currency scheme's adherence to the doctrine of Passive Obedience, the other major ethical spring of the Querist's hope was his theodicic method which always asks the sufferer to attend to the source of his/her suffering, for in it s/he is bound to find the key to her/his salvation by noting the links of the evil with a wider plan for Good. Berkeley could have had hope for his plan because it penetrated to the heart of the mercantilist system—the money form—and, with a master stroke, operated a revolution within it. Money, the prized end of the mercantilist universe, is inverted by Berkeley into a devalued, but necessary means.

The Political Dimension of His Hope

The other dimension of the Querist's Hope arose from the political conjuncture of the mid 1730s. For the regime of Prime Minister Robert Walpole (the man who ultimately decided to block the funds for Berkeley's college in the Bermudas) had entered into a crisis at about the time Berkeley began to write Part I of *The Querist* in 1734–35 and there was a genuine possibility, for the first time in more than two decades, that a government formed by the opposition to Walpole would take power. Berkeley was very close personally, ideologically, and politically with the leaders of this opposition. If they controlled the British Parliament, Berkeley had good reason to believe they would give his plan a sympathetic ear, unlike Walpole's Parliament which would have dismissed the Querist's plan without a thought.

The Misfortunes of the Ideology of Order

Berkeley's ties to the opposition to Walpole and the Whig Ascendency were formed at the start of his political-ecclesiatical career. He had begun as a conventional (though clever) Church Tory, but what determined his future was his singularly ill-timed identification with the brief Harley–St. John Tory regime in what were evidently its last days in 1713. Berkeley arrived in London just before the disasterous collapse of the Tory ministry and he had the misfortune of being fulsomely welcomed and sponsored by many Tory "bigwigs" who saw in him a

fresh and charming (though at times silly) ecclesiastical aspirant, capable of matching wits with Locke's Whig descendants and of adding new intellectual glamour to Filmer's archaic sounding "ideology of order."[23] But within a year of his London *debut*, Berkeley's sponsors like Henry St. John were fleeing into exile or were being slaughtered fighting for a lost Jacobite cause. Berkeley himself was for some time under an official cloud and considered by many a crypto-Jacobite for much of his life because of these early Tory connections. Though the collapse of the Tory regime was a major loss for Berkeley's ecclesiastical career, it was a stimulus for his intellectual development. Traditional Tory ideology could not have advanced his economic thought, for it was not hostile to mercantilism as long as it was applied to its *proper* sphere: trade and external affairs.[24] But it did keep Berkeley conceptually paralyzed in social and economic matters for two decades. Whether in or out of Ireland, he led an unstable, dissatisfied life, filled with utopian plans for escape (the Bermuda affair) to twists of fate (the surprise inheritance from Swift's "Vanessa"), burdened with the realization that being *both* a Tory *and* Anglo-Irish was a prescription for political impotence in the post-1715 world.

His critique of mercantilism matured in a complex and somewhat paradoxical political context. Like Swift, Berkeley was a High-Church Tory and he shared the ironic experience of other spokesmen for the "party of order" like Dr. Sacheverell, Henry St. John (later Lord Bolingbroke), and Alexander Pope in post-Settlement England. "Law and Order" thinkers are normally pictured as the darlings of the Establishment. We think of them as the Burkes, Spensers, Oakshootts, Fukiyamas, and Nozicks, who celebrate the Sundays of their realms with lectures and sermons assuring all that "Whatever IS, is RIGHT" and are in return pampered and pensioned to the end of their days. But in the first half of England's eighteenth century the life of God, King, and Country thinkers was full of uncertainty. For neither God, King, nor Country seemed to be interested in their services. Thus a pallor of anxiety and gallows humor hangs over the works of Berkeley's Tory friends from *Gulliver's Travels* to *The Beggar's Opera* to *The Dunciad*.

Indeed, the very word "Tory" fell out of fashion after 1715. Even (perhaps especially) renowned Tories like Bolingbroke eschewed the old dichotomy of Tory and Whig and replaced it with another even

older one, "Court and Country." Thus he wrote after returning from his French exile in 1725:

> The proper and real distinction of the two parties (Tory and Whig) expired at this era (of the Revolution), and . . . although their ghosts have continued to haunt and divide us so many years afterwards, yet there neither is, nor can be any divisions of parties at this time, reconcilable with common sense, and common honesty, among those who are come on the stage under the present constitution, except those of churchmen and dissenters, those of Court and country.[25]

According to the standard self-definitions, to be a "Tory" was to support a hierarchical, patriarchic "order" (in contrast to the Whig's who presumably favor "rule by consent") while "country" refers to "landed interest" (in contrast to "court" which refers to the "moneyed interest.") But these definitions were woefully imprecise. For the Whigs were by no means against "order" and the "country" faction was certainly interested in money.[26]

Indeed, Whigs and Tories, country and court politicians were, with the exception of the extreme Jacobites, remarkably unified.[27] They were men of property whose paramount interest was the defense of its accumulation. They were mercantilists who identified the power of the state with successful trade and were willing to be taxed to support a powerful Navy guaranteeing such trade. Prime Minister Walpole had many a disagreement with Dean Swift, but he would have agreed, point for point, with the "true Causes of any Countries flourishing and growing rich" Swift conventionally described in his numerous pamphlets on economic matters. Berkeley, Swift, Gay, and Pope should have eagerly joined the choir of the inherent order in things and the powers that be. Why then did they take up such an energetic and, at times, apocalyptic-sounding opposition to the Whig *robinocracy*?

For an answer we must turn to the Walpolean opposition's literature which is pervaded by one lament: the corruption of Walpole's Whig government and the danger it posed for the health of the state.[28] "Corruption" is a bedraggled subject of sermons past and present, but Berkeley and his friends believed that corruption of the state was in their time qualitatively deeper. Berkeley's 1721 *Essay Toward Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* is a jeremiad that holds up to scorn "Our Gaming our Operas, our Masquerades," but it gazes beyond them

to discern a fundamental rot. Many Berkeleyan passages in the *Essay* were later to be sharpened up and barbed in the *Dunciad's* apocalypse, Gulliver's misanthropy, and Pecham's jokes, yet their point became standard in the 1720s and 1730s. As Berkeley wrote in the conclusion of his 1721 *Essay*:

> One may nevertheless venture to affirm that the present hath brought forth villainies new, and portentous, not to be paralleled in our own or any other history. We have been long preparing for some great catastrophe. Vice and Villainy have by degrees grown reputable among us; our infidels have passed for fine gentlemen, and our venal traitors for Men of sense, who know the world . . . in short, other nations have been wicked, but we are the first who have been wicked on principle.[29]

In Marxian terms, this "principle" was the domination of the money form over the state form or, in Simmelian terms, the reduction of personal values into money equivalents. But for Berkeley in 1721 it signified the rapid extinction of many ancient moral inhibitions and political distinctions vital to the health of the state. The litany of corruption became almost routine in the writings of Walpole's opposition. Thus, according to it, gambling had become a science, merging, in the stock exchange, with investment and enterprise.[30] Further, with the oncoming public ownership of the national debt, the once divine right state was becoming commodity to be bought and sold.[31] Finally, what had once been considered gangsterism had become, in Walpole's hands, a calculus of rule and accumulation.[32]

The object of Berkeley's, Swift's, Gay's, Bolingbroke's, and Pope's despair was the very logic of mercantilism *introjected within* the state. Once the world market began to regulate the relations between sovereign states, the domination of political authority by economic exchange subverted the sovereignty of the nation. Tory state-clergy-men, pension-hunting poets and out-of-power politicians decried the paraphernalia of modern capitalist political behavior produced by this subversion. Walpole merely perfected them.

This explains why standard late-twentieth century scholarly opinion of Walpole is at odds with Pope's and Gay's and why these poets are often considered excessively tendentious. Walpole was simply consistent with the logic of capitalist empire. If bribery, slave-trading,

piracy and fraud were "patriotic" mercantilist tactics in India, West Africa and the Caribbean, why should they not be applied in London to preserve the peace and secure the Hanoverian succession?

This, however, was not Berkeley's query. On the contrary, all his writings down to *The Querist* lament the "degenerate" consequences of introjected mercantilism. Money had its proper place, Berkeley and his colleagues agreed, but if it totalized social space, ruin must follow. Unfortunately, especially for a prophet of doom, catastrophe did not strike. God's finger seemed to be pointing elsewhere.[33] The Lord was perversely bent on providing material, temporal rewards to the realm that, according to Pope, listened to Vice's "black trumpet proclaim/Not to be corrupted is the Shame" and applauded.[34] As Vilar, the main scholar of gold of our century, described it, the British empire's economic situation in the 1720s and 1730s was such that the whole world seemed poised to inject gold and silver into English veins: "In America, the Caribbean, the South Seas and the Mediterranean, the way was prepared for gold and silver, especially gold to flow into England."[35] Mercantilist common sense seemed to receive a divine blessing in the form of newly discovered gold mines in Portuguese Brazil, African slaves to mine them, the British ships that brought them there and protected the flow of gold to Lisbon, and the invariably favorable balance of trade England had with Portugal, paid in Brazilian gold.

In the thirty-three years of Sir Isaac Newton's reign at the Mint (1694–1727) about £14 million of gold coin was minted, equal to the coin minted in the 136 year period between 1558–1694.[36] With the establishment of a long-term equilibrium (however fortuitous its origins) in the quadrilateral trade between Africa, Brazil, Portugal and England, the British Monetary system could survive the South Sea Scandal and innumerable smaller ones because the *gold was there*. Vilar sums up the reason for the power mercantilist logic exercised:

> The influx of gold explains why, once the wars were over, the various forms of paper Money could be fairly easily reabsorbed and why the currency was stabilized. . . . The monetary crisis was therefore brought to an end. Despite the small quantities involved, rapid circulation of silver coin met the needs of everyday use, while the minting of gold met the needs of international trade until the next major change in the world ratio of gold and silver took place in

> 1774, England was troubled neither by the export of gold coin nor by the deterioration of current coin. . . . From 1720–1721 until the major world conflicts were resumed in 1792–1798, England experienced a monetary stability characterized by the import and minting of gold.[37]

"Country" thinkers decried the "corruption" of the robinocracy, but they could not condemn the wealth that made it possible. They accepted without demur that this wealth was produced by slavery, slaughter, and exploitation. After all, they took the Roman world of Augustus as their model and what would Rome have been without its empire and its slaves? What they could not accept was an empire of money *inside and out* where "corruption" was not a moral excess, but a logical and social development of the empire's nature.[38]

The most cutting political theme of Country ideologists was the critique of the forms of money. For example, Pope's *Epistle to Bathurst—Of the Uses of RICHES* is nothing but an extended reflection on the personal and social imbalance a single-minded passion for monetary accumulation (in the form of gold or paper notes) engenders:

> B. What Nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,
> 'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows,
> P. But how unequal it bestows, observe.
> 'Tis thus we riot, while who sow it; starves.
> What Nature wants (a phrase I much distrust)
> Extends to Luxury, extends to Lust:
> Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires
> But dreadful too, the dark Assassin hires:
> B. Trade it may help, Society extends
> P. But lures the Py-rate, and corrupts the Friends
> B. It raises Armies in a Nation's aid,
> P. But bribes a Senate and the Land's betrayed . . .
> Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!
> That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly!
> Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,
> Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings
> A single leaf shall waft an Army o'er,
> Or ship off Senates to a distant Shore;
> A leaf like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro

Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall flow:
Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,
And silent sells a King, or Buys a Queen.[39]

Pope's discussion of money is dominated by "but"s. He is clearly warning his fellow citizens against the Walpolean drive to totally monetarize society. Money is essential, *but* it must stay in its place. After all, the Popes, Bolingbrokes, and Bathursts were no anarchists bent on abolishing the money form, but they bemoaned *where* it was spent, *how* it was gotten, and *who* got it.

The main political weakness of this critique lay in its ambivalence. Though it might have been accurate diagnosis of the Walpolean disease, what did the Country ideologists suggest as an alternative? What was their programme? Their only answer was: *more of the same, but more carefully*. For the Country "opposition"—aside from some questions of Parliamentary procedure—did not oppose the Walpolean path of accumulation. They, with a few Jacobite exceptions, merely wanted to go more slowly, cautiously and with a fine microscopic attention to the England beyond London.[40]

This is where Berkeley decisively differed from his Country friends. His situation *was* desperate; he *had* to be serious. Berkeley turned the Country ideology's "critique of money" into a political economy, i.e., a system that determines *where* money is spent, *how* it is gotten, and *who* gets it. The Querist located in the source of pain and privation—money—a solution to his and his class's dilemma. Certainly he was not alone in this logical preference for theodicy. Pope, for example, wrote the following closing lines in the *First Book of Ethic Epistles to H. St. John, Lord Bolingbroke* exuding the chocolate-stained nectar of eighteenth-century apologetics and theodicy:

Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name,
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know they own points This kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee
Submit—in this, or any other sphere
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear
Safe in the hand of one disposing Power,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee!

All Chances Direction, which thou canst not see,
All Discord, Harmony, not understood,
All partial Evil universal Goods
And spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, "Whatever is, is RIGHT."[41]

Pope's use of this theodicic rhetoric was remarkably unspecified and remained on the most general level, a level that Voltaire would satirize in *Candide*. Berkeley, in contrast, continually concretized theodicy in all his political, economic and religious projects.

For Berkeley was not only a Country/Tory figure. He was also Anglo-Irish, and, once he realized his fate was to fix him in Ireland, he turned his earlier critique of "corruption" into a rejection of the mercantile system. The objective circumstances for such a move were not favorable in 1735. The struggle against "corruption" and "absolute power" had exhausted Swift, but Walpole was still in power and Ireland in England's deadlock. Yet Berkeley's queries betray no hesitation. An even-tempered good humor and earnestness runs throughout them suggesting confidence in a solution to the Anglo-Irish dilemma.

Country Ideology: Myth and Reality

Berkeley was not only one of the intellectuals who helped define Country ideology for the 1720s, he tried to extend it to Ireland. Its adherents' increasing power gave him hope in the 1730s that the recommendations in *The Querist* might receive a favorable hearing in London.

For *The Querist* is the application of the country ideology to a whole country, Ireland, just as many have argued Jeffersonianism is the application of the country ideology to the new-independent United States. The standard versions of country ideology are well known to students of eighteenth-century English politics and literature. It compounded "revulsion" for the "corruption" of the Georgean court and Walpolean City, with the praise of "retirement to the country" where estates were "improved," "country house traditions" preserved and patriarchal relations with the rural poor ware sustained. Its bearers were supposedly the slightly edgy subscribers to Bolingbroke's later rhetoric and the ideal types of Pope's poetry like "the MAN of ROSS":

Rise, honest Muse! and sing the MAN of ROSS
. . . Whose Causeway parts the vale with shady rows?
Whose seats the weary Traveller repose?
WHO taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise?
The MAN of ROSS each lisping babe replies.
Behold the Marketplace with poor o'erspread!
The MAN of ROSS divides the weekly bread
Behold you Almshouse, neat, but void of state
Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gates:
Him portion maids, apprentic'd orphans blest,
The young who labour, the old who rest
Is any sick? the MAN of ROSS relieves,
Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.
Is there a variance? enter but his door,
Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.
Despairing Quacks with curses fled the place,
And vile Attornies, now an useless race.[42]

Here we have a "Private Country Gentleman" who has refused to join the climbing kissers of the seat of Walpolean power. He "retired" in the country, using his "modest" £500 a year for the improvement of his estate and, more crucially, of rural society. His improvements were directed to the resolution of conflicts with Nature, with God and with the "poor o'erspread." By this resolution he circumvented the State and its officials, with their balk'd Courts, despairing Quacks and fleeing Attorneys. Moreover, his extensive, ecologically sound, architectural projects were privately designed and financed though personal savings; they are also publicly beneficial.

Pope's MAN of ROSS applied passive obedience by "retiring" from the corrupt and corrupting state, rather than actively resisting it. Thus he contrived to neutralize the social pollution emanating from London (in the form, say, of an expensive and divisive legal superstructure) on his own or in collaboration with fellow "public Spirits." Pope envisioned the creation of many such centers; he called not for rebellion, but for construction and class-conflict resolution, inoculating rural England from the totalization of mercantilist logic. If the denizens of "country houses" could become men of Ross—public spirited, modest in expense, conciliators of the poor, architecturally creative—in economics, rentiers *engagé* with their rents and tenants, in politics,

bulwarks against the "anarchic pretentious of the masses," but independent of the "moneyed interest" and loyal to the ancient constitution—then Walpole's rule, when it naturally ended, would leave England capable of upholding its Augustian ideal. But if the countryside too was corrupted, Walpole's Dunciadic triumph would be complete:

> In Soldier, Churchman, Patriot, Man in Power,
> 'Tis Av'rice all, Ambition is no more!
> See, all our Nobles begging; to be Slaves
> See all our Fools aspiring to be Knaves!
> The Wit of Cheats, the Courage of Whore,
> Are what ten thousand envy and adore.
> All, all look up, with reverential Awe,
> On Crimes that 'cape, or triumph o'er the Law:
> While Truth, Worth, Wisdom daily they decry
> —"Nothing is Sacred now but Villany."[43]

Pope's vision of the opposition to Walpole assumes, as most Country ideology did, that land ownership created an especially virtuous relation to the state and society. The classic *virtu* of the "free ownership of the self-managing peasant" displayed by the Roman farmer and Greek *georgos* is seen as a continuing possibility for English landowners and, in the best of cases, an actuality. Political independence, frugality, martial spirit, interest in productivity, incorruptibility—the classical "virtues"—have a long history of idealization. Even the normally clear-eyed Marx had a soft spot in his conceptual armor for them.[44] But Pope and his epistolic circle had the presumption to equate the figures out of Virgil and Xenophon with the landowners of the realm who were to lead England to new Augustan heights.

The Country Ideology was concretized in the self-conscious imitation of Palladio's Venetian villa design, which expressed not only an aesthetic taste acquired on the Grand Tours in Italy (and reiterated by former "bear leaders" like Berkeley in his *The Querist* and his travel writings). Palladio's Venetian villas were designed to impose a new patriarchalism of a commercial bourgeoisie returning to a countryside torn apart by the politico-religious struggles of the Reformation. Palladio designed villas that controlled the countryside and its inhabitants not through a heavy-handed medieval militaristic presence, but by a rationalistic aesthetic inscribing Pythagorean cosmology and musical

harmonies into the terrain, bricks and plaster to renovate the archaic ideology of the *padrone*. For "Palladio found a formula for the synthesis of agricultural capitalism with agricultural humanism, of urban cultural demands with rural economic planning."[45] This sixteenth-century Italian conjuncture of aesthetic and patriarchal politics found a welcome echo in eighteenth-century England where a new patriarchy suitable for capitalist agriculture was being conceptualized by Country thinkers. Palladian country houses (often on a grand scale) announced the arrival of a new kind of English landlord (both rational and concerned) requiring a new kind of servant.

These historical and aesthetic developments explain the political behavior of the larger gentry and landed aristocrats. Despite the apocalyptic overtones of Berkeley's, Bolingbroke's, Swift's, and Pope's rhetoric, the actions of their constituencies were far from resolute. Their passive obedience all too readily turned into a systematic unwillingness to form a rigid opposition to the Robinocracy which, according to their table talk, was leading Britain to perdition. As busily as the City financiers were transforming the older forms of exchange, so too the Country landlords were rationalizing and capitalizing English agriculture. Money was king in both domains. It ruled dually, however, as Rent and as Interest. Through their spokesmen, the landlords claimed archaic rights and privileges owing to their title to quadrangles of England's emerald surface. But they were most actively engaged in destroying the very mode of production these rights and privileges were based on. Just as an old Tory in his cups turned Jacobite for a night, so too a Man of Ross, in dividing the weekly bread, could imagine himself a Cato or an Ischomachus for an afternoon. But these musings were soon sobered when a "'fifteen" came along or a Waltham Blacks panic exploded. To be sure, actual or potential conflict between City/Country or Moneyed/Landed Interests existed, as there is a substantial economic asymmetry between Rent and Interest. But their division was far from schismatic at that time.

Walpole, the supposed "magician of corruption" and "pimp of the moneyed interests" was by no means against the landlords; he was one himself. His efforts lead to the dramatic lowering of the land tax in the 1720s and early 1730s by shifting the burden of taxation on to the consumption of the proletariat.

The themes of Country politics—land qualifications for MPs, shorter parliaments, the elimination of placemen, and the abolition of the

standing army—were real enough demands, yet they never were shibboleths of a life-or-death struggle. These demands expressed the unease of a class whose title to its income was becoming more anachronistic and contested. Was title to land rooted in ancestry, productivity, or loyalty? This very unease generated the need for assurance that supreme political power—i.e., its absolute juridical authority over tenants and laborers and over the monopoly of state violence—would remain in its hands forever. They did not get their satisfaction. Much of what they did obtain depended, ironically enough, on the honest Jacobites who played the sacrificial role of "extremists" in a now familiar political drama. For the "revolutionary" Jacobites allowed the moderate "Country" landlords to threaten the system of compromises between Rent and Interest that characterized the post-Willliamite intra-class peace without jeopardizing their own health.

But regardless of its place in English ruling class history, Berkeley in 1735 could see the "Country Interest" as a potential ally for his project of an Ireland unilaterally withdrawing from the world market to cultivate its own gardens. We might even describe the Querist's proposal as the "building of country ideology in one country." Certainly the Querist's positive programme comes out of the pages of the Augustian ethic: attention to georgic affairs, modest expense, public spirit and an obsession with building, building, and more building, enough to please any Man of Ross:

> II. 232. Whether building would not peculiarly encourage all other arts in this kingdom?
>
> II. 233. Whether smiths, masons, bricklayers, plaisterers, carpenters, joyners, tylers, plummers, glaziers would not all find employment if the humour of building prevailed?
>
> II. 234. Whether, the ornaments and furniture of a good house do not employ a number of all sorts of artificers in iron, wood, marbles, brass, copper, wool, flax, and divers other materials?
>
> II. 235. Whether in buildings and gardens, a great number of day labourers do not find employment?

II. 236. Whether he who employs men in buildings and manufactures doth not put life in the country and whether the neighbourhood round be not observed to thrive?

The Excise Crisis

Given Berkeley's inspiration of and alliance with the Country ideologists, the crucial political conditions leading up to the writing of *The Querist* (and indeed a major source of Berkeley's hope) are to be found more in England and Ireland. Though the agistment tithe crisis was the trigger for *The Querist*, the instability the Walpole regime experienced in 1733 and 1734 laid the political basis for the Querist's hope. Those years were quite "hot" for the Country ideologists and their fellow travelers like Berkeley. Berkeley's appointment as Bishop of Cloyne had much to do with the temporary surge of the Walpolean opposition, being a symptom of the equally temporary lapse in the Robinocracy.[46] The key event was the Excise Crisis of 1733 which brought the Walpolean political economy to its limits. In order to understand this crisis one must review the basics of Robinocracy.

Walpole's political power rested on his ability to satisfy the different Parliamentary "pressure groups," viz., the receivers of the basic revenues (rent, interest, and profit), with an adroit use of fiscal measures guaranteeing high interest payments without war, reduced land taxes and falling customs duties. This was accomplished through a concerted attack on wages by means of sales or excise taxes, a strategy pioneered by that ever fertile seventeenth-century genius: Sir William Petty.

The excise taxes had produced less revenue than the land tax until 1714, after that year it consistently brought in more revenue than the land tax. By 1733 the excise tax revenues were ten times that of the land tax.[47] Walpole's regime began to tax objects of popular consumption—soap, candles, spirits, calicoes, drugs, tea, coffee, pepper, salt and above all malt and beer.

The excise is, of course, the most "regressive" of taxes, but Walpole's attack on wages had a further objective. The wage form had not yet been totally monetarized in the eighteenth century, workers directly appropriated part of their wage as bits and pieces of the process of production they took a hand in. As Linebaugh pointed out in his *The London Hanged,* the wage struggle of the eighteenth century pivoted as much on the *form* of the wage (especially on the "customary" part

could be appropriated) as on its monetary *quantity*. The Excise Crisis was a decisive moment in the wage struggle, for the heart of Walpole's Excise Scheme in this case was not only an increase of consumption taxes on wine and tobacco but an extension of anti-fraud and anti-"socking" devices (i.e., the halting of the pilfering of goods transferred by the dockers in the Port of London), Walpole argued that the measures would require a national police force of "excisemen" with the power of search and seizure in stores and even private homes.[48] The contemplated savings from the previously "lost" revenues could eliminate the land tax completely and supposedly only the fraudulent merchant and the "socker" need beware. Thus, the landlords would become taxless through the transformation of the proletariat's wage form and the fraudulent merchant's profits.

This logical conclusion of Walpole's fiscal policy had worked splendidly before (e.g., in 1723 with the excise on coffee, chocolate, and tea and later in 1732 with the salt excise). But an unlikely coalition of "country" ideologists, City of London merchants and Port proletarians stopped the Excise Scheme. The London proletariat, not surprisingly, fought the Scheme individually and *en masse*; as it meant for them the perfection of a machinery that had already reduced their monetary wages and was now aiming to nihilate their "customary" wages.[49] The City of London merchants fought it because it meant the end of a set of "frauds" they had practiced to escape taxation and customs duties. But why did aristocrats and their apologists like Bolingbroke, Pultney, and Pope join the dockers (with many a "squalid" and "wild" Irishman among them) against Walpole? The popular slogan of the day, "Excise, Wooden shoes, No jury," projected images of poverty(=wooden shoes) and slavery(=no jury) that could hardly cut across class lines, since large landowners were hardly to be made poor or rightless by the Scheme.

The standard account of the Country ideologists' opposition to the Scheme notes their conviction that it would curtail civil liberties and create a new army of "placemen" who would be "spread all over the country," in Sir William Wyndham's words, "and must have a great influence on elections."[50] They saw the Excise Scheme as a Walpolean economic ploy: no land tax, but no parliamentary power for the (Tory or Country) Landed. For they saw these "excisemen" as agents of Walpole and the Court party spreading across the nation inquiring into every transaction. Not only would this new national police force reduce

their independent parliamentary power, it would also set up a parallel judiciary in the countryside, under the direct control of the Court, rivaling the landlords' direct jurisdiction.

There were other political-economic reasons and anxieties prompting opposition. The Excise crisis arose during a period when the basic assumption of political economy was that ground-rent is the basis of all "surplus" revenues: profits, interest, rents, tithes and taxes. A prominent vulgar Marxist wrote of this era's political economy:

> Petty, Cantillon, [Locke as well-CGC] and in general those writers who are closer to feudal times, assume ground-rent to be the normal form of surplus-value in general, whereas profit to them is still amorphously combined with wages, or at best appears to be a portion of surplus-value extorted by the capitalist from the landlord. These writers take as their point of departure a situation where, in the first place, the agricultural population still constitutes the overwhelming majority of the nation, and, secondly, the landlord still appears as the person appropriating at first hand the surplus-labour of the direct producers by virtue of his monopoly of landed property which therefore, still appears as the main condition of production. For these writers the question could not yet be posed, which, inversely, seeks to investigate from the viewpoint of capitalist production how landed property manages to wrest back again from capital a portion of the surplus value produced by it (that is, filched by it from the direct producers) and already appropriated directly.[51]

This view was taken up by the *Craftsman* who quoted Locke's view that in the last analysis all taxes fell on land and concluded, "Struggle and contrive as you will, lay your Taxes as you please; the Traders will shift it off from their own Gain; the Merchants will bear the least part of it, and grow poor last."[52] Thus, the elimination of land taxes would not mean to the learned of the Country thinkers an increase in their revenues, unless it involved a decrease in Profit, Interest and Taxes in general, an eventuality Walpole devoutly did not wish for. From such a perspective, what was given in one hand, Walpole would cleverly take away with an invisible other. Walpole's image in Pope's *Dunciad*—the Magus—undoubtedly embodied for the Country ideologists all the intricacies, transformations, inversions and perversions of the money form. Their harsh refusal of the proffered dream of taxlessness must

have felt as right as Christ's rejection of the devil's vistas.

Second, a vague anxiety was discernible in the Country literature concerning Walpole's relation to the urban and rural proletariat: would the Excise scheme push the proletariat too far? For the Excise Crisis was not simply an angry reaction of the alcohol- and nicotine-addicted English to the excising of wine and tobacco. Key to the inter-class resistance was the sense that Walpole was planning a "General Excise," i.e., a sales tax that would be applied to *all* commodities, especially to those of the "wage basket." As a pamphleteer nicely defined it, "What is meant by a *general Excise* is a new Tax upon all such Conveniences of Life, as the Poor and laborious Part of the nation cannot subsist without."[53] This apprehension was bound to have an immense effect on the proletariat as a whole—since a General Excise would mean a wage reduction engineered by a state beyond local control. Many in Parliament believed that "the moral economy of the eighteenth century crowd" could not be easily dismissed with a contemptuous Walpolean reference to "sturdy beggars." After all, the history of the early eighteenth century was filled with bread, food, or corn riots usually directed against the millers, bakers and corn dealers which the local (and sometimes the national) government had to both suppress and mediate. But the government was not the direct target of the riot . . . with a General Excise, however, every local disturbance could generalize to a potential insurrection against the state, since the national government would become an immediate beneficiary of any price increase.[54]

Country ideologists' resistance to the Excise scheme, therefore, was rooted in their antagonism to Walpole's strategy of class rule in the city and in the countryside. Their consensus was that Walpolean capitalism breeds in and intersects with the urban proletariat's criminal underworld of fences, spies and robbers. What was Gay's Peachum but an ideal type of one who totally monetarizes all social ties in the proletariat, just as Walpole could use the unattached funds from the Excise to more thoroughly "corrupt" their betters? But when this universal corruption triumphs, a breakdown in traditional class subordination follows. Swift's, Gay's, and Pope's message—sometimes explicit, sometimes screened—is that Walpole's logic leads to increasing impudence and detachment of the proletariat from the social hierarchy. For, they suggest, if we do not respect our own rules and pecking order, why should the urban rabble? Certainly, in an age puffing itself up on Roman

images, the counter-image of the depraved, riotous, omnivorous original Roman proletariat could not but have a deflating effect. The "unrest" caused by the Scheme echoed an insurrectional possibility that might well have frightened the many who already found London too dangerous.

As for the rural proletariat, the changing composition of agricultural ownership and production was heading to a discernible crisis. For the Poor had to be kept in the country as wage laborers, but could not be allowed to interfere with the rationalization of the land's geometry. This dangerous contradiction lead some Country thinkers to an ideology of benevolence and the conceptualization of a new rural wage form. Pope, as we have seen, argued for a return to an older, quasi-feudal paternalism, not this time with serfs but with the new landless agricultural wage laborers (i.e., the Poor). In his epistolic verse of the 1730s, especially in *To Bathurst* and *To Burlington*, the reader is relentlessly reminded of the dangers of a pure cost-accounting attitude to the rural population. This concern for the Poor is of course reflected in the bulk of the Man of Ross's activities: feeding the Poor, curing their ills, mediating their legal squabbles and, horrors, even working in the field with them. Pope is preaching a veritable upper-class Maoism which the Walpolean financier and courtier would only cringe at. The scandal of the "Charitable Corporation"—which was set up like the contemporary Grameen Bank to lend small sums of money to the poor at ten percent interest, and which collapsed in 1732 due to fraudulent practices of its administrators—showed to Pope that the Walpolean circle had lost the necessary mediational touch with the Poor:

> Perhaps you think the Poor might have their part?
> Bond damns the Poor, and hates them from his heart:
> The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule,
> That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool:
> "God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
> The wretch he starves" . . . and piously denies;
> But the good Bishop, with a meeker air,
> Admits, and leaves them, Providence's air.[55]

Pope continued this passage in *To Bathhurst* by claiming that this behavior could only be understood if Walpoleans already foresaw the End:

> Some War: some Plague, some Famine they foresee,
> Some Revelation hid from you or me.

A few lines later he connects the apocalypse with the generalization of the Excises Scheme:

> Ask you why Phryne the whole Auction buys?
> Phryne foresees a general Excise.[56]

Thus the Excise Scheme would be the final declaration of war against all the "customary usages" Country writers like Pope were hoping to keep as a necessary device of class intercourse and mediation. Walpole's vision of the total monetarization of class relations would mean the end of Pope's "middle way." But Pope warned that this would leave much of the proletariat with no visible alternative but starvation or rebellion.

All these factors provoked the Excise Crisis, one that Walpole, for all his capacities, lost. His Parliamentary majority shrunk to only seventeen on 10 April 1733, George II became noticeably "uneasy," and Walpole publicly abandoned his project. He had gone too far. During this crisis a spectrum of political weapons were deployed and a sense of tactics and timing displayed that had a distinctly modern ring. Clearly, Walpole's modernity stimulated it in his opponents. For consider the dates of publication of some of Popes epistles: *Epistle to Lord Bathurst*—15 January 1733; *The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace* (Bolingbroke directly asked Pope to write this)—15 February 1733; *An Essay on Man Epistle I* (to Bolingbroke)—20 February 1733; *Epistle II* (to Bolingbroke)—29 March 1733; *Of the knowledge and Characters of Men* (to Viscount Cobham, who voted against the Excise Scheme at some cost to himself). This high-brow "campaign literature" was published simultaneously with an "instruction campaign" that forced many Court-inclined MPs to vote against the Excise Scheme on the basis of their electorate's publicized wishes, while violent demonstrations in the streets and docks of London broke out. Down the Thames from Twickenham to London, up from the quays to the Parliament, the campaign coordinated a wide range of social forces against Walpole.[57]

Berkeley was in London at the time to observe this campaign and was duly impressed.[58] He was there petitioning for a Church position

after the successful publication of *Alciphron* in 1732. His identification with the Country ideology, his failure to establish St. Paul's in the Bermudas because of Walpole's opposition, his High Church interests would lead him to have more hope in his vision of the Anglo-Irish future in the heat of the Excise Crisis and its immediate aftermath. If the opposition could depose Walpole and his money-mad circle, replacing him with a sensible leader surrounded by a ministry committed to Country values, then there would be a chance for a new start in Ireland. Surely if an alliance between "responsible" Anglo-Irish elements with a Country administration in power in London was his hope, it was to prove groundless. But from the perspective of 1733–1735, his appeal to the old Church doctrine of Passive Obedience, to the contemporary ethics of Theodicy as well as to the most recent political developments justified some degree of optimism. Within the political spectrum of the day, the Bolingbrokes, the Bathursts, the Burlingtons, the Oxfords and the other open conspirators of Pope's epistolic circle were the only sources of power in England that might possibly have had an interest in Berkeley's problematic and projects. Attempts to solicit support from Walpole and George II were pointless from the start. And if "things had gone differently" perhaps other deals could have been struck with a Country ministry that was never to be.

NOTES

1. For an interesting example of passive obedience rhetoric in action in the twentieth century see Paton (1974).

2. One can note many modern homologies of Berkeley's approach to questions of development. For example, Berkeley tried (in theory at least) to transform a method of absolute submission into a path of independence. His strategy was not unlike many late twentieth century schemes touted under the rubric of "self-reliance" or "autarkic development" for the post-colonial economies. The writings of Samir Amin offer a rich source of comparison with Berkeley's *The Querist*, see Amin (1990).

3. Quoted in Dickson (1977: 20–21). The Passive Obedience doctrine did not become one of the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England established in the seventeeth century. The closest to it was Article XXXVII which begins "The King's Majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other his dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction." For a nineteenth-century discussion of this article see Macbride (1853: 517–25).

4. The men and women who, in the 1720 and 30s, participated in the slave revolts and urban insurrections in the Americas, in the "pirate utopias" of Africa, or in the raids and rebellions of the Scottish Highlands were hardly subjects of this discourse.

5. Berkeley's *Passive Obedience* was presented in a charged political climate which ironically made the defense of a doctrine of "slavishness" a mark of revolution. On November 5, 1709 (the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot and the landing of William of Orange), Dr. Sacheverell preached a sermon at St. Paul's on "The Perils of False Brethern." He charged that the "steady belief of the Subject's Obligation to an Absolute and Unconditional Obedience to the Supreme Power, in all things lawful, and the utter Illegality of Resistance upon any pretence whatsoever" was "quite Exploded, and Ridicul'd out of Countenance, as an Unfashionable, Superannuated, nay (which is more wonderful) as a Dangerous Tenent" (see Probyn (1979: 75–80). Dr. Sacheverell went on to finger the Whig ministry as "false brethern" who are undermining the prerogative of the Church of England. His provocativeness made his charges self-fulfilling. The defense of the Passive Obedience doctrine was dangerous in his case. The Whig ministry impeached him of "high crimes and misdemeanours" and brought him to trial at Westminister Hall in 1710. Demonstrations in his defense broke out and "The CHURCH and QUEEN, the CHURCH and DOCTOR" was chanted throughout London and the provincial towns during his trial. He was convicted, but he received a light punishment: a three-year moratorium on sermonizing. But the damage was done to the Whig ministry, which appeared to be leaning too much toward toleration of Dissenters. It was voted out of office later on in the year, and a new Tory ministry sympathetic to High-Church views went to power. A book-length discussion of the case and its implications can be found in Homes (1973). Berkeley in Dublin undoubtedly had his eye on London in 1712. His lecture on Passive Obedience (delivered during the period of Sacheverell's moratorium) seems to have been calculated to draw favorable attention to him there, if not in Ireland.

6. *PO* 6.

7. *PO* 15.

8. *PO* 16.

9. *PO* 14. The importance of passivity in Christian morality was widely acknowledged and often criticized in the nineteenth century. Mill (1859: 29) wrote, "Christian morality (so-called) has all the character of a reaction it is, in great part, a protest against Paganism. Its ideal is negative rather than positive, passive rather than active; Innocence rather than Nobleness; Abstinance from Evil rather than energetic Pursuit of Good. . . . It is essentially a doctrine of passive obedience." The reactionary passivity of Christianity was the object of cynical contempt in both Marx's and Nietzsche's thought.

10. *PO* 53.

11. *PO* 1.

12. The publication of *Passive Obedience* was to have a disastrous impact on his early career, especially during the anti-Jacobite witch hunt immediately following the Pretender's 1715 invasion. Berkeley lost a modest Church preferment in St. Paul's in Dublin 1716 due to accusations of Jacobitism and the text of *Passive Obedience* was used as evidence. See David Berman's discussion of this point in

Berman (1994: 83–85). This mishap probably led to Berkeley's decision to become "bear leader" to the son of the Bishop of Clouger, George Ashe, and his four-year absence from England and Ireland.

13. Two classic contemporaneous twentieth century texts on the difficulties of knowing and obeying rules is Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. Berkeley's *Passive Obedience* is their eighteenth century forerunner.

14. Petty's real "dream" was to turn Ireland into a sheep run, his "sinking" scheme was offered in jest.

15. *P* 152.

16. See Laslett (1960: 333).

17. Functionalism in sociology is a twentieth century equivalent of eighteenth-century theodicy, especially in its notion of a "latent function." See Merton (1968), part I, chapter 3.

18. See Mandeville (1924: 369).

19. For another reading of eighteenth-century economic discourse that emphasizes a conceptual instead of a logical transformation see Hirshman (1977).

20. For a standard commentary on the relation of Mandeville to Berkeley see Oldsamp (1970: 173–83). Olscamp concludes his chapter on the comparison with the following, "Aside from the criticisms of Shaftesbury, there is only one thing I can find upon which Berkeley and Mandeville agree: that we impute guilt on the basis of our knowledge of motives." For a recent facsimile edition of Mandeville's *Letter to Dion* see Berman (1989: 253–324). Mandeville's offer to "exchange" scoldings of their respective followers is on pp. 307–8.

21. Quoted in Caldecott (1970: 66).

22. Berkeley was apparently interested in the actual sensations of the hanged. Oliver Goldsmith in his "Memoirs of the late famous Bishop of Cloyne" notes: "An action of his however soon made him more truly ridiculous than before; curiosity leading [Berkeley] one day in the crowd to go to see an execution, he returned home pensive and melancholy, and could not forbear reflecting on what he had seen He desired to know what were the pains and symptoms a malefactor felt upon such an occasion, and communicated to his chum the cause of his strange curiosity; in short he was resolved to tuck himself up for a trial, at the same time desiring his companion to take him down at a signal agreed upon. . . . Berkeley was therefore tied up to the ceiling, and the chair taken from under his feet, but soon losing the use of his senses, his companion it seems waited a little too long for the signal agreed upon, and our enquirer had like to have been hanged in good earnest; for as soon as he was taken down he fell senseless and motionless upon the floor," Berman (1989: 172).

23. On the fall of the Tory regime and the '15 see Speck (1977), chap. 7. On October 19, 1714 John Arbuthnot wrote a response to a now lost letter of Swift's—which was full of "spleen" over the downfall of the Tory ministry—giving news of friends in their circle including John Gay and Berkeley: "Poor philosopher Berkeley; has now the idea of health, which was very hard to produce in him, for he had an idea of a strange fever upon him so strong that it was very hard to destroy it by introducing a contrary one," Swift (1965ii: 137).

24. On the compatibility of oppositional ideology (Jacobite, Country, Tory, or

Patriot Whig) with mercantile theory see Colley (1992), chap. 2, "Profits," and Rogers (1989: 56–61).

25. Quoted in Dickson (1977: 178). Berkeley went through the same transformation. His first "political" work, *Passive Obedience* (1712), was a stock Church Tory document on the Pauline theme: "Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." By 1721 Berkeley moved on with the times and penned *An Essay Towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*, a jeremiad based on the crisis generated by the South Sea Bubble, that became a basic text of the "country" ideology. Was Berkeley a crypto-Jacobite, as many in the Church hierarchy suspected? Berkeley amply demonstrated his anti-Jacobite sentiments during the '15 in letters and in his *Advice to the Tories who have taken the Oath* (London, 1715). Was there any basis to these suspicions? Berman's discussion of the question is most illuminating. He argues that Berkeley might very well have been a Jacobite in 1712, but due to events in the following two years he was morally obliged to change his views because the Pretender did not renounce Roman Catholicism, George I came to the British crown "without force or artifice," and most influential Tories had taken an Oath of Allegiance to George, Berman (1994: 81–97). Berman, however, neglects the "material interests" that would make proclaiming Jacobitism suicide for an Anglo-Irish cleric. Berkeley put it very well in his excited correspondence with Percival about the '15. "What advantage some great men here [in London] out of employ may purpose from the Pretender's coming among us, they know best; but it is inconceivable what shadow of an advantage an Irish Protestant can fancy to himself from such a revolution," *Letters,* To Percival, Aug. 9, 1715, p. 90. When Berkeley writes "inconceivable" we must assume that he has definitely weighed all alternatives and found them null.

26. The literature discussing the categories and self-descriptions of the Parliamentary opposition in the early eighteenth century—Jacobite/Country/Tory/Patriot Whig—is enormous and is now going through a revisionist period, especially in response to the Thatcherite redefinition of the political landscape of Britain in the 1980s. Some high points among the older view are Dickson (1977) and Speck (1977) while the "revisionists" include Clark (1982) and Colley (1982). W. A. Speck's response to the revival of Tory revisionism can be found in his Speck (1983: 38–40).

27. A fine discussion of the unity of the English ruling class see Speck (1977). He concludes his chapter on "The making of the English Ruling Class" with the following words, Speck (1977: 166): "John Bull, 'the picture of the plain country gentleman,' established himself as the embodiment of the English virtues. Commonsensical, complacent, and self-confident, his very solidity depicted the assurance of the ruling class that the divine right to rule had passed from the Stuarts to themselves."

28. Some important studies of the oppositional literature are Goldgar (1976), Speck (1983), and Gerrard (1994). An introduction to the pro-ministerial writers of the period see Dowie (1984).

29. *Essay,* p. 337.

30. Pope echoed Berkeley's sentiments a decade later in lines 139–142 of "Epistle to Bathurst." All quotes from Pope's verse are in Pope (1966):

Statesman and Patriot ply alike the stocks,
Peeress and Butler share like the Box
And Judges job, and Bishops bite the town,
And mighty Dukes pack cards for half a crown.

31. Pope joked about the alienation of the state in his lines on Peter Walters, a wealthy financial wheeler-dealer of the time:

Wise Peter sees the World's respect for Gold
And therefore hopes this Nation may be sold:
Glorious Ambition! Peter, swell thy store
And be what Rome's great Didius was before,
Crown of Poland venal twice an age,
To just three millions stinted modest Gage.

Pope, "Epistle to Bathurst," lines 123–128.

32. As Pecham sang to Walpole in the audience of *The Beggar's Opera* Gay (1973: 5):

And the statesman, because he's so great
Thinks his trade as honest as mine.

33. A friend of Walpole's once said: "to attain his political ends, which were wise and just, he was willing to bribe the whole lower house, and he would not have recoiled from bribing a whole nation." Walpole was one of the first capitalist politicians who had to create legitimacy out of the money form. Many in the Tory camp did not believe that it could be done, or, if it could, a catastrophe would soon follow. To keep such a "liquid" government afloat, the money had to be available, see Speck (1977).

34. "Epilogue to the Satires, Dialogue I," lines 159–160.

35. Vilar (1976: 222).

36. Vilar (1976: 230).

37. Vilar (1976: 231).

38. The rise of the "National Debt" simply solidified the state as a commodity, see Marx (1909iii: 465).

39. *Epistle to Bathurst*, lines 21–48.

40. For a historical materialist argument explaining why the oppositional elements of the English ruling class rejected a revolutionary path see Colley (1992: 71–85).

41. *An Essay on Man*, lines 281–294.

42. "Epistle to Bathurst," lines 250–274. Erskine-Hill, (1975: 15–41) unearths the "real" Man of Ross, John Kyrle, Esq.

43. "Epilogue to the Satires, Dialogue I," lines 161–170.

44. Marx (1909iii: 918).

45. Bentmann and Muller (1992: 31).

46. On Berkeley's difficulty in gaining preferment see *The Dictionary of*

National Biography article on Berkeley as well as Berman's discussion of the Jacobite aura surrounding him in Berman (1994: 85–96).

47. For Petty on the excise see Wilson (1965: 212). Brisco (1967: 88–89) notes, "Walpole did not contribute anything new to the theory [of equitable taxation], as it is found in the recital to an ordinance dated August the fourteenth, 1649, which describes the excise as 'the most equal and indifferent levy that could be levied on the people.' Petty in his treatise on Taxes reaches the same conclusion. Thus in his theory of taxation Walpole simply accepted that which had been the established belief for more than half a century." The relative weights of the excise, land tax and customs duties can be examined in Figure 4.2 of Brewer (1988: 96–97). Brewer's is a problematic text, for it raises an immense, and important scholarly superstructure on an insipid collection of social platitudes at its base. Thus when it comes time to state upon whom the immense tax burden of eighteenth-century English government weighed, Brewer can only speak of the Poor and the Consumers, as in "But the conclusion seems inescapable that excises hit the pockets of most consumers rather than just the purses of the prosperous" (p. 217).

48. Linebaugh (1992: 153–83).

49. Paul Langford writes that "Particularly in the City the riotous atmosphere of March and April had become distinctly alarming. On April 11, after his announcement that the excise was to be given up, Walpole had to be escorted from the Commons by his friends and some fifty special constables, and narrowly escaped personal injury; the same evening effigies of Walpole and Queen Caroline were burnt in Fleet Street, Smithfield and Bishopsgate Street," Langford (1975: 91).

50. Quoted in Dickson (1977: 184). John Brewer's description of the bureaucratic machinery for collecting the Excise is of great interest and can be found in Brewer (1990: 101-114). Linebaugh's discussion of the methods of evading customs duties is to be found in Linebaugh (1992: 160-175).

51. Marx (1909iii: 910).

52. Quoted in Langford (1975: 159).

53. Quoted in Langford (1975: 160).

54. For a discussion of this matter see E.P. Thompson's classic article "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," reprinted in Thompson (1991).

55. "Epistle to Bathurst," lines 100–106.

56. Epistle to Bathurst," lines 113–120.

57. A short discussion of this parliamentary crisis is in Speck (1977: 214–17). The journalistic assault on Walpole's Excise scheme is reviewed by Langford (1975: 44–59). In fact, Pope's "politicization" was definitively marked by the Excise crisis according to Goldgar (1976: 132). Rogers (1989: 377) agreed with older historians like Morley who noted "how skillfully the opposition orchestrated the protest, playing upon popular fears of oppressive taxation and state vigilance with the image of Monster Excise devouring the people, and coordinating the local celebrations with constituency instructions against the bill. Only in London—where the mob jostled Sir Robert, broke the windows of the Post Office and 'of all other houses not illuminated,' and 'stopt every coach that came by, and made them cry "No Excise"'—did the protest threaten to get out of hand."

58. As with the Wood's Half-pence agitation, Berkeley was extremely reticent

about the Excise crisis in his correspondence. Four days after the retraction of the Excise bill he writes enigmatically to Prior, "The political state of things on this side the water I need say nothing of. The public papers probably say too much; though it cannot be denied much may be said." *Letters*, B. to Prior, 14 April 1733, 217. At that time he seemed to be more concerned about an effort to amend the Test and allow dissenters to be JPs in Ireland because, it was claimed, there were so few Anglicans in many counties to take the positions, see B. to Prior, 27 March 1733.

SECTION 2: MONEY, LIBERTINISM, AND FAILURE

Berkeley's Bank Campaign

With the clear conscience afforded to him by the doctrine of passive obedience and by the application of the theodicic methods, and further fortified with the knowledge that his Country allies were finally tottering the Walpolean colossus, *The Querist* might well have had hope in 1735. This hope died in 1738 due to the conjuncture of local Irish with imperial British politics and an inherent limitation in his own method. The Querist failed again and failed better.

The local failure of *The Querist* was obvious to Berkeley within a year of the publication of its final Part III. In a rare "organizing" letter to Thomas Prior in March 5, 1737 we see Berkeley busily preparing a campaign for his national bank proposal, which he began to publicly elaborate in 1735. In the letter, he enclosed a brief abstract of the proposal to be printed in Dublin newspapers which he "could wish were spread through the nation, that men may think on the subject against next [Parliamentary] session." He was concerned about the timing of the publication, "I would not have this [brief abstract] made public sooner than a week after the publication of the Third Part of my *Querist*, which I have ordered to be sent to you."[1]

There were other signs of a campaign pushing for the reintroduction of a National Bank and other themes central to the Querist's scheme to develop Ireland. For example, *Faulkner's Weekly* reprinted a document—*Considerations on the Advantages accruing to the publick on the Establishment of a National Bank*—from the 1721 debates concerning a National Bank in its November 15 and 22, 1737 issues. George Falkner, a friend of Swift and Madden and a frequent publisher of Dublin Society literature, prefaced the reprint with the following notice: "As there is Talk at this Time of establishing a National Bank in this Kingdom, we hope the following Extract, printed some Time Since, will be agreeable to our Readers in General."[2]

The Dublin Society began publication of its *Weekly Observations* in January 1737 whose major themes seem to be direct elaborations of a number of the Querist's queries. For example, on January 18, 1737 the Dublin Society emphasized import substitution—"we can consume yearly above the value of a million sterling in foreign commodities,

which far from being necessary or useful to us, are for the greatest part destructive of our Trade, and a means of exhausting the Wealth of the Nation"—and the value of labor—"the Labor of a whole people is of much more consequence and value that therichest Mines of Gold or Silver . . . Africa, Peru and Spain are strong Instances of this." Then in its February 8, 1737 issue, the Dublin Society literally quoted *The Querist*: "Before the Gentlemen of this Society can properly apply themselves to direct the Industry of the Nation, it is first necessary to excite it. They must make men willing to be useful, and afterwards inform them how they may be most so." This echoing of *The Querist* should not be surprising, for "of the fifty two weekly letters contributed over the period 1737-38, some thirteen were contributed by [Thomas] Prior," who was Berkeley's political and intellectual ally throughout his life.[3]

Berkeley's other Anglo-Irish henchman was Samuel Madden, who among many other services, shepherded the three separate parts *The Querist* to the press in Dublin between 1735 and 1737. Not surprisingly, Madden published his own *Reflections and Resolutions Proper for he Gentlemen of Ireland As to their Conduct for the Service of their Country* in 1738 and it included a lengthy section on the proposal of a National Bank.[4] Let us hear some examples of this pre-established harmony between Berkeley's *The Querist* and Madden's *Reflections.* "But the last expedient . . . which I shall hint is, that which above all others our merchants might make use of to the prosperity of trade, and the happiness of this kingdom, if once it were established by law, I mean a well regulated bank, as proposed by those excellent papers *The Querist.* The novelty of this most useful proposal though it is as old as Mr. Potter's proposal, and Mr. Hartlib's legacy; and Sir William Petty's writings, to say nothing of Mr. Lamb's and Captain Yarringon's, which is so near a kin to theirs, may possibly startle inexperienced people; and it is also to be feared, many others from private views and interests, may infuse jealousies against it, I will therefore set down several reasons here, why every merchant nay every man who wishes well to Ireland, must necessarily desire its establishment, as the best and safest remedy for all our ailments," Madden (1738: 171).

Madden, playing Projector to Berkeley's Querist, then went on to present eighteen reasons why a national bank should be instituted: (1) "such a national bank, modeled by the wisdom of our legislature, and secured by the public faith, must have as sure and as extensive a

credit, and as firm a foundation, as any other bank now in the world." (2) The national banks of Venice, Hamburgh, and Amsterdam "(and let us, though it is on a different foot, join the bank of New England with them)," have been so successful in increasing trade. (3) The Irish House of Commons supported such a Bank in 1720, which was rejected simply because of a fear of "the engrossing power and interest of the directors." (4) We can guard ourselves against problems by passing new acts of the legislature. (5) We need public banks; private banks are not adequate to Ireland's economic needs. (6) Such a National Bank would double the money supply and lessen interest charges. (7) It will increase Irish trade and hence English wealth. (8) It will "enlarge our business, and cause such a quick circulation of our cash, or, which is the same thing, of its notes, as will make it equivalent to four times our present specie." (9) By increasing credit, it will bring "dead money" into circulation. (10) It will protect us from "any such accident" that might attend our bankers. (11) "Because the notes of such a bank (never minted but by order of Parliament) are founded on, and fenced in by our laws with proper funds, and the whole weight of our national credit for its support, must have infinite circulation beyond those of private banks, as not liable to theft or loss, and easier recovered, as being entered in the books of the bank, and payment can be stopped on due notice." (12) It cannot lessen our specie "which is occasioned entirely by the balance of trade being against us." (13) We may easily pay off the national debt. (14) Stock jobbing will be prevented and all the other ills of private banks will be bypassed. (15) "Our national bank is not in its management to be secret and mysterious, or conceal private loans, or a clandestine traffic with other men's money, but is to be open." (16) Since it is guaranteed by the Parliament, any fund can be adequate to support its credit, without a burden to the nation. (17) "A very useful adequate fund may be settled for it by a tax on the follies of our dress, equipage and furniture, and the madness of our luxury." (18) "All profits are solely to redound to the public."

Madden ended his pitch in the following manner, "And thus having dispatched this subject, though in a manner infinitely inferior to the greatness of the design, and the honour due its author, I shall now proceed to such new manufactures or methods, as our merchants may employ, to the enlarging our foreign trade," Madden (1738: 171-75). And he goes, a little like the March Hare, on to tapestries!

The Author of the Design, of course, was Bishop Berkeley and in late 1737 he went for the first and only time to Dublin to take his permanent seat in the Irish House of Lords as Bishop in December during the 1737–38 session. Everything was readied for putting the national bank and paper currency on the legislative agenda.

And then nothing. No bill concerning a National Bank was introduced in the 1737–38 session, and it was only a generation after his death, in 1783, that an institution named "The Bank of Ireland" (whose operation substantially differed from his sketch) was chartered by the Irish Parliament. The Querist had failed utterly, his Plan did not even have enough support to be put up and voted down. Berkeley left no report of the vicissitudes of his campaign. His correspondence in the years after 1737–38 make no reference to it. His only explicit statement on "the sketch or plan of a national bank" is in the 1750 "Advertisement by the Author" to a much revised text of *The Querist*. He wrote: "it may be time to take in hand [those queries dealing with a national bank] when the public shall seem disposed to make use of such an expedient."[5] Berkeley had resigned himself to the failure of his "expedient," by removing many of the queries dealing with original purpose of the text in the final revision.

Why had he so miscalculated the moment? He leaves us a few hints in his writings of that year: *The Irish Patriot or Queries on Queries* and *Discourse addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority Occasioned by the Enormous Licence and Irreligion of the Times*. Both have un-Berkeleyan tone. The first is Swiftian in its irony, sarcasm, and pique. It seems to be a compilation of all the objections, rejections, retorts, and evasions he encountered in the endless dinner parties, social gatherings, and lobbying he endured in the course of his campaign for the national Bank. The second is the most disjunctive and alarmist of his writings. These are texts written in anger against a motley crew of private bankers, "Irish patriots," mercantilistic foreign exchange managers, and Berkeley's bug-bears, the libertines—who, collectively, were responsible for the failure of Berkeley's national bank plan.

Private bankers had the most immediately to lose from the establishment of Berkeley's bank and they probably fought it with all the considerable power at their disposal. As the sardonic Meta-Querist in the *Irish Querist* queries:

> (5) Whether it ought not to be considered that so long as private men skilled in the money-trade command our cash, they may to their great advantage traffic with the several species thereof? And whether this advantageous traffic may not be hurt by a national Bank?

Unfortunately for Berkeley, private bankers were major players in the Irish economy by 1738 and formidable opponents. The history of Irish merchant banking began in 1719-21 with the founding of the La Touche & Kane bank and the house of Swift.[6] It was an auspicious debut; a mere decade later, banker's notes comprised about half of the Irish money supply—equal or greater, in relative terms, to the ratio of notes and specie in England at that time. The bankers' influence was spread throughout the Ireland, as banks appeared in a number of smaller centers, especially Cork, throughout the 1720 and 1730s, and many an indebted M.P. in the Commons or Lords was in his banker's pocket.

Bankers as a group were certainly vulnerable as well; for Irish banking industry was largely unregulated and untested. They often excessively issued bank notes, and their reserve requirements were still determined by rules of thumb or limits of greed. Hence, the slightest "shock"—e.g., a rumor of a crop failure or a Jacobite invasion—could lead to panics and bank runs, ending with the bankers in bankruptcy or absconding. But private banks were indispensable to Ireland's specie-poor economy. Parliament demonstrated its vital interest in them throughout the 1730s by organizing the payment of creditors, depositors and note holders of suspended banks. Bankers and parliamentarians were apparently in each others' pockets.[7]

A national bank would not only have competed with and crowded out private banks, it would have destroyed the special relationship with Parliament which private bankers coveted. Indeed, the Meta-Querist implied that they were themselves lobbying for a utopian bill that was similar to the Federal Deposit Insurance of the New Deal in the 1930s:

> (33) Whether, to remedy the fear of bankruptcies in private banks, and at the same time to avoid jobs and influence, it would not be the wisest way for the parliament to engage itself once for all to make good the deficiencies of all particular bankers, and whether this

> simple engagement may not do better than any new schemes whatsoever?

Surely the existence of a national bank, directly operated by and overseen by the Parliament, would have made this private banker's utopia impossible. Hence Berkeley's Bank met a wall of resistance in the highest financial circles of the capital city. Yet the "moneyed interest" was not strong enough to destroy his plan alone.

Berkeley easily satirized private bankers' self-interested motivations, but there was another type of critic who was much more a wonder, the perverse "Irish Patriot," who responded to the final query of *The Querist*—"Whose fault is it if poor Ireland still continues poor?"—with the first and last of *The Irish Patriot or Queries upon Queries* :

> (1) Whether riches, or even the appearance of riches, be not often dangerous to the liberties of a people?

> (36) Whether it be not more prudent to yield to our fate, and possess our poverty in peace?

This Patriot described the situation of the Anglo-Irish in the following query:

> (20) Whether there be not two ways of preserving freedom and independence, either by being above oppression or below?

Since he despaired of being "above" English Parliamentary oppression, the Patriot chose to remain far "below" it; the lower the better, perhaps. For the poorer Ireland was, the more it could hinder the English or the puppet Irish government's "exertions of it." If there was less industry, manufacture, and wealth, then there would be less opportunity for the British to tax, influence, and oppress. Hence the Irish Patriot took the role of Aesop's hungry, but free wolf, who scorned the well-fed dog's servitude, with pride. Any project that might materially improve Ireland, like the national bank project, was thus immediately suspicious. For is not "the whole and sole duty of an Irish patriot . . . to nourish opposition, the guard against influence, and always to suspect the worst?"

Such a rejectionist psyche was no figment of Berkeley's imagination. A previous effort to establish a Bank of Ireland in 1720–21 was stopped by such "patriotic," Beckettian reasoning. The Irish Patriots had not disappeared from the halls of Parliament or the streets of Dublin by 1737 and their arguments, though almost two decades old, still had a perverse charm. The 1720 Bank project certainly was flawed in Berkeley's eye, but the opposition's objections had nothing to do with his own (which were inscribed in his plan for a national bank.)[8] Hercules Rowley, a major opposition spokesman in the pamphlet war surrounding the Bank project, replied to an exposition of the merits of the Bank proposal in his 1721 *An Answer to a Book entitled "Reasons offered for erecting a bank in Ireland"*:

> If the intended Bank prove advantageous to us by increasing our trade and encouraging our manufacture—and should in the least interfere with or hinder the trade of England, then we may expect they will procure a Repeal of the Charter, and so cramp our trade and discourage our manufactures as to render them impractical. If it happens to impoverish us, and drain our little substance into Great Britain, then indeed we may be sure of a continuation.[9]

Rowley's cynical, no-win reasoning touched a deep chord, for after an auspicious beginning, the Bank faced surprising and decisive resistance in the Irish Parliament. The Bank proposal was defeated in Commons by a vote of 150 against and 80 for in December 1721. The Commons then promulgated the following "patriotic" address to the King:

> As this is a matter of unusual and national concern, your dutiful Commons took the same into their most serious consideration, and not finding any solid or good foundation for establishing a public bank, so as to be beneficial to the nation or even consistent with the welfare and liberties of it, think themselves obliged, in duty to your Majesty and justice to themselves and those which they represent, to offer their humble opinion to your Majesty that the establishing of any public bank in this Kingdom will be greatly prejudicial to your Majesty's service and of most dangerous and pernicious consequence to the welfare and liberty of the nation.[10]

The Commons even passed an open-ended resolution making the anyone attempting "to solicit or endeavour to procure any Grant, or get the Great Seal put to any Charter for erecting a public Bank in this Kingdom" in contempt of Commons and "an enemy of his Country." This ban technically put even Berkeley's later efforts under a legal cloud.

But the 1720–21 Bank project and Berkeley's 1737–38 National Bank plan were not only defeated by perverse logic. Another element was the pervasive *a priori* suspicion of all monetary experiments in Europe which the Mississippi and South Sea Bubbles inspired after 1720. This was especially apparent in 1721, for the Irish Parliament debated the Bank of Ireland proposal just months after the Anglo-Irish gentry had lost a substantial amount of money in the Bubbles, while details of the British Parliamentary investigations of South Sea directors' frauds and bribes were the daily entertainment of Dublin. Jonathan Swift made this suspicion an essential aspect of the "patriotic" opposition in many satiric pamphlets and poems aimed at paper money, Bank directors, stock jobbing during the time. Thus he published the broad sheet, "The Bank thrown down," slightly after the defeat of the proposal, and brought together many of these themes:

> This Bank is to make us a new Paper Mill
> This Paper they say, by the help of a Quill
> The whole Nations Pockets with Money will fill
> But we doubt that our Purses will quickly grow lank
> If nothing but Paper comes out of the Bank . . .
> Oh! then but see how the Beggars grow Vapour.
> For Beggars have Rags and Rags will make Paper,
> And Paper makes Money, and what can be cheaper. . . .
> Those that dropt in the South Sea discovered this Plank
> By which they might Swimmingly land on a Bank.[11]

The fear of Bubbles and ragged paper notes lived on long after the Bank proposal of 1720–21. Swift and many other "patriotic" writers kept it strong throughout the 1720s and into the 1730s. For the generalized suspicion against "monetary innovations" was compounded by a paranoia towards any devise that might imitate the financial wizardry of the Walpolean state. One consequence, however, of this politics of reaction was the steady decline of specie in Ireland's actual monetary

supply. Thus, the suspicion and paranoia of British intentions which drove the campaign to reject Wood's Half-pence in 1724, also resulted in the increased use of cardboard tokens for small change and paper bank notes for large transactions. In their effort to have a mercantilistically "sound," hard money supply and to patriotically reject any British-inspired expedient, Swift and his circle hastened the exact contrary result. For the Irish Patriots demanded specie for Ireland, not only for their supposed economic indispensability, but also because accepting any substitute would mean unpatriotically reconciling themselves to a dependent and secondary status vis-à-vis Britain.

Even though Swift's influence had waned in the mid-1730s, the financial attitudes he gave voice to were still very much in evidence. *The Querist* tried to overcome the mercantilistic prejudice and cul-de-sac Swift had so cleverly and patriotically maneuvered much of Irish public opinion into. But the Querist's questions could not unravel the Irish Patriot's labyrinthine resentment.

The private bankers, the gold bugs, and Irish patriots were not the only opponents Berkeley met (and complained of) in Dublin in 1737–38. The libertines were in Berkeley's estimation his most treacherous opponents, since they did not present open arguments, but they uttered insidious caveats poisoning the ethical atmosphere his national bank depended on. Libertines, freethinkers, and atheists appeared in this narrative previously, for Berkeley sensed the presence of the libertine movement in the ideology of the tithe revolt of 1734–35. One of the major themes of this movement from 1660 on was that "priestcraft" was tyrannical and fostered civil tyranny as well, and that tithes are payments for the preservation of a mental and civil slavery.[12]

Berkeley's National Bank depended upon the public spirit of the Legislature and its designated officials, none of whom should profit (or lose) individually from the Bank's success (or failure). There ought to be no self-interested motivation directing their decisions and actions. But could such a financial machine operate without a threat of corruption and/or the incentive of private gain? Berkeley clearly heard the cynics whispering:

> I. 24. Whether from all these things it doth not plainly follow that a national bank, as well as every other project for increasing the wealth of this kingdom, must in the event increase influence?

I. 25. Whether it be possible to contrive any scheme for the public good which shall not suppose or require common honesty and common sense in the execution thereof; and whether this be not an unanswerable argument against all projectors?

I. 37. Whether therefore it be not vain to talk of schemes for bettering our affairs?

A successful National Bank would create wealth which would attract "influence," and the national bankers' only defense from it would be "common honesty" and "common sense."[13] But could they be adequate? Could the public trust its representatives and servants to protect its good while feeling the "influence"? The Mandevillan libertines, Berkeley argued, had subtly undermined any faith in the strength of public spirit and subverted the essential moral-theological foundation of any institution like Berkeley's Bank.[14] Money required trust (which must be rooted in religion, according to Berkeley) and libertinism, by attacking religion, destroyed banking.

The libertines, therefore, had to be delegitimized and driven off the public stage. Berkeley's *Alciphron* and his writings on mathematics in 1734–35 took dialectical aim at these "free thinkers," but by 1738, facing his inability to even get the Parliament to consider his plan, Berkeley saw an opportunity to strike a mortal practical blow at "the enormous licence and irreligion of the times," and his second work of the 1737–38 legislative session, the *Discourse to the Magistrates,* was the result.

The opportunity ostensibly arose from the behavior of members of a new Dublin "society or club," the Blasters, and their leader, Peter Lens, a miniaturist painter who, according to an investigating committee, "professes himself to be a votary of the Devil; that he hath offered up prayers to him, and publicly drank to the Devil's health; that he hath at several times uttered the most daring and execrable blasphemies against the sacred Name and Majesty of God."[15] The Blasters was apparently not the only satanist club operating in Dublin at the time. The Hell-Fire Club was even more notorious. It had been founded in 1735 by Lord Rosse and a portrait painter named James Worsdale, and included a number of young aristocrats and/or military officers like Lord Santry, Lord Irnham and Colonel Henry Ponsonby. Stories of their satanic

antics along with their sexual transgressions, public drunkenness and violence against servants had already become legendary.[16]

Berkeley made only one speech before Parliament during his life. It did not introduce his national bank plan as we might have assumed, rather it demanded legal action against the Blasters and other "blasphemous" clubs. His jeremiad against satanic clubs had a wider range, however, for libertinism rarely took the extravagant embodiment of a Lens, a Rosse or a Santry. Certainly, a Bishop of the Church of Ireland would naturally have been concerned that Anglo-Irish aristocrats could be open apostates, but pure Satanism was a minor phenomenon in Ireland, as it was in France. Only a marginal segment of the aristocracy both despised an alliance with the "rationalizing" capitalist stratum and despaired of the Church's capacity to support their pretensions and turned to a logical, but silly, alternative, the Devil. Hell-raising rakes, demonic Don Juans, and neo-satanic Blasters could not be taken seriously, since their very existence revealed the diminishing power of the Devil in social imagination and the legal code. After all, James I's draconian witchcraft statute of 1604 was repealed in the British Parliament in 1736 and the traditional symptoms of demonic presence were quickly being medicalized.[17] These clubs might have been laboratories of a new type of sociality, mentality, and sexuality, but they were hardly the menace to the moral-political order Berkeley claimed.

But Berkeley took the Blasters as a "symptom of the madness of our times," for:

> Blasphemy against God is a great crime against the state. But that a set of men should, in open contempt of the laws, make this very crime their profession, distinguish themselves by a peculiar name [Blasters], and form a distinct society, whereof the proper and avowed business shall be, to shock all serious christians by the most impious and horrid blasphemies, uttered in the most public manner: this surely must alarm all thinking men. It is a new thing under the sun reserved for our worthy times and country.[18]

That is, the Blasters subverted the moral-theological foundation of human behavior and reduce trust in the state and mutual obligations in the public. Is it fair to identify a Peter Lens with the luminaries of free thought, deism, and masonry? Hardly. But Berkeley's use of a politically charged synecdoche in the *Discourse* allows him to identify

the true target of these remarks—the deistic followers of Mandeville and Shaftsbury (the main antagonists in *Alciphron*), free thinkers like Collins, anti-clericalists like Toland, atheists, freemasons—with the most extravagant "out" element of the clerical opposition. Berkeley knew, of course, that deism and Satanism were logical contraries, for the former recognized God without the Devil while the latter recognized the Devil without God. Socially, however, this synecdoche had a point, for there was a new paradoxical social creature gestating outside the circle of the family, the firm, the state, the Church, or the public common, creating a new mental space: the club. The club was private, but it was not the home; it was public, but it was not the state; it was inward, but it was not the church; it was associative, but it was not social. The clubs were increasingly the places where new notions and principles of actions were being discussed, debated and put into action.[19] Berkeley had helped form one such society during his sojourn in Rhode Island (as we saw in Chapter 1), where he experienced the potentialities of the social genre, and he was concerned with the progress of the Dublin Society, largely animated by his editor, Samuel Madden, and his collaborator, Thomas Prior.[20] For these clubs and semi-secret societies, by being outside of the eye of Church and State, could easily degenerate into a confusing diabolical mixture of rationalist discussion and satanic inspiration. After all, an organization that was most similar to the club was the witches' coven mentioned so often in Continental witch trial transcripts. Berkeley calls on the magistrates to investigate the inner workings of these gatherings of "the better sort," in order to protect the "outworks" of the state.[21]

Berkeley's sense of alarm was obviously growing, not because of the jocular antics of the rakes and hell-raisers of Dublin alone. He could see in the wider network of new deistic and freethinking clubs the intellectual source of the material attack on the Church (the tithe of agistment crisis of 1734–35) and of the indifference his National Bank plan faced, for all the advance work done by Prior, Madden and the Dublin Society. He wanted to crush the immediate "symptom" of "the licence and irreligion of the times," of course, and that was easily done. Laws against blasphemy existed and a short campaign in the House of Lords against "Kneller's bastard," Peter Lens, proved adequate to drive him from Ireland and to dissolve the Blasters. But Berkeley was after larger game.

Berkeley's *Discourse Addressed to the Magistrates* was tactically written to forward his campaign of repression of the enemies of the Church and its tithes. More fundamentally, it was directed at the weak logical link of Anglo-Irish libertine's politics. For they, like all other Anglo-Irish, depended on the authority of government (and the Magistrates) to legitimate their "Ascendancy." Without this authority, they, like all the other Anglo-Irish, would face a hostile indigenous population divided and weakened. Berkeley then pointed out that religion was central to governmental authority, and so if they launched a campaign to undermine religion (either through blasphemy or tithe evasion), they would ultimately subvert themselves.

Religion is at the intersection of the Divine and human government; hence it is both inevitable and indispensable. Here again Berkeley took a deistic intellectual gambit—i.e., their insistence on examining the notion of religion in general and of "religions" as a range of objects for comparative study instead of a fixation on the uniqueness of Christianity—outdoes it, and turns it against its creators.[22] He examined the writings or behavior of Roman, Greek, Babylonian, Persian, Chinese, Islamic, French, and English authorities (including the "very unsuspected writer," James Harrington) and finds a fundamental agreement on the need for governmental support and protection for religion and morality.[23]

The Blasters and other authors of "atheistical blasphemy" openly subvert "a religious awe and fear of God, being . . . the center that unites and the cement that connects all human society." Hence they are responsible for the consequences: filling Ireland with "highwaymen, house-breakers, murderers, fraudulent dealers, perjured witnesses, and every other pest of society."[24] Clearly, if the magistrates do not legally punish and "put out of countenance" those who display open contempt for God, then they undermine their own dignity and authority. Moreover, the aristocrats and rich merchants who either participated in or are entertained by deistical-satanic sallies prepared the stage for their own destruction:

> One thing it is evident they do not know; to wit, that while they rail at prejudice, they are undoing themselves: they do not comprehend (what hath been before hinted), that their whole figure, their political existence, is owning to certain vulgar prejudices, in favour of birth,

> title, or fortune, which are nothing of real worth either to mind or body; and yet cause the most worthless person to be respected.[25]

Berkeley was not above playing with the Blasters' fire and brimstone, as we can see here, but with an ironic Enlightenment twist, as he peered ahead to the French revolution and the dual conflagration of the aristocracy and Church.[26] Although he certainly could harken back to the *real* fires and dismemberments of the witch-hunt via a reference to "Nebuchadnezzar . . . [who] made a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which spoke anything amiss against God, should be cut in pieces, and their houses made a dung-hill."[27]

Significantly, Berkeley ended the *Discourse* with an extended parallel between economics and morality:

> The morals of a people are in this like their fortunes; when they feel a national shock, the worst doth not show itself immediately. Things make a shift to subsist for a time on the credit of old notions and dying opinions.[28]

But as the credit declined and the accumulated fortune dwindled, a new generation, grown up in a climate of Satanist pranks and freethinking sophistries, would create an "age of monsters" incapable of regenerating the lost credit and fortune of the land. Unless, of course, magistrates (from the King down to "the petty constable") recognize that their authority is derived from God and "manfully" protect it from blasphemers.

Berkeley's *Discourse* and his speech before the House of Lords was effective in that the Report of the Lord's Committee for Religion resolved on the prosecution of Peter Lens, and on directing "the Judges in their several circuits to charge the magistrates to put the laws in execution against immorality and profane cursing and swearing and gaming, and to inquire into atheistical and blasphemous clubs." Moreover, as a result of the Parliamentary agitation the atmosphere surrounding the "atheistical and blasphemous clubs" and their members turned hostile. The fate of Lord Santry, who was nearly hung for the killing of a porter a few months later, made it clear that membership in such clubs could strip one of the normal protections that came with title and fortune. The atmosphere was further poisoned by the Dublin publication in 1738 of *The Irish Blasters: or, The Votaries of Bac-*

chus—largely a translation of a part of the Thirty-Ninth Book of Livy's *Histories*—which told in blood-curdling detail the campaign of a Roman magistrate, Posthumous, to destroy a secret Bacchic society: with tortures, confessions about lurid sexual rites, and mass executions included. The author of the pamphlet hoped that "the Christian Magistrate may be spirited up by the Example of a Roman . . . and that the infamous Society of Men, known by the Title of BLASTERS, may as successfully be punished as the Roman Bacchanalians."[29] Berkeley could be gratified in knowing that he helped make the life of a Dublin satanist/deist/atheist/freemason club member in 1738–39 rather uncomfortable. But this was a small reward, for his revenge on this underworld did not so profoundly shake-up the fundamental moral-political climate to make his own project of a truly National Bank a reality.

Private bankers, Irish Patriots, "hard currency" reactionaries, and libertines in Dublin managed to keep Berkeley's National Bank plan from being given a serious airing in the Parliament in 1737–38. The weight of this opposition was substantial, but not necessarily decisive. For Berkeley's project was not totally dependent upon Anglo-Irish events and prejudices, he had Country-Party allies in England whose support could be adequate to force consideration of his proposal whatever the opposition in Dublin, *if* these allies had taken over Parliamentary power from Walpole *and* were interested in changing the place of Ireland in the colonial system.[30] The Excise Crisis gave Berkeley hope that the Walpolean path to accumulation could be terminated, but the events following the crisis and the election that followed were not encouraging, but neither were they cause for despair. Although Walpole was not voted out in 1734, his grip on power was loosened and the oppositional alliance of Tories, crypto-Jacobites, and oppositional Whigs proved to be formidable. But Walpole was far from dead. By the time the first of three installments of *The Querist* was in print (1735) Bolingbroke fled again to Paris in self-imposed exile. The Walpole administration slowly recovered its poise (beginning with its victory in 1734 Parliamentary elections) and was to rule until 1742. By the time Berkeley published the last installment of *The Querist* in 1737, Pope had begun his own retreat, feeling the threat of a libel suit from a Walpole ministry now on the offensive. In 1737 a playhouse licensing act passed Parliament requiring plays to be approved by the Lord

Chamberlin, a definite sign of danger for the literary opposition. In July 1738 Pope published the last of his "Satires" ending with these lines:

> Yes, the last Pen for Freedom let me draw
> When Truth stands trembling on the edge of Law:
> Are none, none living? Let me praise the Dead,
> And for that cause which made your fathers shine,
> Fall by the votes of their degenerate Line.

The old guard of the opposition seemed to be slowly eroding.

The Irish Parliamentary session of 1737–38, however, began in a climate of new crisis for the Walpole regime. In July of 1737 Frederick, the Prince of Wales, set up an independent court and offered himself as the figurehead of the anti-Walpolean opposition. This was quite important, since the opposition could not be "Jacobite-baited" while it was under his protection. Then, in November of 1737, Queen Caroline died. Her death was taken by many to be potentially fatal to Walpole, since Caroline was considered to be essential in mediating between the King and Walpole:

> Walpole wisely realized that Queen Caroline had more influence on the King in political matters than any of his mistresses. As he crudely put it, he seized "the right sow by the ear." Walpole would discuss political matters quite frankly with the Queen and often she was able to cajole her husband into following his advice, even though the King was not prepared to listen directly or personally to his minister's arguments.[31]

Many thought that without the Queen's intercessions and in the midst of a new dynastic Oedipal struggle, Walpole would lose his grip on the reins of power.

These events allowed the Opposition to stage a remarkable revival, but they were not promising for Berkeley's National Bank. The death of "Philosopher Queen" Caroline was as damaging to Berkeley's political prestige as it was to Walpole's political management. Caroline, as Princess of Wales, was the instigator of the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence and organized a weekly philosophy seminar to which Berkeley was often invited throughout the 1720s when he was in London. Berkeley was able to secure high office in the Church of

Ireland on his return to London after the collapse of the Bermuda Project only due to Caroline's patronage, as Joseph Stork, Berkeley earliest biographer, attests:

> After Dean Berkeley's return from Rhode Island, the Queen often commanded his attendance to discourse with him on what he had observed worthy of notice in America. His agreeable and instructive conversation engaged that discerning Princess so much in his favor, that the rich Deanery of Down in Ireland falling vacant, he was at her desire named to it, and the King's letter actually came over his appointment. But his friend Lord Burlington having neglected to notify the royal intentions in proper time to the Duke of Dorset, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, his Excellency was so offended at this disposal of the richest Deanery in Ireland without his concurrence, that it was thought proper not to press the matter any further. Her Majesty upon this declared, that since they would not suffer Dr. Berkeley to be a Dean in Ireland, he should be a Bishop.[32]

Caroline's evident concern for Berkeley's career would have given added aura to his political proposals, including that of the National Bank, partly because of her value to Walpole. If she was persuaded by The Querist's hints, then her support might have been enough for Walpole to relax his instinctual hostility toward any "innovations" in Ireland.[33] Her death, of course, stripped Berkeley's proposal of its potential regal power.

The 1737 estrangement of Frederick from the King and Queen was also problematic for Berkeley. The last substantive item in his March 3, 1737 campaign letter to Prior (quoted above) was about the prince:

> Last post a letter from an English bishop tells me, a difference between the king and prince is got into parliament, and that it seems to be big with mischief, if a speedy expedient be not found to heal the breach. It relates to the provision for his Royal Highness's family.[34]

The "difference" referred to was the Parliamentary opposition's attempt in February 1737 to vote £100,000 to Frederick instead of the £50,000 requested by Walpole and the Court. The opposition's motion was defeated by barely thirty votes in a crowded house largely because

forty Tories (some Jacobites among them) abstained "on the grounds that to carry the proposal would derogate from the royal prerogative."[35] Berkeley was clearly unhappy with the very news that gave the opposition joy. Subsequent developments would show a source for his apprehension.[36]

Walpole's decision to fight any increase in his annual allowance certainly alienated Frederick. When the Prince refused to have his wife give birth in the palace where the King and Queen were resident in July, Walpole had to forward a royal order evicting Frederick and his family from St. James Court. This was the breaking point. Frederick then openly allied with the opposition, but his move simultaneously transformed the center of gravity of anti-Walpolean politics and radically changed the strategy for provoking a ministerial revolution. The Parliamentary opposition to Walpole, as mentioned above, was ideologically exceedingly complex and contradictory (as the vote on Frederick's annual budget demonstrated). "Jacobite," "non-jurying Tory," "Country Party," "Old Whig," "Patriot Whig," and a wide assortment of mixtures of these political labels, as well as much opportunism, lead to a sense of virtual reality and old fashioned double dealing, as was clearly demonstrated by the easy compromises between "ins" and "outs" after Walpole's fall. Certainly if the volatility of historians' interpretative fashions is any indication, this period was and remains quite confusing. Was the Jacobite threat real? Did the Tory Party survive the '15? Was the Court/Country distinction of the pre-Civil War period applicable to the 1720s and 1730s? Were there any ideological conflicts in Parliament at all during this period? Wasn't all the fuss about who was in and who was out of power?[37]

Whatever the stability of its members' voting patterns or its precise relationship to the capitalist class composition of the day, it is certain that many in Parliament identified themselves with *the* Opposition to Walpole, which for our purposes can be distinguished into two phases: (I) between 1725 and 1735 (i.e., Bolingbroke's London arrival and departure) and (II) from 1737, when Frederick openly linked his name to the opposition, until to 1742, the fall of the Walpole ministry. The ideology of the first period was that of a "Country Party" (as described in a previous section), that of the second of a "Patriot Party," or, as H.T. Dickson put it, "The old Country programme was revived in a new 'Patriot' guise [in 1737]."[38] There was an overlap between both Country and Patriot frameworks, but also a marked difference in

emphasis. The most important one was the revaluation of the question of international trade and imperial aggression against Spain and France in the Americas.

The Excise crisis had shown to the Walpolean opposition that the distinction between "landed" and "moneyed" interests was inadequate to chart the dynamics of the capitalist class of the day. There was a "commercial interest" as well, centered in the cities with a "global reach," that was willing to join the opposition to Walpole and use its considerable resources to change the course of state policy. The alliance of import/export merchants with the Country Party gentry proved explosive in 1733, and although it could not drive Walpole from office (given the electoral machinery of the day) it appeared to be the most promising path to power among the Country Party politicians. But these merchants, after defeating the Excise Scheme, were colliding often with Walpole's foreign and commercial policies which emphasized the importance of peace and "great power" negotiations, especially with Spain and France, since these states had a history of using the Jacobite threat in any confrontation.[39]

The merchants were demanding that Walpole start "battering down the Chinese walls" of the Spanish Empire in the Americas, but Walpole's reply throughout the 1720s and 1730s had been dilatory. Many in the Parliamentary opposition, especially the Patriot Whigs, saw in this commercial demand an opening for a new politics which immediately coincided with the patriotic imagery stimulated by their new princely leader. Instead of a nostalgic party harkening to an idyllic, country past, the opposition was beginning to revive the often forgotten temporal dimension of the Future, with youth, struggle and conquest again on the agenda.[40] Some of the major figures and journalistic organs in this ideological transformation remained (*Craftsman*, Thomson, and Pope), but there were also new voices, attitudes and literary genres.[41]

Beginning in 1737–38 the London stage rang with patriotic plays and speeches, Miltonic blank verse took over from tinkling rhyming couplets to drum in the message, "Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves," while parliament and the Board of Trade were bombarded by merchants form British West Indies and America and ship owners from London, Bristol, Glasgow, Lancaster, Liverpool, and Edinburgh "with memorials addresses and petitions—at least four dozen between March 1738 and March 1739—against Spanish depredations, and demanded

redress."[42] The Patriot Whigs were taking the initiative and driving the opposition into an imperialist policy of war with Spain to right the presumed wrongs that Spanish *guarda costas* perpetrated against British ships, sailors, and merchants (who were most often guilty of violating Spanish prohibitions against trading with their colonies.)

By the time Berkeley had gone to Dublin to begin his campaign for an Irish National Bank, the new imperial, anti-Spanish thrust of the Walpolean opposition was apparent to all sophisticated observers. Berkeley's alarm in March 1737 over rumors of a split in the Royal family, undoubtedly intensified by the turn of events in July, was quite justified. For Berkeley's National Bank campaign and his "de-linking" economic strategy ironically needed Walpole's foreign policy of peace with the Catholic state powers of the Continent, especially Spain and France. Berkeley's project required a more autonomous Anglo-Irish ruling class that was less dependent upon English military force to crush an indigenous revolt. But it was almost an axiom of Irish history that whenever there was war with Catholic (and often pro-Jacobite) Spain or France, the probability of invasion, "priestly agitation," and generalized tension increased.[43] The Patriot opposition's demands for war immediately sent a message to the Irish Parliament to be prepared for domestic unrest and the resurgence of native Irish resistance instigated by outside powers, whatever the actual insurrectional intentions and possibilities of the Irish "natives." War would also mean the reduction of the army's presence in Ireland, which was the visible defense against a native Irish uprising.[44] Berkeley's plan to launch a more autonomous course for Ireland in the midst of a rising imperial war fever, generated by Berkeley's own allies in London, would have caused an immediate dissonance in the Irish parliament about the political consequences of the National Bank.

The 1737–38 economic conjuncture was also problematic for Berkeley's inward-looking strategy of national disengagement. Whatever the results of the "kingdom/colony" debate in political matters, Ireland was *de jure* part of the periphery of the British colonial system and *de rei* more than one half of Ireland's imports and exports went directly to Britain.[45] The onset of a Patriotic agitation for a war policy in London made any attempt at a delinking of Ireland from Britain moot. War was the arena where the colonial system was put to the test and its monopolized supply-demand interconnections most valued by the center.[46] Inevitably, an Anglo-Spanish war would bring embargoes on

the profitable Irish trade with Spain and France, directives to fill war-related needs, and greater taxation.[47] The Querist's image of an Ireland surrounded by wall of brass and tending its own monetary garden could not help but weaken in the midst of a Patriotic war waged to revenge Jenkins' ear and conquer large tracts of territory from the Spanish Empire. Ironically, it was Walpole's conciliatory foreign policy that was crucial to the success of Berkeley's plan, and it was this policy that proved to be Walpole's "weak link." When it broke, Walpole fell, but so did Berkeley's Bank.

The major political events in London in 1737–38 would have undermined the confidence of anyone who, being neither a private banker, an "Irish Patriot," a gold bug, or a libertine, might have supported Berkeley's Bank plan. The abysmal failure of his campaign seemed inevitable in the face of the shifting climate of his day. His hopes were rooted in a rapidly dissolving political opposition that valued decentralization of power and economic localism just as he was preparing to launch his project. Moreover, his theoretical method—economic passive obedience and theodicy—was not strategic; it provoked an atemporal, utopian hope, inviting historical failure.

A few years after his failure, Berkeley defended the atemporality of his hopes and utopias at the moment of crisis the Walpolean opposition had been trying to provoke for almost two decades: Walpole's fall from power in early 1742. To his friend Gervais in Dublin he wrote:

> I find by your letter, the reigning distemper at the Irish Court is disappointment. A man of less spirits and alacrity would be apt to cry out, *Spes et fortuna valete*, &c., but my advice is, never to quit your hopes. Hope is often better than enjoyment. Hope is often the cause as well as the effect of youth. It is certainly a very pleasant and healthy passion. A hopeless person is deserted by himself; and he who forsakes himself is soon forsaken by friends and fortune.[48]

while to John Percival's son, a Westminister MP in the midst of the negotiations concerning the constitution of the post-Walpolean ministry, he wrote:

> Utopian schemes (I grant) are not suited to the present times, but a scheme the most perfect *in futuro* may take place in idea at present. The model or idea cannot be too perfect though perhaps it may

> never be perfectly attained in fact. Things though not adequate to a rule, will yet be less crooked for being, even clumsily, applied to it. And though no man hits the mark, they who come nearest merit applause.[49]

These Platonic-Christian sentiments constitute an *apolgia sua vita* for Berkeley's national Bank and currency campaign. He clearly did not see the 1742 post-Walpolean world any more congenial to his "utopian" idea than that of 1737–38. He kept his hopes, however, even though by the time of the great frost and famine of 1740, when the bodies of frozen children littered the Irish roads, he had abandoned his Bank and turned to his next utopia of social transformation: tar-water.[50]

NOTES

1. *Letters*, n. 187, B. to Prior, March 3, 1737, pp. 244–45. The "brief abstract" was a letter to A.B. Esq. entitled "The Plan or Sketch of a National Bank" and reprinted in Johnston (1970: 205–8).

2. The *Considerations* includes the following projection: "By such diffussion and Influence of the National Bank, a currency of Credit equal to Cash will be dispersed to the remotest Parts of the Kingdom, all Manufacture, Labour, and Industry receive a new life and Vigour, whereby in a little Time none but the sluggard, Lazy and Indolent can be poor."

3. Clarke (1951: 53).

4. Madden's *Reflections and Resolutions* is structured as a set of resolutions which seem to have been inspired as responses to *The Querist's* queries. For example, his last resolutions appropriate to Members of Parliament include the following:

> XXX. We resolve as Members of Parliament, that we will promote such sumptuary laws, as will be most conducive to reform the manners of our people, by fencing against luxury and vanity in the better sort, and securing sobriety and frugality in the lower.
>
> XXXI. We resolve as members of Parliament, to remedy by all possible ways and means in our power, that great obstruction to the prosperity of this nation, the want of hands.
>
> XXXII. We resolve as members of Parliament, to provide and contrive all the best methods and ways we can for employing our people and encreasing their industry.

5. Johnston (1970: 124).

6. See Cullen (1983: 26–30). Indeed, in Berkeley's correspondence to his lawyer, Thomas Prior, throughout the 1720s and 1730s, we find him, like many

other absentee landlords and clerics, asking Prior to carry on his financial affairs through the banking firm of Swift and Co.

7. For details on this and other aspects of private banking in early eighteenth-century Ireland see Hall (1959: 1–26), "Banking Conditions in Ireland before 1783."

8. The Bank of Ireland's structure was modeled on the Bank of England's. It was essentially a private corporate bank, owned by subscribers who put up the initial capital, but its main customers was to be the Irish government. Berkeley's Bank, as we saw in Chapter III, was to be owned and managed by the Government, it was similar to the Banque Royale of France. For more details on the aborted 1720–21 Bank of Ireland see Hall (1959). Berkeley wrote in "Plan or Sketch of a National Bank": "We have had, indeed, Schemes of private Association formerly proposed, which some may Mistake for National Banks. But it doth not appear, that any Scheme of this Nature was every proposed in these Kingdoms," in Johnston (1970: 208).

9. Quoted in Johnston (1970: 47).

10. Quoted in Hall (1959: 20).

11. Quoted in Hall (1959: 25).

12. For a discussion of Freethinkers as an anticlerical, instead of a crypto-atheistic, movement see Champion (1992). Libertinism enters into our story this time, however, under a Mandevillian and rakish guise.

13. "Influence" was a popular political term of the day, borrowed from the dictionary of the occult and transformed, via Newtonian physics, into the glossary of Walpolean politics, i.e., the effecting of events at a distance by hidden or screened forces.

14. A similar debate concerning the pre-requisites of a monetary society has broken out in the field of economic sociology in the last two decades, pitting neo-Mandevillean "economics imperialists" with neo-Polanyesque social "embeddedness" theorists. For a discussion of the network of trust and obligation relations that is presupposed by money see Swedberg (1990) and Granovetter and Swedberg (1992).

15. From "A report from the Lord's Committee for Religion, appointed to examine into the causes of the present notorious immorality and profaneness" in Luce and Jessop (1953vi: 197).

16. For a description of these two clubs and the general atmosphere surrounding them see Jones (1942: 51–54, 64–79); Gilbert (1867: 215–57); Peter (1907: 277–83); Craig (1952: 153–54). The temperature surrounding these satanic, hell-raising clubs was definitely increased in 1738. After the Parliamentary investigation and report in February-March one of the most celebrated incidents in Irish criminal history took place in August having Hell-Fire Club member Lord Santry as its principal agent. Apparently, Santry, during a binge, stabbed a porter named Laughlin Murphy in Palmerstown. He left the tavern, after giving the landlord four pounds to "settle things." Normally that would have been the end of it, had Santry not been so notable a member of the satanic set. But Murphy died a month later due to his wounds and, most surprising, Santry was arrested. He was tried before his peers in the House of Lords, convicted of murder, and sentenced to hang. After elaborate negotiations, which included Santry's uncle's threat to divert the water

supply of Dublin if he was executed, Lord Santry was allowed to escape to England where he died, bereft of title, in 1751. The story can be found in Jones (1942: 69–70).

17. On the end of the witch-hunt see Thomas (1971: 570–83); Russell (1980: 122–37). For a classic story of the confrontation of a satanic aristocrat like Rosse and a modernizing bourgeois like Samuel Madden (*The Querist's* editor), see Jones (1942: 65–66).

18. *Dis* 108.

19. The club and society was the seed of "civil society" as it is contemporaneously used (in contradistinction to Hegel's and Marx's use of the concept. An early theorist of this reincarnation of the term is Habermas (1989).

20. On the roles of Madden and Prior in the formation and operation of the first phase of the Dublin Society see de Vere White (1955: 1–32).

21. "The worse sort" was similarly creating new social spaces in this period. The workers' combinations, pirate utopias, and maroon villages created a rhizome of communication and revolt throughout the British Atlantic and Caribbean. See Malcolmson (1984); Rediker (1987), and Wilson (1995).

22. An interesting discussion of history of the discipline of comparative religion in deism see Harrison (1990: 139–46). John Toland's writings was a source of this "gambit," see Daniel (1984: 21–24 and *passim*).

23. Harrington is "unsuspected" since he often had been included in the anticlerical ranks.

24. *Dis* 111.

25. *Dis* 106.

26. There is a chapter to be written on Berkeley and the Devil, of course. For if spirits can create ideas, then why should the only two sources of ideas be God and the Self? Berkeley seemed to be on the cusp between the end of the older substantialization of Evil, the Devil, so central to the witch-hunt ideology, and the functionalization and interiorization of Evil that Foucault writes about in his works on Madness, Sexuality, and Disease (although Foucault seems to have been oblivious to the witch-hunt).

27. *Dis* 110.

28. *Dis* 112.

29. McGowan (1982/83: 1–4) suggests that Berkeley might be the author of this pamphlet because the rhetoric and purpose of *The Irish Blasters* is similar to the *Discourse*.

30. It was for that reason that Berkeley arranged for the simultaneous publication of the three parts of *The Querist* in England with the help of Sir John Percival, Earl of Egmont. On Thursday, May 27, 1736, for example, Percival wrote in his Diary, "I also send Bishop Berkeley's second part of Queries to Mr. Richardson to be printed." Great Britain. Royal Commission of Historical Manuscripts (1923: 275).

31. Dickson (1973: 69–70).

32. Joseph Stock, "An Account of the Life of George Berkeley (1776)" in Berman (1989: 35–36). A more accurate picture of Berkeley's vicissitudes in his hunt for preferment on his return from Rhode Island see Luce (1949: 155–58). His Tory *cum* Jacobite past, his "immaterialism," his Bermuda project came back to

haunt him, but the Queen's support (along with his friend Percival's) was enough to overcome the resistance.

33. For Walpole's political management of Ireland and the creation of the "undertaker" system (which basically required that initiatives in Ireland should emanate from London) see Hayton (1984: 95–119).

34. *Letters*, n. 187, p. 245.

35. Speck (1977: 237).

36. He might have also heard the rumor that Frederick had joined the Freemasons in 1737.

37. The literature on the debate is immense. For a tendentious introduction see Clark (1986: 141–63); for a semantic genealogy of "Whig" see Pocock (1985: 215–310).

38. Dickson (1973: 180).

39. For a discussion of the "political motives" of Walpole's economic policies see Brisco (1967: 207–17).

40. For a description of the opposition as nostalgic see Kramnick (1968: 5–6). Kramnick sums up Bolingbroke's position as, in essence, "reactionary" and Walpole as "progressive": "The old order sought by Bolingbroke in his nostalgic flight from the political and economic innovations of his day was a dream which could not suffice for this new age. Walpole and his world represented an essential step on the path to a stable and modern British economy and polity."

41. For a more through discussion of this ideological transformation see Wilson (1988); Gerrard (1994), especially Part I, pp. 3–97; Goldgar (1976: 163–85).

42. Wilson (1988: 78).

43. This axiom continued to be affirmed down through the end of eighteenth century and it certainly applied to the "War of Jenkins' Ear." David Dickson, for example, in Dickson (1987: 85) notes, "Rumours of Spanish-backed invasion of Ireland circulated through the country in 1740, but more firmly-based reports of an intended French invasion of Ireland or England in February 1744, on the eve of the French declaration of war, led to drastic anti-catholic measures by Devonshire's administration: all magistrates in the country were instructed 'strictly to put in execution' all penal laws relating to ecclesiastics and firearms."

44. The Irish "natives" passive response to the '45 was a spectacular counter-example to the axiom. For a discussion of this passivity see Dickson (1987: 86–87); Berkeley wrote an open letter at the time directed to the Irish Catholics urging their non-resistance. But like all axioms, it survived quite a bit of countervailing evidence.

45. See Cullen (1968: 45).

46. War goes to the heart of the "mercantilism as a system of power" which "[forces] economic policy into the service of power as an end in itself." Therefore war is the primary act of the state, as Colbert aphorized: "Trade is the source of finance and finance is the vital nerve of war." For a classic discussion of mercantilism as a system of power see Heckscher (1955: 13–49). The development of the eighteenth-century debate between mercantilist *machtpolitik* and the irenic potentialities of capitalist development is traced in Hirschman (1977: 48–66). Although a discourse that incorporated the position that "money-making" is a non-violent

activity in the context of the slave trade and genocide in the Americas must have had a huge gullet.

47. The embargoes, directives and taxation indeed did take place, see Dickson, (1987: 85). The reasons for the embargo are nicely presented by Cullen (1972: 56–57): "While in many wars some official countenancing of trade with the enemy continued, this toleration never extended in the eighteenth century to provisions. Given the general dependence by European navies and their support ships on Irish beef in particular, the official policy was to take all steps possible to prevent provisions reaching actual or prospective enemies. As the prospect of war led to a general upsurge in demand for Irish provisions, the first step in the enforcement of the policy was the imposition of a general embargo. This was not intended to last. While imposed, it had the advantage of depriving the enemy of provisions and at the same time ensuring that enhanced foreign demand might not reduce supplies for the provision of the English navy." What was even more catastrophic for the Querist, for Berkeley and for Ireland was the war-related famine of 1740 which ended in the death of between an eighth to a fifth of the island's population.

48. *Letters*, n. 206, Feb. 2, 1742, pp. 259–60.

49. *Letters*, n. 209, March 28, 1742, p. 262.

50. The Irish famine of 1740, like most other famines, had an epidemic phase and Berkeley tried to deal with fevers, dysentery and diarrhea through the use of various remedies. He found tar water the most effective and in 1744 he wrote *Siris: A Chain of Philosophical Inquiries concerning the Virtues of Tar-water and Divers Subjects Connected Together and Arising One from Another.*

Conclusion: Instructions for Dismounting from Sejanus's Golden Horse[1]

III. 291. Whether gold may not be compared
to Sejanus's horse, if we consider its passage
through the world, and the fate of those
nations which have been successively
possessed thereof?
George Berkeley, *The Querist*

The argument of this book has been that the writing of *The Querist* can be explained by showing how Berkeley deployed the evolving matrix of philosophical and semantic concepts he developed in the previous three decades to solve the class problematic he and his circle faced in 1734–35 and to create a strategy of capitalist development in Ireland. Although commentators from Karl Marx to Jean-Joseph Goux have noted the conceptual affinity between Berkeley's theory of money and his "idealist" philosophy, few have noted how the Querist's form of money was over-determined by the class dynamics of early eighteenth-century Ireland.[2] The problematic Berkeley and his circle faced was complex, since it involved three powerful social forces: the British state's imperial economic policy, the Anglo-Irish gentry's consumption impulses, and the Irish Catholics' stubborn passive refusal of work. Of the three, the last posed the greatest and most paradoxical problem. For its solution required not the all-too-familiar repressive attitude to "native" Irish workers exhibited since the days of Elizabeth, but rather their excitation and the development of their powers to labor. After all, the Cromwellian experiment in the 1650s of transforming Irish labor wholesale into chattel slave labor did not prove promising.

Consequently, the solution to the Irish labor problem required a completely different approach from Locke's policy of demonetarizing the proletariat. Money, for Berkeley, had to *wake up* those who have abandoned themselves to "cynical content" in dirt and beggary. Indeed, it was the overcoming of this passive aggressive, self-inflicted catalepsy of the Irish "natives" that was at the heart of his theory of money.

Berkeley's ingenious solution to the class problematic he faced ended in failure. The Querist's proposals for a new form of money and a National Bank failed to even be defeated in the 1737–38 legislative session of the Irish Parliament, since they did not garner enough support to even be proposed as a bill that could be voted down in Parliament. But Berkeley did not abandon this project even while he was involved in proselytizing his tar water pharmacology in the 1740s. This can be seen in his *Words to the Wise* in 1749 and, more pertinent to us, in the second and third editions of *The Querist* published in 1750 and 1752 respectively. Berkeley eschewed his quizzical pseudonymity in these editions, only to eviscerate the text. The 1752 final edition, which is the one most readers encounter, has 595 queries instead of the original's 895. Berkeley deleted 345 queries and only added 45, so that in sum *The Querist* was cut by a third.

The cuts were not arbitrary, however, for they mostly related to "the sketch or plan for a National Bank," as he admitted in his 1750 "Advertisement." His fundamental queries about money and banking and the general anti-metallist provocation of *The Querist* were not altered. Moreover, Berkeley rearranged neither the order of the presentation of themes nor the linear structure of *The Querist*. Though large blocks of queries were cut and some additions were made, the original 550 queries that remained still kept their ordinal position with respect to each other.

Ellen Leyburn was one of the few commentators who reflected on these changes. She argued that they were the result of the late Berkeley's new rhetorical strategy. The Berkeley of 1735–37 was too biting in his irony and, she claimed, in 1750–52 he decided to tone down *The Querist*. She wrote:

> The revised *Querist* is far from being free of exhortation, but the questions of stinging irony are gone. The change is probably due in part to the reassertion of Berkeley's habitual policy of trying to win others to his way of thinking by persuasion instead of by harsher

> methods. He had almost steadily followed the admonitions he had entered in his *Commonplace Book* in his Trinity College days not to be angry and to rein in his satirical nature. He probably realized that the rein had been too much loosened in the original edition of *The Querist* and that his sarcasm had weakened the effectiveness of the pamphlets.[3]

Leyburn's hypothesis of an irenic elder Berkeley correcting the savage indignation of his engagé past is attractive, but does it actually account for the thick irony of a number of additions? Consider, for example, some of the queries in the series 335-344 that were added in the revision:

> 335. Whether there be a more wretched, and at the same time a more unpitied case, than for men to make precedents for their own undoing?
> 336. Whether to determine about the rights and properties of men by other rules than the law be not dangerous?
> 337. Whether those men who move the corner-stones of a constitution may not pull an old house on their own heads?
> 340. If the revenues allotted for the encouragement of religion and learning were made hereditary in the hands of a dozen lay lords and as many overgrown commoners, whether the public would be much the better for it?
> 341. Whether the Church's patrimony belongs to one tribe alone; and whether every man's son, brother, or himself, may not, if he please, be qualified to share therein?
> 342. What is there in the clergy to create a jealousy in the public? Of what would the public lose by it, if every squire in the land wore a black coat, said his prayers and was obliged to reside?

These queries take up the issue of the tithe more than a decade after the Church of Ireland had accepted the Anglo-Irish gentry's refusal to the agistment tithe as a *fait accompli*. But Berkeley's bitterness and irony is as thick in 1752 as it was in 1735–37. These queries are hardly good evidence for the mellowing of the Bishop.

On the contrary, one can see the additional queries as evidence that he continued to try to solve his original problematic with other means besides the National Bank scheme that he saw as being a dead letter at

the time. For example, in the new queries of the revised edition (265–268) he suggested that the best way to make the wealthy Catholic merchants more loyal to the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy would be for them to be allowed to own land. Thus he queries the fundamental material principle of the Penal Laws:

> 265. Whether a squire possessed of land to the value of a thousand pounds per annum, or a merchant worth twenty thousand pounds in cash, would have most power to do good or evil upon any emergency? And whether the suffering Roman Catholics to purchase forfeited lands would not be a good policy, as tending to unite their interest with that of the government?

Similarly, in new query 191 he suggested the ending of the educational segregation of Catholics:

> 191. Whether in imitation of the Jesuits at Paris, who admit Protestants to study in their colleges, it may not be right for us also to admit Roman Catholics into our college, without obliging them to attend chapel duties, or catechisms, or divinity lectures? And whether this might not keep money in the kingdom, and prevent the prejudices or a foreign education?

In this he queried the fundamental ideological principle of the Penal Laws. With these two queries Berkeley was continuing the path of trying to make the surplus accumulated by the successful Catholics available for general circulation *in Ireland.*[4] Perhaps this reasoning was: if the poor Irish natives cannot be attracted into the wage labor market given the failure of the National Bank scheme, then at least the wealthier Catholic merchants and middlemen could be tempted to buy land in Ireland and educate their sons at Trinity instead of buying guns in France for their sons enlisted in the French army!

When I examine the forty-five additional queries—which also include an ironic subversion of the dowry system prevalent among the Anglo-Irish gentry—I get a rather different impression from Leyburn's picture of an irenic Berkeley philosophically accepting his defeat in a sort of stoic content. If anything, *The Querist* revised, shorn of the technical minutiae concerning the day-to-day running of a National Bank and the historical details of previous banking institutions, was a

much more radical antagonist to the eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish Establishment's hegemonic content than the original pamphlets.

Within a few months of the publication of the 1752 revision of *The Querist*, George Berkeley died and left his quizzical anti-text alone to face the gaze of history. It has been a paradoxical gaze indeed. On the one side, Berkeley was clearly the most accurate prophet of the empiricist triad—Locke, Hume, and himself— in the matter of money. After all, Locke and Hume were metallists—granted, with different motivations and justifications—while Berkeley was decidedly not. He foresaw and justified the specieless economies of today (while surrounded by specie-dominated ones in his time) in the way that the anti-monarchical political theorists of the seventeenth century saw the possibility (even necessity) of monarchless states even though surrounded by monarchical ones. One would have expected serious attention paid to a Bishop and philosopher with a Mosaic monetary vision.

But such expectations have not been satisfied, for Locke and Hume are much more formidable figures in the estimation of the history of modern economies. Locke is often credited with presenting the first sophisticated version of the quantity theory of money, while Hume is still revisited for his hydraulic theory of international trade along with his many other lasting theoretical achievements. Berkeley's contributions to the philosophy and economics of money are often seen to pale beside the monumental contributions to economics of his other partners in the "British empiricist" triad.[5]

Berkeley's marginalization in historical discourse is perversely similar to John Law's. Both figures were essentially correct in projecting their vision of a specie-less economy, and have been vindicated in an extraordinary way by events since 1971. But Law was excoriated by two and a half centuries of metallist orthodoxy as being a charlatan of genius—but a charlatan and crank for all that—while Berkeley's reputation for "every virtue under heaven" made him the perfect target for being dismissed as an airy, abstracted philosopher angelically out of touch with material reality.[6]

How can one explain this bizarre inversion of the platitude: "History is written by the victors"? Berkeley was the historical victor, but Locke's and Hume's posthumous success arose from the fact that they were the early architects of modernist textuality, of the developmentalist paradigm, and of the gold standard which still hold sway even in

these so-called "post-modern" times. Berkeley's obscurity lay in the fact that he stood against the grain on all three counts. His singularity, however, poses for us who inhabit the other side of Locke's and Hume's textuality, developmentalism, and specieism a unique perspective on *The Querist*, since it allows us to note the peculiar "legacies" Berkeley left and to retrieve them. Let us consider each in turn.

Legacy I: Economic thought should not be presented in an alienated, axiomatized form. Economic life is an expression of human freedom and power (which cannot be reduced into a decision-theoretic mechanism). Discourse concerning the economic rules of life must engage and motivate this freedom.

Legacy II: The model of economic development which premises integration into the world market (which is shared by both mercantilism and liberalism alike) is bound to fail in a country inhabited by classes that have not been trained to behave in such markets. If a nation in such a premature situation is compelled to enter into the world market (via "shock therapy" procedures), the result is bound to be catastrophic for a large proportion of the population.

Legacy III: Simply dismounting from Sejanus's golden horse (i.e., the defetishizing of specie) does not lead automatically to a healthy financial system. Another peril assails at the very moment of liberation from the alienation of specie: infinite fancy. The exchange of signs of wealth without the concomitant "excitement of the industry of mankind" can lead to catastrophe, for fancy is infinite and social momentum is finite. Thus fancy must be controlled by rules and a will, hence the need for state enforcement of controls of monetary growth in the very moment of defetishization.

I recognize, of course, that a legacy for one person might be another's encumbrance, and that the parceling out of a treasure can be accomplished in many ways, more or less just. Moreover, like all gifts from the dead, legacies are a mixed blessing for the living. For they have within them implications that fatally limit their deployment in another terrain (in our case, three centuries later in a stage of capitalist "globalization"). In this conclusion I will emphasize the positive aspects of Berkeley's legacies for contemporary economic life and thought, with implicit provisos emanating from his assumption of an infinite, unitary spirit continually interrogating humanity, viz., God. With that noted, let us turn to *The Querist*'s treasures.

Post-Modern Textuality

It is obvious that Berkeley's *The Querist* is stylistically and conceptually more sophisticated than any work of either Locke's or Hume's on a number of counts.

First, it is an early modern anti-text satisfying all the typical post-modern criteria: non-referentiality, semantic openness, self-reflexiveness, rejection of argumentative and axiomatic structures.[7] The mere fact that it is constructed out of 895 queries proves its quintessential non-referentiality. Moreover, these queries are sequenced in a musical rather than a deductivist manner, to emphasize repetition, rhythm, and suggestion. Finally, the "voice" of the Querist is sensitive to the inter-reflexivity of his queries, i.e., the true "author" of *The Querist* is the absent one, the active reader, who answers the queries to create the text.

Berkeley's query series is in stark contrast to Locke's bureaucratic reports or Hume's essays, although all were, in a way, inspired by different aspects of Newtonianism.

Locke's dry, febrile prose in his works on money was inspired by the Newtonian axiomatic approach to questions of social life. After all, for Locke questions involving morality, money, and mathematics contrasted his stance to economic issues from that of the projector and the enthusiast both in *content* and *form*, for he saw the projector and enthusiast as future and past mortal enemies respectively of the accumulation process. Locke was in a battle to impose an "idea-standard" on language, i.e., the ideal was that "each word would be backed by a publicly recognized, temporally durable, conceptually distinct and determinate idea" (Caffentzis 1989: 122–23). The semantic battle Locke was engaged in required the type of prose typical of the contemporary bureaucrat: "the gnarled, quizzical, and surprising grammatical constructions of a Shakespeare, a Browne or a Milton were . . . reduced to a set of relatively limited prose structures, while the penchant for the couplet perfectly expressed this stratagem in poetry" (Caffentzis 1989: 122).

Hume's economic essay form appealed to the experimental and empirical side of Newtonianism and to his reader's practical imagination. It was a literary equivalent to the "application of experimental philosophy to moral subjects" he proposed as his research program in the *Treatise* (Hume 1888: xx). For "experimental philosophy" was a

code word for Newtonianism in the early eighteenth century. As M. A. Box points out:

> The continuity of the *Treatise* as the political essays resides in their sharing of Hume's humanist-inspired empiricist program. . . . The empiricist movement can be seen as having been motivated in part by the need to distinguish between questions that could and could not in their natures allow of progress. . . . With his attacks on adulterate philosophy Hume had sought to harness to the empiricist cause the anti-metaphysical sentiment of the reading public (Box 1990: 148–49).

The graceful movement from general hypotheses to particular history and back again that is so much part of the literary strategy of Hume's economic essays is self-consciously reminiscent of Newton's "Rules in Philosophy." In the beginning "Of Commerce," for example, he states his method clearly:

> General reasonings seem intricate, merely because they are general; nor is it easy for the bulk of mankind to distinguish, in a great number of particulars, that common circumstance in which they all agree, or to extract it, pure and unmixed, from the other superfluous circumstances. . . . But however intricate they may seem, 'tis certain, that general principles, if just and sound, must always prevail in the general course of things. . . . I thought his introduction necessary before the following discourses on commerce, money, interest, balance of trade., etc., where, perhaps, there will occur some principles which are uncommon, and which may seem too refined and subtle for such vulgar subjects. If false, let them be rejected: But no one ought to entertain a prejudice against them, merely because they are out of the common road (Hume 1758: 282–83).

Berkeley rejected the axiomatic and the empirical aspects of Newtonianism in his choice of genre when dealing with money. He appealed instead to the quizzical Newton of the *Opticks*, a text which was enormously popular among scientists like Ben Franklin, and was perhaps the most cited scientific work in the literary works of that century.[8] In posing his monetary and economic thoughts in an absolutely interlocutory manner, Berkeley undermined the ontological

and semantic presuppositions of Locke's and Hume's literary styles in the same way that Newton's queries subverted in both form and content the mechanistic philosophy he was overly taken to be committed to.

What is the legacy of Berkeley's economic rhetoric? Why has it taken so long to be appreciated? Berkeley's queries bring into focus a maxim that is embarrassing to the makers of "iron laws" in the past and to the "rocket scientists" of the present. It is a maxim that Donald McCloskey has emphasized in this critique of modernism in economics again and again: *good economics is good conversation*. That is, the point of economic discourse is neither prediction of future events nor adherence to any pure "scientific methodology" (the purported ideals of modernism), but it is to answer the question, "What methods must I use to persuade an audience?" (McCloskey 1986: 35). This is inevitable, since the very content of the discipline is, as Berkeley suggested, continually open to the actions and powers of the participants. Economic life, just as any other aspect of human sign-producing activity, is an exercise of human freedom and, in capitalism, struggle. The so-called objective conditions of a country's economy (fertility of soil, climate, even the genetic codes of its inhabitant) do not determine its performance, because it is based upon the creative sign-producing powers of its inhabitants.

No one is free to ignore the force that conditions this maxim. Just as even God must convince his creatures of the wisdom of the rules of nature, given their paradoxical freedom, the legislature must do even more to convince its subjects of the wisdom of its economic "laws."

How else to carry on this conversation than in the way that God does, i.e., through a continual interrogation? The interrogation is aimed not so much to get the "right answer" but at making it clear to the respondent that s/he produces the (economic) text, it is not a product of objective, alienated laws known only by "experts." This methodological amateurism explains Berkeley's use of the epigraph to Part III—"Consult not with the Merchant concerning Exchange"—and the later "Advertisement" of *The Querist*—"I apprehend the same censure on this that I incurred upon another occasion, for meddling out of my profession; though to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, by promoting honest industry, will, perhaps, be deemed no improper employment for a clergyman who still thinks himself a member of the commonwealth." This approach to economics transfers the liberty

found in the quizzical text of *The Querist* into the action that realizes the series of answers to the query-series in order to create a possible world. This approach is a powerful weapon for those who reject the resplendent modernist orthodoxy continually presented as a sort of triumphant determinism by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization known as "the Washington Consensus." This is the first legacy of *The Querist*.

POST-DEVELOPMENT

Berkeley's second legacy concerns the notion of development, for *The Querist* still speaks directly but quizzically to us as we face an epochal crisis of development. Ireland of the 1730s—with its "native Irish" cynics passively resisting their total expropriation (land, body, and soul) by the Anglo-Irish settler class—increasingly appears to be a model of many parts of the planet that have been "left out" of capitalist development. Berkeley was writing before the evolutionist paradigm of capitalist development was established; we, who are living after the crisis of this paradigm, can learn from and profitably reflect on the political and class constraints he confronted.

Technically, this developmentalist paradigm was officially formulated at the end of World War II (Esteva [1992]; Bernasconi [1998]), but its roots go back to Locke and the Scottish Enlightenment. As Locke saw it, the boost to productivity given by the introduction of money (and the possibility of accumulation it provided), led to the gradual control of the planet's resources by the "industrious and rational," who eventually created conditions that improved the "Conveniences of Life" for every member of their society (whatever their status as property holders).

Hume's ranking of commercial society as the highest available for the historical defined human race echoed Locke and potentiated the "stages of civil society" schema that was so much a part of the framework of Scottish Enlightenment thought. But the path of development for both thinkers is always through the world market that exposes a local, parochial set of values to a universal arena that inevitably provokes a transformation to universalism.

Berkeley, however, was skeptical of the axiomatic positivity of integration into the world market will have on the health of an

economy, especially in the case of Ireland. In the first pamphlet of *The Querist*, he plays upon the hegemonic certainty of agoraphilia in asking:

> I. 114. Whether there is not a great difference between Holland and Ireland? And whether foreign Commerce without which the one could not subsist, be so necessary for the other?

> I. 128. Whether the Apology which is made for foreign Luxury in England, to wit, that they could not carry on their Trade without Imports as well as Exports, will hold in Ireland?

He then evokes a counter-factual (almost Gulliverian) imagination, in the query:

> I. 140. Whether, if there was a Wall of Brass a thousand Cubits high, round this Kingdom, our Natives might not nevertheless live cleanly and comfortably, till the Land, and reap the Fruits of it?

The majority thrust of his queries between I. 100–181 is to suggest to his readers that it is folly for a country that is not yet capable of feeding its population to engage the world market by exporting "provisions" and importing luxury items like wines, dresses, and timber. Although Hume's response to the "rich country-poor country" problematic was almost two decades away, Berkeley found its weak link: the inability of either the gentry or the natives of Ireland to receive the correct signals from the "commerce with strangers." The integration into the world market can lead to luxury consumption by the rich and further degradation of the poor.

The Querist does not call for a universal retreat from the world market by all nations, as he has been sometimes interpreted. Obviously, some countries like Holland must enter the world market to sustain their status. But he queries the universality of agoraphilia, especially for nations like Ireland that find themselves with a huge population of paupers. To allow wealthy individuals in these societies free access to the world market would end in "madness." He queries:

> I. 176. Whether Trade be not then on a right Foot, when foreign Commodities are imported in Exchange only for domestic Superfluities?

These suggested rules for world trade imply that the Querist is not committed to universal autarky or even autarky in one country. He takes a self-potentiating approach to the matter:

> I. 68. Whether a People, who had provided themselves with the Necessaries of Life in good Plenty, would not soon extend their Industry to new Arts and new Branches of Commerce?
>
> I. 134. Whether a general Habit of living well would not produce Numbers and Industry; and whether, considering the Tendency of human Kind, the Consequence thereof would not be foreign Trade and Riches, how unnecessary soever?

Thus, the Querist questioned the assumption that Trade will automatically create its own demand. A nation needs a period of training which can take decades, he hints, before it can profitably open up its economy to the world market. There is no rational reaction to commodities in a population which is committed to "a cynical Content in Dirt and Beggary," and to a gentry that is both suspicious of the British state and lives in slavish imitation of the latest styles in London.

This skepticism is a crucial legacy at this moment when there is a crisis of development generated both internally (the increasing gap of incomes between rich countries and poor) as well as externally (due to environmental limitations). The Querist suggested that the world market is no magic solution to the problems of poverty long before liberal ideology came into existence claiming the contrary. Indeed, if the Querist's questioning descriptions of Ireland were correct, integration into a world market can create new incentives for enclosing the means of subsistence for a large proportion of the population without a concomitant increase in employment elsewhere in the country.

It appears that in the process of dismounting from Sejanus's golden horse, the mainstream neo-liberal economic theorists have leaped onto an even more cursed steed, whose substance is, however, immaterial, even though its serial calamities are substantial enough. Perhaps an increased consciousness of Berkeley's second legacy can give some more courage to leap from this destructive nightmare.

POST-MONETARY

The final legacy is Berkeley's discovery of the "idealism" in the money form that is now becoming a gross fact of global economic life. Berkeley's philosophy of money (which radically eschewed the pathos of equal exchange and durable value) can be heard more clearly in a period when "xenomoney" and "virtual money" exchanges begin to dwarf, quantitatively, commodity transactions in the world market, and the Future becomes the dominant temporal dimension of economic activity (in the market for "futures contracts" and "derivatives").[9]

Berkeley's eighteenth-century failure has made for his late twentieth-century success, for the Querist's notion of money prefigures the post-1971 conception and practice of money on the international market. The circulatory, disembodied aspects of money—the very Berkeleyan essence of his notional approach to money—seems to have been realized with a vengeance, once Nixon was forced to dismount from Sejanus's golden horse. Ironically, the form of money Berkeley proselytized in the eighteenth century to escape the domestic consequences of the world market became the world market's money form in the late twentieth century.

What Marx took to be the ultimate dismissal—"Because tokens can be substituted for precious metals in the sphere of circulation, Berkeley concludes that these tokens in their turn represent *nothing*"—reveals the secret power of Berkeley's conception of money in the late twentieth century, when only the most diaphanous terms can be used to describe the money form.[10] Marx found in *The Querist* a set of profound confusions between measure of value with the standard of price and with a means of circulation, but his nihilistic interpretation of Berkeley, however, is inaccurate. It is not that money represents nothing in *The Querist*, but rather that money does not represent at all. It is a gift from society that allows its recipients to act and show his/her powers in a return-gift.

This is not to say that the contemporary form of money is identical to Berkeley's vision. Although the fluorescence of financial transactions across the planet in the last thirty years was premised on the final cutting of the umbilical tie of world money with gold, *this act despecieized money, it did not defetishize money*. On the contrary, the hegemonic ideology of this period has been a bizarre mixture of gold standard economics with a totally politicized production of money

known first as monetarism and later neo-liberalism. At the very moment when money loses its glittering metallic appearance as a chthonic fetish, it transmorphizes into an even more mysterious lightning god unleashed by wizards. It did not shrink into being a mere tool of collective need satisfaction as its defetishization would have required. Hence the penchant for the language of virtuality and simulacra that we find in much of the contemporary philosophy of money. Jean Baudrillard is a prime example of such an interpreter.[11] For he takes the dismounting from Sejanus's gold horse as a step into a world of "hyperreality" and "simulations" that have absorbed their reality and originals in a sort of cannibalism of signs.

Berkeley's aim, like Marx's, however, was to defetishize specie. But Berkeley never started with the pathos of the sign as the early Marx did, i.e., the urge toward referentiality. Consequently, anyone who starts from Berkeley's conception of money to view the post-1971 monetary world does not collapse to Baudrillard's semantic cynicism when faced with dismounting from the golden horse. On the contrary, for Berkeley the problem of money is not how to accurately represent wealth, but how to excite industry. That is, the mere movement of monetary signs (however gigantic and swift) should not be equated with the excitation of human productivity, power, and freedom. On the contrary, without the proper will and rules, the production of signs will become a matter of infinite fancy which will inevitably lead to the inflationary madness of the "bubbles." For the gift of money must wait upon a reciprocity rooted in the ancient ambivalent American phrase, "Indian giver."

Berkeley's concept of money is indeed rooted in a gift economy through its native American genealogy. His "legacy" is the return to the gift character of money which requires a shared and universalized consciousness of its function. As I have shown, the Querist (unlike Locke) was deeply indebted to his experience with the paper money economies of the British North American colonies. These colonies were surrounded by a sea of gift-exchange relations among the native Americans, and the systematic confusion of world money and localized gift is what gave these intermediate colonial economies their life and duplicitous power.[12] The colonist's wampum transactions with the native Americans liberated their monetary imaginations just as the masterless character of the North American Indian peoples liberated the colonists' political imagination.

Berkeley simply tried to bring the wampum money-gift economy back to Ireland. Not surprisingly, he failed. But for us, reflection on his failure might give us courage to rethink money at the very moment when it is accelerating at light speed to its crisis.

NOTES

1. The title of this conclusion arises from a conflation of two tales told by Aulus Gellius in his *The Attic Nights* with the same dialectical message: What initially appears like a boon may really be a serial catastrophe.

The first tale concerns a horse which belonged to a scribe named Gnaeus Seius whose lineage could be traced back to a breed of horses owned by the Thracian Diomedes. "They say that this horse was of extraordinary size, with a lofty neck, bay in colour, with thick, glossy mane, and that it was superior to all horses in other points of excellence; but that same horse, they go on to say, was of such a fate or fortune, that whoever owned and possessed it came to utter ruin, as well as his whole house, his family and all his possessions" (Gellius 1927: 265).

The second tale is about "the gold of Tolusa." Tolusa was a town in Gaul pillaged by the consul Quintus Caepio. A sack of gold was found in the town's temple, but "whoever touched a piece of gold from that sack died a wretched and agonizing death" (Gellius 1927: 267).

2. Marx wrote in 1859: "Very fittingly, it was Bishop Berkeley, the advocate of mystical idealism in English philosophy, who gave the doctrine of the nominal standard of money a theoretical twist" (Marx 1970: 78). More than a century later Goux rediscovers the connection between Berkeley's philosophy and his theory of money. He writes: "like many English philosophers (sic), [Berkeley] (who denies the existence of matter or corporeal substance) also proposed a theory of monetary circulation. It is therefore not difficult to define the correspondence—more profound than a simple metaphorical allusion—between his philosophy and a certain type of political economy" (Goux 1990: 107).

3. Leyburn (1937: 91).

4. Although it was well known that there were many wealthy Catholic merchants, there is now a growing literature on a social layer of Catholic middlemen and big farmers in the eighteen century which Whelan calls "an underground gentry," see Whelan (1996: 3–56). For a piece of micro-history concerning Cork County Catholic gentry families that managed to keep control of land, see Cullen (1992).

5. The differential attention paid to Locke, Berkeley, and Hume in the history of economics literature can easily be judged by looking at some standard textbooks in the field. Consider Mark Blaug's advanced text, Blaug (1968). It has 21 index references for Hume, 13 for Locke, and 3 for Berkeley. Spiegel's textbook, Spiegel (1983), which is more oriented to the humanities, shows a similar differential: 48 index references to Locke, 32 for Hume, and none for Berkeley.

6. For the posthumous professional assessment of Law see Murphy (1997) and for Berkeley see Rashid (1990).

7. I am using the term "postmodern" in a broad way to characterize an attitude prevalent in a range of disciplines that is skeptical of the "grand narratives" told by philosophers and social thinkers from the Enlightenment to the mid-twentieth century. It is a cluster concept that often includes other clusters, like "post-structuralism" and "deconstructionism," I'm afraid, although the mustard seed for the cluster was definitely Lyotard's work, *The Postmodern Condition* (1983). Like all skepticisms, postmodernism can easily fall into the clutches of self-reflexive contradictions.

8. For an introduction to the notion of textuality, see Davis (1986: sec. VIII).

9. For a philosophical discussion of "xenomoney," see Rotman (1988) and for an economist's view of "virtual money," see Solomon (1997).

10. Marx (1970: 79). Two points of Marx's critique of Berkeley are problematic. First, Marx was to realize, while working on the transformation of value into price in Capital, Vol. III, that no commodity was an accurate measure of value unless it was the result of the "average conditions of production." Gold, silver, or other forms of specie are not necessarily such commodities. Second, Marx claimed: "Later advocates of paper money also refer expressly to the transformation of the metal coin into a token of value which is brought about by the circulation process itself. Such references occur in the works of Benjamin Franklin and Bishop Berkeley" (Marx 1970: 117–18). But Marx neglects the fact that Berkeley is quite cognizant of the possibility that paper money units can be issued in a way that does not excite industry and so inflation will follow. Berkeley gives to the managers of the National Bank the task of correlating the total monetary units with the total economic activity in a society. For an attempt to reconcile Marx's insistence on the need for money to have a "measure of value" function in capitalism, see Harvey (1982: 292–96).

11. Baudrillard (1983). One might suspect that Jean Baudrillard's "semiological idealism" is the contemporary analogue of Berkeley's "idealism." After all, does not Baudrillard write: "Gone are the referentials of production, signification, affect, substance, history, i.e., the whole equation of real contents that still gave the sign weight by anchoring it with a kind of carrying capacity, of gravity—in short, its form as representative equivalent" (Baudrillard 1988: 125)? Does Baudrillard not rediscover, *sans Dieu*, what Berkeley taught two hundred years before? Such anachronistic correlations pose indeterminancies, of course, but we should remember that Berkeley did insist on the different levels of power that determine the "grammars" and production of signs: from individual, social, natural, and theological. Baudrillard seems to be uninterested in these refinements.

12. For a powerful recent discussion of the interactions of gift and money economies in the early colonial period see Martien (1996). Was *wampum* money or gift? This is the source of some debate. See Woodward (1970) for historical details and see Martien (1996) for the conceptual problematics. The impact of native American political thought on the colonists is described in Weatherford (1988) and in Brandon (1986). The revival of Marcel Mauss's gift exchange tradition in contemporary philosophy of money has much to do with Derrida's recent work, see Derrida (1992).

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