

11-9-11

I. Berkeley's Phenomenalism

--assumes empiricist account of origin of ideas (no ideas without sensations)

--introduces new claim: no existence without perception!

II. First Dialogue

--attack on the idea of real properties of mind-independent objects

--attack on the idea of material substance

III. General Form of BB's Arguments in First Dialogue

(i) Assume no legit ideas without sensations

(ii) Assume inferences from sensations to mind-independent entities as their causes are unwarranted

(iii) Notice the 'mind-dependent' features of any and all sensible qualities

(e.g., what is small for me is large for you,
all I ever apprehend directly is in the mind, etc.)

(iv) Note that if such sensible qualities are real properties of mind-independent objects, they must be unchanging and we must be able to know them

(v) Note that by (i) and (ii) and (iii) such sensible qualities are neither unchanging nor are they knowable by us.

(vi) Conclusion: sensible qualities cannot be real properties of mind-independent objects.

IV. Esse is percipi --> Material substance does not exist

Arguments (see last notes)

V. Does the Wall Exist when I don't look at it?

Answer: Yes....god is always looking (317)

Corollary: I didn't create my impressions, so what did?

Answer: god did.

VI. More arguments to show Matter is unreal:

cannot be extended (shown in Dialogue I)

cannot be a substratum (shown in Dialogue I)

cannot be a cause

cannot be an instrument

cannot be 'active'

cannot be an 'occasion'

cannot be a general abstract form of 'entity'(322)

VII. Berkeley's final parry: "can any more be required to prove the absolute impossibility of a thing than the proving it impossible in

every particular sense that either you or anyone else understands it in?"[324]

Hylas: impossibility is only proved if it can be shown that an idea is self-contradictory.

Berkeley: if you have no idea of matter, you cannot have a self-contradictory idea of matter, can you?

VIII. Remaining Problems for esse is percipi

a. scepticism [325]

b. cannot have idea of god, therefore cannot appeal to god to solve other problems

[327]

c. isn't the "self" as unreal as matter, being made up merely of impressions which only exist as objects of perception, not as an underlying substratum?

d. aren't my day dreams, then, as real as my sense perceptions? [329]

e. how can we be sure you and I see the same thing ever? [335]

f. how can a mind contain things with length and solidity (tables, for example)? [336]

g. if god always perceives everything, and is eternal, how could there have been a creation event (shouldn't everything have always existed?) [338-339]

38-43: Phil's argument against heat as a property of material substance:

- (i) heat and pain are the same, simple sensation, thus the same property
- (ii) material substance is sense-less
- (iii) anything which is unperceiving/sense-less is incapable of having the property of pain
- (iv) material substance cannot have the property of pain (by ii & iii)
- (v) material substance cannot have the property of heat (by i & iv)

Problems: Premise (i) is dubious. We can distinguish heat from pain, and therefore it is not true that there is a simple, uncompounded idea that contains both. Immediate sensations which have simultaneous properties are not, therefore, uncompounded sensations.

44-45: Phil's reply:

- (i) if two ideas are distinct, you should be able to abstract each from its instances.
- (ii) we cannot abstract pain or pleasure from the particular sensations of heat, cold, taste, smell, etc.
- (iii) therefore, pain/pleasure are just elements of what is hot, cold, etc.

JP:

- (i) the same particular heat sensation can be both painful and pleasurable for the same person at different times.
- (ii) painful sensations are different than pleasurable ones.
- (iii) by (i) a particular heat sensation can be both the same and different than itself
- (iv) either pain and pleasure are not different, or particular heat sensations and pain/pleasure are distinct properties.

60-63: Phil's counterexample to Hylas' claim that "indolent" heat/cold exist independently:

- (i) imagine a hot hand and a cold hand going into the same, "indolent" water.
- (ii) the same water will feel warm to the cold hand, cool to the hot hand.
- (iii) no thing can have two contradictory properties (hot/cold, warm/cool)
- (iv) if 'indolent' degrees of heat/cold are real properties of bodies, by (i) (ii) and (iii) they would seem to have contradictory real properties in the case of (i) & (ii).
- (v) bodies must not have such properties; rather, they must be perceived to be properties, and cannot be in the bodies as perceived (given (ii))

[see 'distempered palate' for other, similar examples...at 74]

65-67: Phil's new argument that sensible properties cannot be in the object:

- (i) pin prick is a sensation caused by a pin rending the flesh
- (ii) we don't attribute the sensation to the pin
- (iii) like (i), a heat burn on the same finger is a sensation caused by touching the burning coal
- (iv) when two cases are alike, we should make the same judgments about them
- (v) if (ii), then by (iv) we should not attribute (judge) the sensation of heat (to be in the) to the coal.

Phil's reductio argument:

- (i) sound is a motion (hylas)
- (ii) motion is a property detectible through sight and touch, not hearing
- (iii) therefore, sound is a property detectible through sight and touch, not hearing (and this is Absurd)

120-132: Phil's argument against the reality of extension and figure...the Animals Argument.

- (i) no real property of any object can be changed w/out change in the object itself
- (ii) all properties are only as detectible only through immediate sense
- (iii) what to one eye is little, smooth, round, to another is great, uneven, and angular
- (iv) such an object as in (iii) cannot exist by (i)
- (v) the properties mentioned in (iii) are not real properties of material substances.

"Be the sensible quality what it will--figure or sound or color--it seems alike impossible it should subsist in that which does not perceive it." [135]

137-140: Phil's arg. against reality of motion in material substance:

- (i) motion is = time x space "described" by a body
- (ii) time measurement depends on the succession of ideas in the mind (we measure it by the temporal passage detected as 'in between' the immediate impressions of the mind)
- (iii) each mind can have a different clocking speed (analogy to Mhz for computers)
- (iv) detected motions will be fast or slow depending on your mind's clocking speed.
- (v) detected motions cannot, therefore, be properties in the objects themselves.

Arguments against the other primary qualities are unnecessary, once extension is lost (since all other primary qualities presuppose it).