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CHAPTER ONE

# Introduction

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT George Berkeley? We know that he was born in 1685 in or near Kilkenny, Ireland, and died in 1753 in Oxford, England; that he studied and taught at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) from 1700; that he spent the best part of a decade between 1722 and 1732 fundraising for and attempting to establish a college in Bermuda; that he was made bishop of Cloyne in the south of Ireland in 1734. But primarily, perhaps, we know that he was the most significant proponent of the philosophical doctrine of immaterialism, the doctrine according to which there is no material substance supporting the sensible qualities we experience as perceptions or ideas.

Immaterialism is a striking doctrine, and Berkeley seems to have appreciated that it could easily be taken as a form of wild and radical scepticism. In 1713, he published a set of three dialogues between Hylas, who begins as a materialist, and Philonous, an immaterialist, to expand on and popularise the doctrine. Hylas, when he accepts Philonous's arguments for immaterialism, believes he has adopted a scepticism that makes knowledge of things as they are in themselves impossible: 'You may indeed know that Fire appears hot, and Water fluid: But this is no more than knowing, what Sensations are produced in our own Mind, upon the Application of Fire and Water to your Organs of Sense. Their internal Constitution, their true and real Nature, you are utterly in the dark as to *that*'.<sup>1</sup> Hylas hasn't yet grasped that Philonous, and Berkeley behind him, are identifying

1. *Three Dialogues*, p. 103 (LJ, II.227).

sensations and real natures. Some of Berkeley's near-contemporaries took the doctrine more generally to be 'the most outrageous whimsy that ever entered in the head of any ancient or modern madman', and felt that in arguing for 'the impossibility of the real or actual existence of matter', Berkeley was taking away 'the boundaries of truth and falsehood; expos[ing] reason to all the outrage of unbounded Scepticism; and even, in his own opinion, mak[ing] mathematical demonstration, doubtful'.<sup>2</sup> Whilst immaterialism may now have few adherents—and those few proposing something very different from Berkeley—the arguments he used to defend his position are still the subject of philosophical debate. John Campbell and Quassim Cassam, for example, have produced a dialogical book on what they call 'Berkeley's puzzle', which 'is this: to describe the explanatory role of sensory experience without being driven to the conclusion that all we can have knowledge of is experiences'.<sup>3</sup>

*'Tis Plain, We Do Not See a Man'*

This book gives an account of (and modestly extends) what we know about Berkeley. It offers details of the documented aspects of Berkeley's life, such as the nature of his early schooling, his relationships with women, his work towards establishing a university in Bermuda, his purchase of enslaved people whilst in America. Berkeley was a thinker and writer throughout his life, and his writings are another different but still more important form of documentary evidence about that life. I survey Berkeley's entire career as a thinker and writer, attempting to show how his concerns intersect with those of other thinkers and of the intellectual, social, and political movements of his age as well as previous ages. The line between the two kinds of documentation that support this study is not perfectly clear. We have some knowledge of Berkeley's biographical experience of education through one kind of documentation—the statutes of the school he attended, the assessment procedures for fellowships at TCD when he was submitted to them, records of

2. Warburton, ed., *The Works of Alexander Pope*, IV,319–20, Warburton's note to 'Epilogue to the Satires: Dialogue II'.

3. Campbell and Cassam, *Berkeley's Puzzle*, p. 18. For an example of an immaterialism far from Berkeley's, see Harman, *Immaterialism*.

disciplinary issues in college when he was the junior dean, records of the charity for the schooling of Catholic Irish in Cloyne when he was bishop, his choices in educating his own children at home, and so on. That knowledge is difficult to separate from Berkeley's extensive but diffuse writing on education, at its most concentrated in *Alciphron* and *The Querist*, but a perennial concern. The same can be said of his political allegiance, family life, taste, and various other important topics. No attempt has been made for over a hundred years to bring these two kinds of documentation of Berkeley's life together across the full length of his career, as A. A. Luce's biography, dating from 1949 and still the most recent book-length treatment, declines to integrate biographical and philosophical discussion.<sup>4</sup> Berkeley's documented life and participation in various institutions and practices, such as those of the exclusive educational institutions of a Protestant elite, is inseparable from his treatment of major philosophical and social issues.

Any biography might be taken as the answer to a slightly different and more abstract question about its subject from the one just posed—what *can* we know about George Berkeley? To a great extent this question will be answered by what we admit as documentation of a life and by how willing we are to engage in interpretation and speculation about the meaning of documents. But there is a further question concerning what can be said about a life as a whole. Can we attribute character to Berkeley, given that all we have of him is a set of documents, even if some such documents explicitly discuss his character (such as the remarkable letters written by Anne, Berkeley's wife, to their son George Jr after Berkeley's death)? People have not been afraid to characterise Berkeley—as pious and practical, for example, or as more than normally given to dissimulation and deceit.<sup>5</sup> But we may have misgivings about such characterisations, even based on relatively ample documentary evidence. There are always things about people that we do not know, things that have eluded documentation, or which could not

4. Luce, preface, pp. v–vi: 'Any comment that I make here on Berkeley's thought is incidental and strictly subordinate to the biographical interest, and is entirely free from technical discussion.'

5. See Luce, *passim*; Berman, *George Berkeley*, *passim*; and Berman, 'Berkeley's Life and Works', p. 24.

be documented (at least not in any straightforward way). The question of what we can know about another person should occur to the writer and reader of a biography, as we worry about the judgements we are inevitably forming of the subject and the basis on which they are founded. In Berkeley's case there is a further complexity: the question of what we can know about other people is bound up philosophically with what we most commonly do know of him—his propounding the doctrine of immaterialism.

What does immaterialism have to do with the question of what we can know about other people? My purpose in addressing this question at the beginning of this book is twofold. First, by offering a brief survey of the immaterialist writings for which Berkeley is best known I want to introduce those unfamiliar with his thought to some of its central topics, and to indicate to those already familiar with his thought something of my own approach to immaterialism. My discussion does not aim to achieve the standard of a technical, professional, philosophical interpretation of Berkeley's immaterialism, nor to offer a summary of philosophical commentary on particular questions or passages. Rather, I aim to broach some of the topics that will be particularly relevant to other parts of this biographical study. I refer in the notes to some selections from the substantial technical commentary on Berkeley's metaphysics, not with the aim of arriving at an interpretive consensus, but to point readers to examples of more philosophical commentary where a variety of approaches to the topic in question can be found. Second, I want to suggest that a consideration of the central topics in Berkeley's immaterialism offers a justification of a biographical approach to his philosophical career—but one that might first require us to rethink our ideas of what people are and how they know one another.

For a student in the early eighteenth century, the most canonical modern philosophy was dualist. Holding that there are two substances in the universe, mind (or spirit) and body, Descartes and his followers upheld a strong distinction between the two—between substance that is thinking and unextended and substance that is unthinking and extended. John Locke identified the two kinds of being known to man as cogitative and incogitative beings.<sup>6</sup> Locke

6. *Essay*, IV.x.9, pp. 622–23.



is clear that spirit is metaphysically prior to matter and should precede it in any course of study:

[U]nder what Title soever the consideration of *Spirits* comes, I think it ought to go before the study of Matter, and Body, not as a Science that can be methodized into a System, and treated of upon Principles of Knowledge; but as an enlargement of our Minds towards a truer and fuller comprehension of the intellectual World, to which we are led both by Reason and Revelation. [. . .] Matter being a thing, that all our Senses are constantly conversant with, it is so apt to possess the Mind, and exclude all other Beings, but Matter, that prejudice, grounded on such Principles, often leaves no room for the admittance of Spirits, or the allowing any such things as *immaterial Beings in rerum natura*: when yet it is evident, that by mere Matter and Motion, non of the great Phænomena of Nature can be resolved, to instance but in that common one of Gravity, which I think impossible to be explained by any natural Operation of Matter, or any other Law of Motion, but the positive Will of a Superiour Being, so ordering it.<sup>7</sup>

Philosophical understanding of the world, in this type of dualism, is understanding how spirits, principally God but also lower orders of spirits, work upon matter to produce the regular phenomena made evident to us by our senses—from the movement of the planets to the movement of human bodies.

Berkeley is not a dualist of this kind: he believes that ‘there is not any other Substance than *Spirit* or that which perceives.’<sup>8</sup> His

7. Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, pp. 245–46.

8. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §7. Winkler, *Berkeley: An Interpretation*, p. 309, has provided a persuasive reconstruction of Berkeley’s reasons for thinking of spirit as a substance: ‘A Berkeleyan idea is not an act of awareness but an object of awareness, and if an object of awareness must be perceived, there must be something that perceives it. Now if there *must* be something by which it is perceived then the perceiver has *something* of the character of a substance, because it is something on which the idea depends for its existence. For all I have said so far, though, a “perceiver” might be nothing more than one pole or aspect of an indivisible thing: an unowned episode of awareness, one of whose aspects is an object, and one of whose aspects is an act. But according to Berkeley I know that *I* perceive, and I know that I perceive an “endless variety” of ideas that succeed one another in time, upon which I exercise “diverse operations”, among them willing, imagining, and perceiving (*Principles* 2). I am therefore a persisting thing capable of various acts or operations. I am not a fleeting or momentary thing, but something that resembles what substances are widely held to be.’

rejection of this kind of dualism might lead to comparison with attitudes considered dangerously heterodox, such as Benedict de Spinoza's assertion that there is only one substance in the universe, God.<sup>9</sup> Berkeley makes efforts to distance himself from the 'wild Imaginations' of Spinoza, who is listed next to Hobbes as a believer that matter might exist without mind.<sup>10</sup> Berkeley's assertion of one spiritual substance has much in common with dualism. It is evident from the full range of Berkeley's writing that he shares the belief, expressed by Locke, in a superior intelligence producing lawlike regularity in the world perceived by the senses. But the regular productions of that organising intelligence are not, for Berkeley, bodies or matter, but ideas—understood as what our senses report to us, or images we are able to call up in our minds.<sup>11</sup>

The evidence of the senses might be taken as a report of what is out there in the world: it is an internal impression of an external reality. This attitude is central to the scientific culture of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, in which the scientist or natural philosopher attended closely to her own sensory experience in order to learn more about the regular behaviour of the external, material world. But Berkeley suggests that it is this attitude, and not his immaterialism, that opens the door to scepticism:

[W]e have been led into very dangerous Errors, by supposing a two-fold Existence of the Objects of Sense, the one *Intelligible*, or in the Mind, the other *Real* and without the Mind: Whereby Unthinking Things are thought, to have a natural Subsistence of their own, distinct from being perceiv'd by Spirits. This which, if I mistake not, hath been shewn to be a most groundless and absurd Notion, is the very Root of *Scepticism*; for so long as Men thought that Real Things subsisted without the Mind, and that their Knowledge was only so far forth *Real* as it was conformable to *real Things*, it follows, they cou'd not be certain, that they had any real Knowledge at all. For how can it be known,

9. Spinoza, *Ethics*, part I, proposition XIV, corollary I, p. 86.

10. *Three Dialogues*, p. 76 (LJ, II.213); see also *Notebooks*, §§826–27.

11. Hight, *Idea and Ontology*, pp. 8, 35, and in the chapters dedicated to Berkeley, argues that Berkeley conceived of ideas as quasi-substances, ontologically dependent on minds but not modes of them.

that the Things which are Perceiv'd, are conformable to those which are not Perceiv'd, or Exist without the Mind?<sup>12</sup>

Berkeley's solution to the sceptical abyss over which one has to leap from idea to external object is to identify them: the object is the idea. As we can never have any report of objects other than our sensory impressions, we have no basis on which to posit their separate existence. When we perceive regular and lawlike behaviour, we are perceiving the 'Ideas imprinted on the Senses by the Author of Nature [. . .] called *real things*'; 'those excited in the Imagination being less Regular, Vivid and Constant, are more properly termed *Ideas*, or *Images of Things*, which they copy and represent.'<sup>13</sup> Ideas take the place of real things in Berkeley's immaterialism, and they are imprinted on the senses by God, not by a material substratum that underlies or provokes sensory response.

It might seem that Berkeley has simply established a mind-idea dualism to replace a mind-body dualism.<sup>14</sup> But his statement that there is only one substance, spirit, should be recalled. Ideas are not a substance. Both spirits and ideas might be called things, but that common name should not be allowed to conceal their radical difference: '*Thing* or *Being* is the most general Name of all, it comprehends under it two Kinds entirely distinct and heterogeneous, and which have nothing common but the Name, *viz. Spirits* and *Ideas*. The former are *Active, Indivisible, Incorruptible Substances*: The latter are *Inert, Fleeting, Perishable Passions*, or *Dependent Beings*, which subsist not by themselves, but are supported by, or Exist in Minds or Spiritual Substances.'<sup>15</sup> Spirits and ideas can be distinguished by their activity or passivity. Ideas are passive: 'the very Being of an Idea implies Passiveness and Inertness in it, insomuch that it is impossible for an Idea to do any thing, or, strictly speaking, to be the Cause of any thing.'<sup>16</sup> Berkeley's goal in asserting this heterogeneity is to reserve causality for spirits in a more complete

12. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §86.

13. *Ibid.*, §33; see also §§30–31.

14. Indeed, McCracken, 'Berkeley's Notion of Spirit', 597–602, suggests that Berkeley goes from being a spirit monist (with activity and passivity the main distinction within spirits) to being a mind-idea dualist.

15. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §89.

16. *Ibid.*, §25.

way than does Locke. As ideas are passive, and what we tend to call real things are ideas, there is no active or causal power in things whatsoever. All causes are spiritual.

In his philosophical notebooks, Berkeley says, ‘Nothing properly but persons i.e. conscious things do exist, all other things are not so much existences as manners of y<sup>e</sup> existence of persons’.<sup>17</sup> When a spirit has ideas, that spirit is being in a certain way or manner. This is not to say that ideas are in minds in such a way that minds share the qualities of the perceived ideas—being extended or red, for example.<sup>18</sup> Ideas are not modes of being of the mind in that sense. Persons perceive or produce ideas, they understand or they will: ‘A Spirit is one Simple, Undivided, active Being: as it perceives Ideas, it is called the *Understanding*, and as it produces or otherwise operates about them, it is called the *Will*’.<sup>19</sup> This division of the undivided being answers a division in our experience of ideas. There are those that we produce ourselves, and those that seem to be produced for us: ‘whatever Power I may have over my own Thoughts, I find the Ideas actually perceiv’d by Sense have not a like Dependence on my Will. When in broad Day-light I open my Eyes, ’tis not in my Power to chuse whether I shall See or no’.<sup>20</sup> Those ideas we do not produce by an act of will we perceive or understand.<sup>21</sup> The distinction is not absolute. The philosophical notebooks are ambivalent on the question of whether the will and the understanding are distinct, but Berkeley does say, ‘The Understanding taken for a faculty is not really distinct from y<sup>e</sup> Will’, and

17. *Notebooks*, §24.

18. See *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §49.

19. *Ibid.*, §27. For this characteristic sense of the self as active, see Jaffro, ‘Le Cogito de Berkeley’, p. 97.

20. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §29.

21. Commentators offer a variety of views on how active the mind is in perceiving and how distinct the mind and its objects are. Migely, ‘Berkeley’s Actively Passive Mind’, p. 157, argues that mind is only passive in determining the content of perceptions it does not will, but active in everything else, from confirming and assenting to those perceptions, to operating about them to create mediate objects of perception. She holds that the will and the understanding, the mind and its ideas, are ontologically distinct but existentially inseparable (pp. 161–65). Daniel, ‘Berkeley’s Doctrine of Mind’, p. 31, suggests that Berkeley wants to distinguish ideas from acts of mind, even though neither ‘is intelligible in abstraction from the other’. Ott, ‘Descartes and Berkeley on Mind’, p. 447, says the mind is passive in perceiving, but active in distinguishing and differentiating ideas within perception.

that ‘Understanding is in some sort an Action.’<sup>22</sup> ‘Understanding’ is Berkeley’s word for the relatively passive state spirit finds itself in when perceiving. When producing or operating about ideas in any other way, the spirit adopts its characteristic activity of willing.<sup>23</sup> In producing our own ideas, our spirit is willing, and it is behaving in a certain manner; in perceiving ideas produced by another spirit, our spirit is operating about those ideas, still active in attending to and interpreting them.

Berkeley’s philosophical predecessors recognise the mind’s activity in relating and judging ideas. Malebranche, a philosopher Berkeley read closely, says that any judgement about ideas is an act of will.<sup>24</sup> Locke describes relation as ‘When the Mind so considers one thing, that it does, as it were, bring it to, and set it by another, and carry its view from one to t’other.’<sup>25</sup> Berkeley agrees. All relations, he tells us, include an act of the mind. Relations themselves are not ideas, but they are nonetheless added to the list of things we can know: ‘Ideas, Spirits and Relations are all in their respective kinds, the Object of humane Knowledge and Subject of Discourse.’<sup>26</sup> Relations and spirits are alike inasmuch as they are proper objects of knowledge and subjects of discourse, but they are not ideas. We have a ‘notion’ of relations just as we have a knowledge of our own existence as spirits ‘by inward Feeling or Reflexion, and that of other Spirits by Reason.’<sup>27</sup> We do not have ideas of spirits as ‘the Words *Will*, *Soul*, *Spirit*, do not stand for different Ideas, or in truth, for any Idea at all, but for Something which is very different from Ideas, and which being an Agent cannot be like unto, or represented by, any Idea whatsoever.’<sup>28</sup> As he revised the

22. *Notebooks*, §614a and §821; for firmer distinctions, see §708 and §816.

23. Bettcher, *Berkeley’s Philosophy of Spirit*, p. 80, notes that agents are normally willing, but that they can experience ideas passively and affect (pleasure and pain) is the mark of their being so experienced. Roberts, *A Metaphysics for the Mob*, pp. 93, 94, argues that Berkeley conceives of spirits as wills, and notes that, ‘for Berkeley, thought is one of the modes of volition’.

24. Malebranche, *The Search after Truth*, pp. 8–9, and editors’ introduction, p. xii. Malebranche, *Elucidation II*, p. 560, also states that the soul is one, its different faculties being merely different forms of the soul’s operation.

25. *Essay*, II.xxv.1, p. 319.

26. *Principles of Human Knowledge* (1734 text), §§142, 89.

27. *Ibid.* (1734 text), §89.

28. *Ibid.* (1734 text), §27.

texts of the *Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues* for republication in 1734, Berkeley more consistently applied the word ‘notion’ to the type of knowledge we have of spirits and relations. Notions are the medium of knowledge of relations and other spirits. Relating to operations of the mind, they are themselves operations of the mind.<sup>29</sup> We infer spirits with greater powers than ourselves on the basis of the ideas we find we have and are not responsible for. Those caused by God have ‘a Steadiness, Order and Coherence, and are not excited at Random, as those which are effects of Human Wills often are, but in a regular Train or Series, the admirable Connexion whereof sufficiently testifies the Wisdom and Benevolence of its Author.’<sup>30</sup> Our knowledge of spirits is an inference of an agent capable of producing the series of ideas we do not ourselves produce.

The ideas that we perceive and attribute to the agency of other spirits operate as signs. We know of the existence of other people in this manner, and even more certainly we know of God:

I perceive several Motions, Changes, and Combinations of Ideas, that inform me there are certain particular Agents like my self, which accompany them, and concur in their Production [ . . . ] the Knowledge I have of other Spirits is not immediate [ . . . ] but depending on the Intervention of Ideas, by me refer’d to Agents or Spirits distinct from my self, as Effects or concomitant Signs.<sup>31</sup>

The admirable regularity of the phenomenal world means ‘that GOD, is known as certainly and immediately as any other Mind or Spirit whatsoever, distinct from our selves’. This is a God ‘*who*

29. Lee, ‘What Berkeley’s Notions Are’, pp. 31–32; Flage, ‘Relative Ideas and Notions’, p. 243, distinguishes the knowledge by description that one can have of notions from the direct knowledge of a positive idea. Here and in *Berkeley’s Doctrine of Notions*, p. 5, Flage agrees with Lee (p. 33) that having notions is closely connected to knowing the meaning of words. Atherton, ‘The Coherence of Berkeley’s Theory of Mind’, p. 396, contests the reading of ‘notion’ as a solution to a problem about spirit.

30. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §30.

31. *Ibid.*, §145. It should be noted that by parity of reason we might just as well infer matter as the cause of ideas—the only difference in the process of establishing the existence of other spirits and of matter is in the type of intuitive knowledge on which we are reliant. In the case of spirits, it is intuitive knowledge of our own existence as agents; in the case of matter it is that the report of the senses corresponds to an external world. Berkeley must prioritise, like Descartes, the intuitive knowledge of the existence of the self.

*works all in all, and by whom all things consist.*<sup>32</sup> God is known by signs, is the agent of everything, and is the source of all being. What people perceive is no accidentally produced train of ideas that enables a merely episodic or partial or haphazard set of inferences about the will of another spirit. The train of ideas is organised and reliable, intended by God to be an ongoing, legible set of instructions to people.

The regular and admirable series of connected ideas that God produces gives us ‘a sort of Foresight, which enables us to regulate our Actions for the benefit of Life.’<sup>33</sup> Showing that God uses signs to instruct us in how to live is the burden of Berkeley’s essay on vision and visual ideas, here quoted as it was republished with his philosophical dialogue *Alciphron* in 1732:

Upon the whole, I think we may fairly conclude, that the proper Objects of Vision constitute an Universal Language of the Author of Nature, whereby we are instructed 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. It is by this Information that we are principally guided in all the Transactions and Concerns of Life.<sup>34</sup>

We can think of our ideas as signs, and those signs, as we have just seen, provide guidance for current and future conduct. Berkeley gave consideration to the possibility that this instructive function of language—producing attitudes or dispositions in the people addressed, and not raising ideas in the mind—is the primary function of language. He is clear: ‘[T]he 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.’<sup>35</sup> People do not engage in speech to no end, or no end other than raising ideas; they often have the ulterior motive of altering the

32. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §147.

33. *Ibid.*, §31.

34. *New Theory of Vision* (1732 text), §147.

35. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, introduction, §20.

conduct of the people they address. Speakers use signs to bring about changes in conduct, and that goes for God as much as for people. Berkeley suggests that when we are speaking, really speaking, it ought to be with some good in mind. That is the attitude expressed by Euphranor, one of the characters of *Alciphron*, when he says that ‘the true End of Speech, Reason, Science, Faith, Assent, in all its different Degrees, is not meerly, or principally, or always the imparting or acquiring of Ideas, but rather something of an active, operative Nature, tending to a conceived Good’.<sup>36</sup> Spirits use signs to talk to us in order to effect dispositional change conceived of in relation to a particular good. The phenomenal world is an example of such a discourse. In this sense, then, we might only really be said to understand the signs the phenomenal world presents us with when we heed them, when we take them as encouragements to change our behaviour, to change our practice.

Here it is perhaps appropriate to return to the question of documentary biography and the biographical approach to a philosopher’s career. If we want to know what we can about George Berkeley, we should scrutinise as closely as possible all the changes of ideas he causes in us, chiefly through those surviving documents relating to his life, including his own writings. We should not confuse those ideas for the person, but take them as signs of the existence of a person like us, someone who produces changes in our ideas analogous to those that we know we can ourselves produce. We should attend to what Berkeley was trying to communicate to us, what kinds of changes in the practice of other people he hoped to bring about, and what conceived good or goods his communications actively and operatively tended towards. As we do not know other spirits directly but by analogy with the intuitive knowledge we have of ourselves, other people are always works of interpretation, conjectures about the meanings of signs based on analogies from our previous experience. This book endeavours to arrive at an interpretation of the attitudes of the spirit communicated by Berkeley’s writings and what can be known of his actions. It is not perhaps surprising that a biographer would have an interest in the attitudinal disposition of the subject of the biography. But it

36. *Alciphron*, VII.17.



is perhaps surprising that Berkeley's immaterialism, his insistence that there is only one substance—spirit—and that ideas are merely passive effects of spirits who exist in willing some conceived and quite possibly indistinct good, lends its support to a biographical approach to his philosophy.

Berkeley's immaterialism, then, in some sense justifies a biographical approach to the philosopher. In the preceding discussion, I was also hoping to indicate an interest—to be pursued throughout this book—in the practical and dispositional component of Berkeley's frequent recurrence to language as an explanatory tool. As John Russell Roberts has pointed out, 'There is nothing mere about practical matters for a Christian philosopher'.<sup>37</sup> An interest in language and practice spans Berkeley's career. In the *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* of 1709, visual ideas are a language that is used to direct our behaviour. In *The Querist* of 1735–1737, money might be understood as a language that can be used to improve the desires and practice of a population. In *Siris* of 1744, the laws of nature are an instructive discourse, improving the spirits of the philosophically inclined. When Berkeley employs the language analogy, he does so with the active, operative tendency towards a conceived good in mind—and not just the use of a various set of arbitrary signs.

The other aim of this introductory chapter is to expand on another tendency in Berkeley's thought that has not previously been elaborated and which I believe to be useful in uncovering the coherence of his diverse writings and activities. This is the tendency to present thinking and acting as participating in (or of) the divinity. Participation in the divinity is what happens, I suggest, when a finite spirit understands and conforms in practice to the will of the infinite spirit. This is how Crito presents the effects of conscience in *Alciphron*: conscience exists to 'ennoble Man, and raise him to an Imitation and Participation of the Divinity'.<sup>38</sup> It could also be parsed as loving God, or becoming more fully of God. Elaborating on this tendency in Berkeley's thought requires citing a broader range of his texts.

37. Roberts, *A Metaphysics for the Mob*, p. 68.

38. *Alciphron*, V.28.

### *'Participation of the Divinity'*

In an unpublished notebook Berkeley indicates that his philosophical project is 'directed to practise and morality, as appears first from making manifest the nearness and omnipresence of God'.<sup>39</sup> Promoting a 'pious Sense of the Presence of God' was one of his chief aims in writing the *Principles of Human Knowledge*.<sup>40</sup> Twenty-four years later, Berkeley had the same aims in the *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, where he noted that, in that age of freethinking, 'the Notion of a watchful, active, intelligent, free Spirit, with whom we have to do, and in whom we live, and move, and have our Being, is not the most prevailing in the Books and Conversation even of those who are called Deists'. Therefore, he concludes, 'I cannot employ myself more usefully than in contributing to awaken and possess men with a thorough sense of the Deity inspecting, concurring, and interesting itself in human actions and affairs'.<sup>41</sup> God is a spirit present to us like other spirits, with whose will ours has to do, and whose concurrence is required for human actions to be brought about. This spirit takes an interest in us, rather than being detached or indifferent. As Berkeley made clear in the *New Theory of Vision* and the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, all our knowledge of the world, both of its phenomena and of the regularities that underlie those phenomena, is instruction, another person telling us what to do for our own good.<sup>42</sup> Becoming scientists or natural philosophers, we are being discoursed by God about what is best for us. The language of the author of nature tends towards a conceived good—it is active and operative. Berkeley holds true to this conception of the phenomenal world and its regularities as an instructive discourse delivered by a personalised divinity to the later stages of his philosophical career, as *Siris*, the last of his major works, demonstrates.

The personal, present, active, discoursing God of Berkeley's philosophical world, early and late, is not a concept or belief that many of his recent students have shared (I do not share it), and yet the presence of this God is so essential to Berkeley's philosophical,

39. BL Add MS 39304, f. 4r.

40. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §156.

41. *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, §§2, 8.

42. *New Theory of Vision*, §147; *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §§107, 109.

and indeed personal, enterprise that it must be admitted if we are accurately to infer anything about the person or spirit ‘Berkeley’ behind the various concomitant signs which the documents associated with his life provide us.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps not everyone feels that Berkeley’s God is an embarrassment, but both those who do and those who don’t, I think, have tended to see the specific, even idiosyncratic, attributes of Berkeley’s God as of relevance only to Berkeley’s metaphysics and philosophical theology. This book will indeed consider what it means, from metaphysical and theological points of view, for Berkeley to believe that good human life is full participation in the divinity.<sup>44</sup> But another way of thinking about participating in the divinity will also be important, and that is to think of participating in the divinity not as a matter of acquiring ideas only, but of acquiring moral, social, and institutional commitments, and indeed privileges. Berkeley’s metaphysics, theology, and social philosophy of morally committed and politically privileged Anglicanism equally draw on his concept of the end of human life as participation in the divinity.

God is ‘to be considered as related to us’, Berkeley says in the notes on moral philosophy contained in one of his notebooks and possibly dating from the last years of his life.<sup>45</sup> A relationship with God is a personal relationship, inasmuch as spirit and person are synonymous: identity of the person consists in identity of the will, as Berkeley says, and spirits are, as I have just suggested, fundamentally willing substance.<sup>46</sup> Personal relationships with God should be loving. Love of God is the first principle of religion, Berkeley said in a sermon preached in Newport, Rhode Island, in August 1730. That love should be shown in various ways, like the love we show to

43. Atherton, ‘Berkeley without God’, explores the possibility that a distinctively Berkeleyan world requires only languagelike regularity and not necessarily a God.

44. Herdt, ‘Affective Perfectionism’, p. 44, describes the concept of participation of the divinity in the Cambridge Platonists—at least one of whose works, Cudworth’s *True Intellectual System of the Universe*, Berkeley knew intimately—in terms that could be related to Berkeley: “The language of “participation” in God is another reminder that friendship with God is unique, that human beings are not in an ontological sense independent of God. [. . .] [F]or the Cambridge Platonists, participation in God’s mind is first and foremost a participation in the love of God, not in abstract rules of practical reasoning’.

45. Belfrage, ‘Notes by Berkeley on Moral Philosophy’, p. 7.

46. *Notebooks*, §194a.

human persons for a variety of comparable reasons. One of these kinds of love involves endeavouring to do the will of another, better person: ‘Love of gratitude & respect to Benefactors and Superiors. [. . .] We shew love to superiors & benefactors by consulting their honour i.e. by performing their will, & endeavouring that others perform it.’<sup>47</sup> Love of God should produce conformity of our wills to God’s, or obedience, and it ought to include the endeavour to make other people also conform.<sup>48</sup> As Stephen R. L. Clark says, ‘That virtue lies in conformity and obedience is a thought to which we have grown unaccustomed’, but it is clearly Berkeley’s view.<sup>49</sup> On Whitsunday 1751, Berkeley preached in Cloyne and asserted again that ‘religion is nothing else but the conforming our faith and practice to the will of god.’<sup>50</sup> The manuscript of this sermon asks, ‘What else is the design and aim of vertue or religion, but the making our several distinct wills coincident with, and subordinate to, the one supreme will of God?’<sup>51</sup> In the roughly contemporary notes on moral philosophy, conformity to, subordination to, or coincidence with the will of God is said to be happiness and virtue.<sup>52</sup> Thirty-five years previously, Berkeley had identified charity as that to which our own and others’ wills should be conformed: ‘mutual Charity is what we are principally enjoyn’d to practice’ by God.<sup>53</sup> As will be shown in discussions of Berkeley’s attitude to trade in the 1710s as a form of mutual, charitable interest and of his activity in establishing institutions for the poor (hospitals, weaving schools, schools), practically whilst bishop of Cloyne and theoretically as “the Querist”, charity is a love of others that takes an interest in their practice and

47. LJ, VII.71.

48. One might here contrast Berkeley’s intuition that we should love our superiors with the views of Jacques Abbadie, *The Art of Knowing One-Self*, pp. 211–12: ‘Man naturally hates God, because he hates the Dependance which submits him to his Dominion, and the Law which restrains his Desires. This Abhorrence of the Deity lies hid in the bottom of Man’s Heart, or Infirmity and Fear many times conceal it from the Eyes of Reason: This inward Aversion perceives a secret Pleasure at any thing that dares and affronts GOD; Men love those slights of Wit which scandalize the *Divinity*’. Abbadie’s view of human depravity in this respect might offer an insight into the psychology of freethinking.

49. Clark, ‘God-Appointed Berkeley and the General Good’, p. 245.

50. LJ, VII.136.

51. BL Add MS 39306, f. 212r.

52. Belfrage, ‘Notes by Berkeley on Moral Philosophy’, pp. 6–7.

53. LJ, VII.27–28, sermon ‘On Charity’, spring 1714.

attempts to bring it into line with a conceived good: charity can be an obligation to attempt to change others' conduct. Charity is the form that love of God takes when God's superiority is recognised and the duty to obey acknowledged.<sup>54</sup>

Berkeley's obedience extends beyond the charitable to the disciplinary: the obligation to attempt to make others' conduct conform to the will of God might require the threat and execution of punishments. His unwavering commitment to the obligation to obey temporal and spiritual authorities is connected to a reverence and love for superiors. These aspects of his thinking will become evident in discussions of *Passive Obedience* (1712) and the *Discourse Addressed to Magistrates* (1738), as well as of Berkeley's insistence on the binding nature of oaths in his *Advice to the Tories* (1715) and elsewhere. People are obliged to obey their superiors out of love for the benefits those superiors bring—chiefly the benefit of protection. If the sovereign's law protects us, we should love, reverence, and obey that sovereign. Likewise, wives should obey husbands, as is suggested by an insertion Berkeley makes into one of the texts he excerpts for *The Ladies Library* (1713). And the philosophical elite of educationalists and the clerisy should be obeyed on account of their superiority.<sup>55</sup>

As well as the metaphysically challenging notion that God's concurrence is required for individual human wills to bring about any phenomenal effect—even the tangible and visible ideas of moving our own bodies, for example—there is this other more broadly social sense of what it is for people to participate in the will of God: entering into a hierarchical network of obligations, dependencies, responsibilities. Berkeley shares both of these interests with Saint Paul, probably the most significant apostolic example for him. Insisting on the participation of the human in the divine will, Saint Paul says that God works in people to will and do his good pleasure

54. Holtzman, 'Berkeley's Two Panaceas', pp. 479–80, captures this same relationship between charity, education, and conformity to God's will in Berkeley's thought. Similar attitudes to Berkeley's can be found in other writers; for example, Henry More, *Theological Works*, p. 263, calls charity, or love of God and man, 'the highest Participation of Divinity that humane Nature is capable of on this side that mysterious Conjunction of the Humanity of Christ with the Godhead'.

55. See again the *Discourse Addressed to Magistrates*, p. 18 (LJ, VI.209) and the attitudes set out in *The Querist* L.22, §192.

(Philippians 2:13) and that the faithful are labourers together with God (1 Corinthians 3:9). He also insists that the submission of wives to husbands should be like the submission of the faithful to the Church, that children should submit to parents and servants to masters (Ephesians 5:22–33, 6:1–6), and that apostles should teach submission to principalities and magistrates (Titus 3:1). Union with God and a life of institutional submission and obedience go together. The two belong together in the interpretation of Berkeley's life and work offered in this book. It is therefore an interpretation that challenges views of Berkeley, such as Michael Brown's in his recent history of *The Irish Enlightenment*, that he 'accepted the central Enlightenment premise that the human being was the basic unit of analysis'. Brown argues that 'Berkeley's intellectual endeavour was directed to defending the faith from within the Enlightenment's terrain'. Berkeley's defence of the faith is unquestionable, but aligning him with an Enlightenment that displaces God from the centre of the known universe glosses over a significant aspect of Berkeley's thought that is at once highly traditional and deeply idiosyncratic: his arguments for the nature of the relationship between finite and infinite spirits, and the scientific, moral, social, and religious consequences of those arguments.<sup>56</sup>

Participating in God is not something that all people or finite spirits achieve equally. There are degrees of participation. As Berkeley put it in an undated set of notes for a sermon at Newport, 'Some sort of union with the Godhead in prophets, apostles, all true Christians, all men. but with men, Xtians, inspired persons, Xt in different degrees'.<sup>57</sup> There is a hierarchy of participation in the divinity.<sup>58</sup> Berkeley states the belief clearly in a sermon on religious zeal delivered during the period 1709 to 1712: 'As we are Christians we are members of a Society which entitles us to certain rights and privileges above the rest of mankind. [?] But then we must remember those advantages are conveyed unto us in a regular dispensation by the hands of a Hierarchy constituted by the Apostles, and

56. Brown, *The Irish Enlightenment*, pp. 92–93.

57. LJ, VII.61.

58. For a description of Berkeley's mental universe as hierarchical, see Charles, 'Berkeley polémiste', p. 414.

from them continued down to us in a perpetual succession'.<sup>59</sup> Not only is this hierarchy metaphysical, but it will have consequences for the privileges into which certain people are admitted. Berkeley's 'Address on Confirmation' identifies a twofold meaning of the kingdom of Christ into which the confirmed are entering:

[T]he whole world or universe may be said to compose the kingdom of Christ. But secondly, besides this large and general sense, the Kingdom of Christ is also taken in a more narrow sense as it signifies his church. The Christian church, I say, is in a peculiar sense his kingdom being a Society of persons, not only subject to his power, but also conforming themselves to his will, living according to his precepts, and thereby entitled to the promises of his gospel.<sup>60</sup>

The Church is a social organisation founded on subjection and obedience to the will of a sovereign. The members of that society must endeavour to conform to the will of the sovereign in practice. Doing so gives them an entitlement not just to protection but to reward. Berkeley here specifies the promises of the gospel. But membership in the Church confers temporal privileges also, and Berkeley worked throughout his life to guard those privileges against the incursions of freethinkers, whom Berkeley feared as an internal enemy, and of worldly minded politicians. He understood Anglican Protestantism to be in competition with Catholicism and dissent.<sup>61</sup> Even if, in his more ecumenical attitudes in later life, Berkeley would consider extending some of the practical, temporal privileges of membership of his church to others (primarily Irish Catholics), those privileges were only ever to be shared in part, and

59. LJ, VII.20. The question mark indicates illegible material in the MS.

60. LJ, VII.169.

61. Hill, 'Freethinking and Libertinism', pp. 58–59, suggests that 'so widespread was the radical idea that religion had been invented to keep the lower orders in place that defenders of Christianity took it over' by presenting the capacity of a future state of rewards and punishments to maintain social subordination as a good thing. In considering confession as a central aspect of Berkeley's thought and practice, I take a different view from Brown, *The Irish Enlightenment*, p. 20, who says of Toland, Berkeley, and Arthur O'Leary that '[f]or none of these writers was confession a determining facet of their intellectual ambition, but a strategic and specific problem encountered when applying Enlightenment methods to the context of eighteenth-century Ireland'.

only ever as part of the project of winning others not just to the Church but to the Protestant church.

To participate in the divinity is to be a member of a hierarchical society that confers privileges in both this world and the next. That society has practical, embodied forms in the Church and its established institutions, and also in the institutions of educational establishments—schools, colleges, libraries, learned societies—as documented in charters and rules. Berkeley’s participation in the divinity through such social institutions forms a major part of this study. His major philosophical works testify to a belief in an infinite mind creating lawlike regularities in the succession of ideas in finite spirits, instructing them in how to behave for their own good, and demanding love and respect. So too do Berkeley’s works of moral, social, and religious philosophy and his actions in shaping the institutions of social and religious life testify to his conception of the infinite spirit. The inequalities produced by his enactment of his beliefs are also a concern of this study: whilst the people subordinated to Berkeley’s privilege (Irish Catholics, women, enslaved people) have not displaced him from the centre of this narrative, I hope at least to do more to recognise the consequences of Berkeley’s practice for the lives of other people.

A passage that Berkeley excerpted from Isaac Barrow when compiling the anthology *The Ladies Library* in 1713 suggests what it meant to be admitted into the society of the Church on the occasion of confirmation, when one first takes the sacrament. In this ritual, confirmands commit themselves to an organised society through communion with Christ, and also with other communicants, when they sacramentally partake of his body:

The *Sacrament of the Lords Supper* declares that Union, which good Christians partaking of it, have with Christ; their Mystical Insertion into Him by a close Dependence upon him for Spiritual Life, Mercy, Grace, and Salvation; a constant adherence to him by Faith and Obedience; a near Conformity to him in Mind and Affection; an inseparable Conjunction with him by the strictest Bonds of Fidelity, and by the most endearing Relations. [ . . . ] We in the outward Action partake of the *Symbols* representing our Saviour’s Body and Blood: We in the Spiritual Intentions *communicate* of his very Person, being according to the Manner insinuated, intimately united to him.



By this *Sacrament* consequently is Signify'd and Seal'd that *Union* which is among our Saviour's true Disciples *communicating* therein; their being together united in consent of Mind and Unity of Faith, in mutual Good Will and Affection, in Hope and Tendency to the same blessed End; in Spiritual Brotherhood and Society, especially upon Account of their *Communion* with Christ, which most closely ties them to one another. They partaking of this individual Food, become translated as it were with one Body and Substance; *Seeing*, says St. Paul, *we being many are one Bread and one Body, or all of us do partake of one Bread.*<sup>62</sup>

What Barrow says of communion is very close to what Berkeley says of unity in the divine intellect in *Siris*. All properties of mind in lower orders of being are derived from the infinite mind, and the true student of nature looks up from study of the physical world to see that 'the mind contains all, and acts all, and is to all created beings the source of unity and identity, harmony and order, existence and stability'.<sup>63</sup> Communion with God is being in God; being in God is the only nonmetaphorical way in which one thing can be in another, as it is the participation of finite spirits in the infinite spirit.<sup>64</sup> Sharing in the nature of God is a social commitment in Barrow, and will appear to be so in Berkeley's practice.

It is not trivial that those who take communion become communicants. Berkeley's theory of communication—God and other spirits continually and actively discoursing with one another through signs and with some conceived good in view—is a theory of communion, of bringing wills into conformity with one another in the process of forming a religious brotherhood or society obedient to God. Participation in the divinity understood in the sense I have

62. *Ladies Library*, III.360, excerpting Barrow, 'The Eucharist', in *A Brief Exposition of the Lord's Prayer and the Decalogue*, pp. 238–67, closing with a citation of 1 Corinthians 10:17.

63. *Siris*, §295.

64. The point I am making here is more or less the same as Roberts's when he says in *A Metaphysics for the Mob*, pp. 74–75: 'Our basic epistemological relation to reality must be conceived of as a relation to another mind [. . .] our basic epistemological link to reality is *attitudinal* in nature'. Malebranche, *The Search after Truth*, p. 230, suggests that minds are in God as extension is in space.

just specified is the consistent aim of Berkeley's diverse activities and his ambition to do good as a philosopher and churchman.

### *Itinerary*

The following chapters are an attempt to interpret the documentary remains of Berkeley's life so as to give a characterisation of his thought and to show that his practice also testifies to some of the same overriding concerns—the omnipresence of God, the communication of spirits' intentions for one another through more or less regular and predictable signs, and the mutual dependence of the creation in a system of obligations and responsibilities, with all ultimately depending on God. Some chapters offer chronologically organised accounts of epochs in Berkeley's life, often ending with a change of residence; publications are placed in the context of the philosophical discourses in which they participate, and also of the personal relationships and institutional and political frameworks that sustained Berkeley.

Chapter 2 considers Berkeley's early life in Protestant educational institutions in a period when the effects of the civil wars and the War of the Two Kings were still keenly felt. It reconstructs the syllabus he worked from and the examinations he passed to become a fellow and also relates his early sermons and other writings to the scientific culture of Trinity College. The chapter culminates in an account of the *New Theory of Vision* as an exploration of laws of nature. Chapter 4 places Berkeley's book on moral law as it relates to political obligation in a variety of contexts: his recommendation to John Percival and discussion of the political writings of William Higden; student politics and discipline at TCD; and his frequent insistence on loyalty and the obligations of the clergy to encourage it. It concludes that, whatever the failings of Berkeley's rhetorical strategy, he cannot be considered other than a loyalist to Queen Anne and the Hanoverian succession. Berkeley's personal connection with Tories associated with Jacobitism is evident, however, in the connections he forged in the 1710s, one of the subjects explored in chapter 6. As well as meeting Matthew Prior and the Earl of Peterborough, Berkeley was friendly with the Whigs Richard Steele and Joseph Addison. This period (1713–1716) is one in

which Berkeley attempted to use new and different publication media (dialogues, the essay, an anthology) to promote his ideas and then travelled to Italy by accepting an appointment in public life. This visit to Italy, particularly the time Berkeley spent in the trading colony of Livorno, was the occasion of his early engagement with missionary Anglicanism in a commercial world order, as shown in the sermons he preached there.

In a different role, as tutor to St George Ashe Jr, Berkeley returned to Italy as one of a party that completed one of the longest tours of the country of the early eighteenth century, described in chapter 8. Taking in the full length of the peninsula, Berkeley reflected in his notebooks of this period on the relationship between architecture, custom, and modes of political organisation, and he considered the role of artworks in an economy, including the tourist and educational economies. He expressed fairly typical Protestant attitudes to what he regarded as Catholic superstition. There is little trace of the thinking that lay behind the essay on motion that Berkeley composed at this time or Part II of his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, said to have been lost on the road. But his *Essay towards Preventing the Ruine of Great Britain* begins to express his concerns about the corrupting effects of a consumption-based economy. Chapter 10 places Berkeley's scheme of founding St Paul's College, Bermuda, a university for colonists and Native Americans taken from mainland America, in the context of the major existing institutions for colonial and Native education, particularly the College of William and Mary.<sup>65</sup> Though previously often presented as whimsical, I suggest that Berkeley's plans were quite typical of missionary Anglican educational work. The chapter closes by noting the practical difficulty of retiring from a globalised commercial world to an institution of polite learning, given the dependency of such institutions on income from that world, and traces the afterlives of Berkeley's scheme in the island of St Kitts and the colony of Georgia.

From 1713 to 1731, Berkeley travelled widely; then, from 1734 to 1752, he rarely left Cloyne, of which he was made bishop in 1734.

65. I use the term 'Native American' rather than 'indigenous American' or 'American Indian' throughout this book without thereby wishing to express a view on the politics of the terminology and in the hope of achieving a respectful neutrality of reference.

Chapters 13 and 15 focus on groups of activities and associated texts from this long period in which Berkeley for the first time in his adult life lived in a majority-Catholic area of Ireland. Chapter 13 considers Berkeley's schemes for converting the Catholic population, persuading them of their loyalty to the House of Hanover in the case of a Jacobite invasion, and training a militia for those same circumstances. Its focus, however, is on the threat to the established church from irreligious statesmen seeking to abolish the Tests (the acts of Parliament that made being a communicant in the Church of England a condition of holding public office) and various groups, from pragmatic politicians to diabolical freethinkers, challenging the political authority of the Church. Berkeley is shown to be a defender of the civil authority of the religious orders and the right to police conscience. Chapter 15 focuses on the therapeutic role Berkeley cultivated as a philosopher and churchman to regulate not only the national economy and the spirit or momentum of the country through his socioeconomic text *The Querist* but also the bodies and minds of individuals through his recommendations for drinking tar-water and the philosophical reflections that make up most of his last major work, *Siris*. Berkeley's mode of writing in *Siris* is rather different to many of his previous works. Besides citing more authorities and deploying a far larger vocabulary, his analysis of the physical world seems very different—he makes aether the first register of spiritual causes in the phenomenal world. Nonetheless, this late text is shown to demonstrate Berkeley's persistent concern with the expressive and communicative nature of the phenomenal world and of the dependence of finite minds on the infinite mind. Berkeley's interest in systematic but not perfectly predictable phenomena, such as the weather, is related to his belief in a free and even idiosyncratic deity.

These are the principal chronological chapters of the book, and a reader wishing to progress through the narrative of Berkeley's life could focus on them. Other chapters of this study focus more exclusively on a work or set of works that are highly characteristic of a particular moment in Berkeley's career and offer an account of the pressures to which Berkeley was responding in composing them. So, in chapter 3, the key features of what Berkeley calls his 'new doctrine' are set out and a reconstruction offered of some

elements of the later stages of the formulation of that doctrine, based on Berkeley's philosophical notebooks and the *Manuscript Introduction to the Principles of Human Knowledge*. This new doctrine is presented as a response to the philosophical challenge of a dualist conception of the world that seemed to Berkeley to open up a gap between things as they are in themselves and things as we perceive them that had been exploited by sceptics and free-thinkers. It was also a response to some old and some new conceptions of the philosopher as moral-religious guide, as scientist, and as iconoclast. I present what remains for many the counterintuitive central claim of immaterialism as a success from the point of view of the internal consistency of Berkeley's thought, and yet as a (strangely unanticipated) failure from the programmatic and rhetorical point of view of stemming a rising tide of atheism and scepticism.

Chapter 11, focusing on *Alciphron*, considers Berkeley's major work of Christian apology, which came at roughly the midpoint of his career as a writer and churchman. The dialogues present, in the opposition of freethinkers and right-thinkers, the antagonistic habits of thinking and practices of living on which Berkeley had already been writing occasionally for twenty years. The freethinkers were lazy sceptics, quick to doubt biblical chronology and providential history on evidence they did not subject to the same degree of critical scrutiny as scripture. They were badly cultivated humans, to use the dominant agricultural metaphor of the book, and closely aligned with calculating office workers. They are cast into the shade by the arguments of Crito and, most of all, Euphranor, the genteel farmer of elevated and enlarged views. As well as recapitulating arguments for conceiving of vision as a language, the text points forward to Berkeley's concerns of the 1730s onwards—the health of individuals and social groups, the reasonableness of accepting local prejudices when guided by superiors, and the meaning of patriotism and how to practise it. Immediately following this chapter, I survey Berkeley's thinking about language and speech and suggest that throughout his career Berkeley remained interested in their use in motivating and encouraging other agents to adopt attitudes and engage in practices, whether or not the terms employed in a discourse signify ideas, or something else, or nothing at all.

Still other chapters reconstruct aspects of Berkeley's practice that have been little studied or understood from a perspective that stretches across his life, and they draw variously on philosophical writings, miscellaneous published writings, correspondence and manuscripts by Berkeley and others, and testimony about Berkeley. Chapter 5 suggests that Berkeley might be understood as a philosopher of education who worked through formal and informal institutions to shape people, especially the nobility and the clergy, for their public responsibilities. The chapter relates Berkeley's educational projects to works by Fénelon, Mary Astell, and John Locke. Chapter 7 gathers reflections from Berkeley's time in Italy, America, and Cloyne to assess his attitude to Roman Catholics, Native Americans, and enslaved people. He criticised Catholic superstition and ritual for their defiance of the evident regularity of phenomena and the instruction it offers to produce health. I suggest that Berkeley, when planning his Bermuda project, made no obvious effort to engage with the existing body of literature that described the cultural life of Native Americans, and that he made similarly little effort to learn about that culture when he engaged with Native Americans whilst in Rhode Island. Drawing on research by Travis Glasson, I note that Berkeley's time in Rhode Island also likely served to entrench the institution of slavery, and that his vision of the public good happily encompassed temporary servitude and forced labour, which he presented as continuous with slavery (rather than more sharply distinguished from it, as in Locke or Pufendorf).

Berkeley would have spent a great deal of time more or less exclusively in the company of his wife Anne Forster/Berkeley whilst in Rhode Island. In chapter 9, I offer a thorough revision of previous accounts of Anne by studying character sketches written by her and preserved in the Berkeley Papers, as well as translations of Fénelon that, I propose, she produced. I also offer a detailed sketch of Anne Donnellan, to whom Berkeley earlier proposed, and consider the evaluations that both Annes made of Berkeley's character: though they describe him as disputatious, destructive, and slightly disappointing, both remember him with loyalty. Chapter 14, the final thematic chapter, concerns Berkeley's daily habits: his early rising; his presentation in *Three Dialogues*, *Alciphron*, and elsewhere of the philosophical benefits of early rising; his attitudes to

eating and drinking; and his reported failure to manage his own appetites. The chapter explores the discipline of Berkeley's daily practice, relating it to the social discipline he was unafraid to evoke. The book closes with chapter 15's study of the relationships between Berkeley's widow and children with Catherine Talbot—the writer, intellectual, and daughter of Berkeley's deceased friend Charles Talbot—and with a conclusion that insists on the provisional nature of my interpretation of Berkeley's personality.

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