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BERKELEY'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this treatise may be stated, in general terms, as an investigation of certain aspects of the social philosophy of George Berkeley. The doctrines to be treated admit a division into two general types: those growing out of speculation not necessarily social in reference, but bearing directly upon social phenomena, and those growing out of a direct consideration of social phenomena. That such a division is arbitrary and only one of degree is obvious; but it seems necessitated by the subject matter, as will subsequently be shown. The exposition will follow this division. Two methods of criticism will be employed: internal criticism, wherein the essential problem is, Does Berkeley's thought, both theoretical and practical, make a consistent whole? and historical criticism, in which the adequacy of his thought for the practical problems he faced will be discussed. Briefly, then, the problem is: Does Berkeley have a social philosophy? If so, what is it, and what is it worth?

A. Definition of Social Philosophy

The preceding statement demands an explanation of the nature and scope of social philosophy. Philosophy is the
persistent rational attempt to understand the whole of human experience. Social philosophy refers to this enterprise in its particular consideration of human individuals in their relations with each other. The social philosopher seeks to discover the general principles underlying social processes and structures. In these principles he proposes to find a concrete basis through which the social aspect of human experience may be understood and criticized, and by which a reconstruction of society—or perhaps the construction of a new society—in the interests of a more harmonious living may be made possible.

The social philosopher finds the human individual among others of his species, associating with them, expressing himself among them, contributing to them, and partaking of them and their contributions. To this activity the term "social process" refers. The principles sought are those which may account for the relative harmony or disharmony of the process, such as individualism, altruism, freedom, and justice. The social process has countless aspects and takes a myriad forms. A more intimate aspect is found in close relationships such as those characterized by family life; a broader aspect may be seen in the political organization of the social community, or, in perhaps a more intangible form, in the formation of culture groups. Movement, growth, and change are characteristic of the social process.
But also, more or less static characters are to be found in this shifting scene. Social structures were mentioned above as phenomena of interest to the social philosopher. At various points the social process seems to leave a deposit, or to crystallize, in specific forms of organization. These organizations, or structures are at once an expression of and an instrument for further expression of the social process. They provide the means by which the social process is ordered and advanced, but may also have a decided negative effect in creating disorder and blocking progress. Ideally, there are only three basic problems in social life, the problem of good, the problem of freedom, and the problem of control. But because this is a human experience the problem is far more complex. In primitive economic life the concept, property, appeared and has been perpetuated; a legal and ethical structure evolved to regulate and to protect it, certain agencies are formed to carry out such regulation and protection. In a less abstract sphere the industrial revolution resulted in modern capitalistic economy and urbanized culture. Political organization is found in every division of society. A dominant religious group may color the cultural life of a whole community. In other words, the social process goes on in definite channels— it becomes institutionalized. The term "institution" may be used to indicate both the abstract concept, such as property, and the actual agency which object-
ifies it, the property-holder.

The areas of experience indicated by the institutions mentioned above (and others—no attempt was made to be exhaustive), comprise the province of the social sciences. Here the historian in general and the political scientist, the economist, the sociologist, the student of law, the anthropologist, the psychologist, the archaeologist, the philologist, and the educator, in particular, have singled out fields of investigation. Their findings furnish the social philosopher much of his basic data. The social scientists gather information as to what actually happens in the social process. They provide detailed descriptions of the origin and development of institutions and point out general laws based on orderly sequence. The social philosopher takes the classified facts then arrayed and the general statistical laws and seeks their deeper significance in relation to the whole of experience. Guided by scientific facts he inquires why the social process takes certain forms, why institutions arise, whence their authority derives, and whether they work coherently to a common and worthy end. In other words, he is interested in the values and disvalues appearing in the social process, the instruments by which they appear, the authority of these instruments, and of the causes which support the social process. He seeks to explain social good and evil, to define the good in society, and to understand by what principles society arrives
at good, or otherwise. He must answer the question, is the social process determined, or is it determinable?

Central to social philosophy is the human individual. His relative position and importance may vary among different thinkers. From one view he is but a cog in the social mechanism and as such is wholly subservient to society. On the other hand, some thinkers find the individual isolated in his self-effected individuality and stress his uniqueness as a self-sufficient unit. The former view emphasizes society and forgets the individual; the latter makes the individual supreme by ignoring society. Obviously a middle ground is more in accord with the facts. No matter where the stress is laid, one truth is apparent. Society consists of individuals. The abstraction, society, is in itself meaningless until it is made concrete with a garnishing of people. Social process and structures may fade away as we approach and analyze them, but the individual (though in some cases unfortunately) always remains. In practice, obviously, and in theory, inevitably though tacitly, we deal with individuals.

Hence in social philosophy any theory put forward is concerned with this irreducible and ineradicable unit. A principle has meaning only in so far as it refers to the individuals who with their relationship constitute the social process. The institutions which give the process order and meaning are individually conceived, their authority is based on personal
allegiance, no matter how expressed; this authority is administered by individuals, and the meanings and values to which institutions are as means to ends, are personal. Though society be necessary for the achievement of values, their selection and enjoyment is always a personal accomplishment. Social philosophy is concerned with unique units and their relations as they constitute a continuous process, with the directions in which the process progresses and with the instruments by which this progress if furthered.

B. The Legitimacy of the Study

It can hardly be said that Berkeley was a social philosopher in the strict sense of being primarily interested in the principles underlying social process and its structures. In his writings no systematic and comprehensive study of social problems is to be found; nor is there any systematic ethical treatise extant. These shortcomings in systematic treatment need not bar Berkeley from the social-philosophical universe of discourse. The deep interest in moral, political, and economic problems evinced in many of his works, as well as in the course of his life, wholly warrant such a treatment as is proposed here. Further, it is very probable that a religious and moral motive was a determining factor in much of his more theoretical philosophy. That this part of his work has implications for all phases of human life is a truism; every
"practical" philosophy deserving the name of philosophy has its roots in metaphysics and epistemology, to say nothing of logic. Berkeley's social philosophy is to be sought in three fields--theoretical implications, the evidence of his life, and a large body of writings concerning social subjects.

Berkeley's primary philosophical interest is indicated by the title of perhaps his most important work, the Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge. His epistemological interests led him to an idealistic metaphysics, a conclusion pregnant with meaning for the ends of social action. The stress on mind and the conception of the self at which he arrives, touches a basic aspect of social philosophy--the status of the individual. Berkeley was from the beginning of his philosophizing aware of the significance of his "New Principle" for mundane affairs. He notes this himself in the conclusion of the Principles, and in the Preface to the Dialogues Between Hylas and Philemon.

Berkeley's ethical writings are even more fruitful with implications for the social scene. His moral views move from a major emphasis on the relations of man to God in the Discourse on Passive Obedience to a more comprehensive insight

1 Johnston, CB, 45. The abbreviations and symbols used in the footnotes are explained at the beginning of the bibliography.
2 Fraser, WGB, I, 345-6. With the exception of the Commonplace Book the Fraser edition of Berkeley's text is used.
3 Ibid., 375.
into the relations of man and man in the *Alciphron*. The *Commonplace Book* abounds with references to moral problems and to the proposed treatise on the subject, "The Two great principles of Morality—the being of a God and the freedom of man, those to be handled in the beginning of the Second Book."\(^4\) Part II of the *Principles*, here alluded to, was partly written but was apparently lost in Italy in 1715.\(^5\) Among the other sources of Berkeley's ethics are the essays contributed to Richard Steele's *Guardian*, scattered sections of the *Siris*, and numerous sermons and letters.

Aside from these are found writings marking a direct incursion into the sphere of social philosophy. Here should be mentioned the *Essay Toward Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*, the *Discourse Addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority*, the *Proposal for the Better Supplying of Churches in Our Foreign Plantations*, *A Word to the Wise*, and above all, the *Querist*. In addition, significant comments are to be found through his sermons.

Probably the most convincing evidence for considering Berkeley as a social philosopher is his own life. From the time of his return from Europe (1720) until his death there were few times when he was not exhorting his countrymen on behalf of some socially beneficial project. The Bermuda

\(^4\) Johnston, CB, 59.

\(^5\) *WGB*, I, 19.
project alone occupied some eight years of his life. As Bishop of Cloyne he urged his parishes to look after their temporal as well as their eternal interests.

C. Plan of Exposition

The general plan of exposition is as follows: Chapter Two is largely introductory and summary in character, surveying Berkeley and his thought in their historical environment. A summary of the political, economic, and cultural history of a social philosopher's time is particularly apropos. A treatment of philosophical antecedents needs no defense. The social and philosophical position occupied by Berkeley is indicated in a sketch of his life, and the remainder of the chapter is devoted to a summary of his philosophy.

From the point of departure thus provided, Chapter Three is devoted to a discussion of Berkeley's conception of the individual, his capacities and his obligations.

Chapter Four is concerned with Berkeley's practical social philosophy, in which his views on government, wealth, and related subjects are brought to light.

In Chapter Five the critical problems mentioned at the beginning will be resolved. Does Berkeley's philosophy, from a social point of view, make a consistent whole? And, in view of the problem he faced, can he be said to have been a social idealist of comprehensive and adequate insight?
CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

A. The Historical Environment

Berkeley was born in 1685 and died in 1753. Roughly, his life extends over the first half of the eighteenth century—a century marked, on the whole, by consistent progress and growth for Great Britain both at home and abroad. 1 1688 had marked the end of the Stuart struggle to reassert royal prerogative. By the Bill of Rights and the establishment of the Protestant Succession the strength of the popular government was confirmed, and the institution of ministerial government began to show a significant aspect of English political organization. Throughout the reign of William and Mary, and Anne, this new departure was solidified, and proved equal to the test of the Jacobite revolts of 1689-92 and on the accession of George I in 1714 (though, of course, abetted by the religious antipathy to the Pretenders). The lethargy and incapability of the first of the Hanoverians paved the way to further extension of cabinet power and the virtual rule of England by Walpole from 1721 to 1742. By the close of the

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1 Traill, SE. IV, 507-621; V, 1-365. Because of the general nature of this historical material, no specific references will be made.
Walpole regime the cabinet form of government was so firmly established that, despite widespread resentment of the arrogant Whig oligarchy in the Commons and the systematic bribery by which the ministry had been maintained, the only result was a change of ministers.

The foreign scene during the period was far more turbulent. From 1689 to 1697 William's interests in Holland and the traditional balance of power and anti-France-and-Spain policies maintained wars with Louis XIV. Again in 1702 these factors brought England into the "War of the Spanish Succession." After this conflict was ended by the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, a precarious peace was maintained by Walpole's policy of moderation; but in 1739 popular frenzy brought on the "War of Jenkin's Ear," which led into the "War of the Austrian Succession," ending in 1748. Besides these actually declared wars, the friction between English, Spanish, and French colonial interests supported a continual struggle in the colonies in the form of Indian wars, and on the seas in the form of legalized piracy.

The chief results of these wars were the extension of English colonization and commerce and the contracting of a large national debt. These are of great importance for the economic history of the period. The Bank of England was established in 1694 as a means of refinancing the public debt. The enterprise was so successful, the attraction of remuner-
ative investment loosening pursestrings which an out-moded tax system was unable to molest, that a wave of stockjobbing ensued. The absorption of the debt by stock-companies proved so profitable, and the expectations of profits from colonial and commercial projects were so great that speculation ran riot. The bubble burst with the failure of the South Sea Company in 1720 and a severe economic depression followed. No adumbrations of the industrial revolution appear until after the middle of the century. It was an era of slow growth in domestic industry; small shops and the family were the typical commercial units. Foreign trade expanded rapidly. Some progress was made in agricultural practices. Berkeley's Ireland is characterized by continued poverty, made even more severe by the famines of 1739-41.

In the more cultural history of the period the most significant development is found in religious thought and discussion. In literary circles the neo-classicist tradition was perpetuated through Pope and Johnson, though Thomson's Winter (1730), and Collin's Odes (1747), indicate that the weight of an hypostatized past was being borne uneasily by more imaginative spirits. In religious thought, on the contrary, continual turmoil and controversy is found. This arose from two completely divergent quarters. On the one hand appeared the rationalistic attack on religion--Deism and Free-thinking. From the appearance of John Toland's Christianity Not Myster-
ious (1696) to William Tindal's Christianity as Old as the Creation (1723), and on to the middle of the century conflict waxed hot. The other attack on the established religion had a more humble origin. Since the rift with Rome, England had had an insistent though small increment of "enthusiast" religious sects. By the grace of temporarily more auspicious factors Puritanism had engulfed the country in the seventeenth century. The restoration of the monarchy brought the Established Church again into its own legally, but new sporadic groups of the enthusiast type continued to appear, some to persist. The Methodist society was founded at Oxford in 1730. Churchmen fought a war on two fronts. In Ireland the Catholic populace presented a third. The most significant for this study is, of course, the rationalistic debate.

B. Berkeley's Life

George Berkeley was born March 12, 1685, in Ireland, of English parents. He entered Kilkenney School in 1696 and seems to have been intellectually acute from an early age. He records in his Commonplace Book: "that I was distrustful at 8 years old; and consequently by nature disposed for these

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2 A mystery surrounds Berkeley's immediate family. Hone and Rossi think his mother may have been a Catholic, thereby accounting for his silence in regard to his parents, and his leniency toward the "Papists." Hone and Rossi, BB, 255-6.
He entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1700, and made quite a brilliant record. He received the bachelor's degree in 1704, the master's degree in 1707, and remained as a lecturer until 1724, though after 1712 his connection with the college was only nominal.

The period immediately following 1704 is one of great intellectual activity for Berkeley. He led in the formation of a society for philosophical discussion. His private diary, or **Commonplace Book**, attests his interests, and indicates the course of his development. This activity bore immediate fruit in two mathematical studies, the *Arithmetica* and the *Miscellanea Mathematica* (both in 1707), which he published anonymously. In 1709 the essence of the "New Principle" appeared in his *New Theory of Vision*. He had begun composition of the *Principles* in 1708, though it was not published until 1710. In 1709 the Percival correspondence begins, which affords intimate detail on both Berkeley's intellectual and public life. His friendship with this studious young nobleman, afterwards an important figure in English public affairs, indicates a close relationship with the practical world about him.

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3 Johnston, CB, 30. The "new" doctrines are those of Locke and Malebranche.

4 Berkeley's family connections were broken at a very early age. He never visited them after entering Trinity. They are never mentioned, save in connection with attempts of certain relatives to capitalize on his fame. Cf. Hone and Rossi, BB, 8-9.

5 Controversy still rages over both the order and content of CB.
Berkeley was ordained as a deacon of the Church of England in 1709, and from this time forward his inclination to avoid arguments which brought church doctrines into question becomes a positive stand against anti-clerical arguments. The Discourse on Passive Obedience (1712), outlines his position toward church and state in no uncertain tones. In fact, the rigorous doctrine of obedience to the established powers which he propounds seemed too zealous, and he fell under suspicion of being a Jacobite. This greatly impeded his later efforts to gain preferment in the Church.

In 1713 he traveled to England in search of health and intellectual and ecclesiastical fortune. He gained an entry to London literary circles through his friend Dean Swift, and was soon much at home in intellectual circles. Both personally and as a thinker he was greatly admired. Pope ascribed to him "every virtue under Heaven," and Addison asked him to contribute to his short-lived Guardian. The popularized exposition of the "New Principle"—the Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous—appeared and added to his fame, since the Principles had not been well received.

In 1713 Swift got him an appointment as chaplain to an embassy to Sicily, and he went abroad. Most of the period until 1721 he spent traveling on the continent, after 1716 as tutor to the son of the Bishop of Clogher. His Journal for these years indicates a wide range of interests in folk-lore,
geography, and climate, but with little interest in political matters. He seems particularly interested in agricultural practice and products.

Berkeley found a sorry England upon his return in 1721. The collapse of the South Sea Company the year before had brought on a severe economic depression which was accompanied by deep pessimism in all parts of the country. He responded to this with the Essay Towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain, declaiming against speculation and indolence, and urging a return to religion, industry, frugality, and patriotism.

Meanwhile he had been attempting to gain a position in the Church. Jacobite imputations had overruled the efforts of Percival and the Prince of Wales to secure him the living of St. Paul's, Dublin, in 1716. Efforts to get the Deanery of Dromore in 1722 met the same opposition from suspicious Whigs and the same ill success. But the same year the amorous difficulties of his friend Dean Swift brought him a stroke of good fortune. Swift's "Vanessa" (Esther Van Homrigh), piqued at being supplanted by "Stella" left Berkeley the legacy Swift had expected. After much litigation he profited handsomely

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6 He does not the framework of the government of Naples. WGB, IV, 293 ff.
7 Ibid., 260, passim.
8 His philosophically-minded consort, Caroline, had found Berkeley very agreeable.
by it.

Far more important for social philosophy is the appearance in Berkeley's correspondence with Percival of an idea which was growing into the famous Bermuda project. This dominated his life for the next eight years. In 1724 he finally received the Deanery of Derry, but his sentiment on receiving it was merely gratitude that his position as an apostle of Christianity and education in the New World was enhanced, and consequently the success of his endeavors made more probable. He went to England and soon London was buzzing with talk of a college for Indians to be founded in the Bermudas for the purpose of training native missionaries and teachers. His zeal brought in voluntary contributions from all sides—even from Walpole. He gained the ear of the King and a royal charter was granted in 1725. The following year a bill setting aside funds for the project passed the Commons with only two dissenting votes. It must be recognized that there were other factors than Berkeley's persuasiveness and a wave of missionary fervor in this apparent success. An institution for spreading the Anglican gospel would provide a needed counterpoise to Jesuit missionary success; the Spanish example proved that religion was an invaluable tool in colonial and commercial expansion.

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9 Rand, BP, 217-20, March 4, 1723. Berkeley says he had been considering it for about ten months then.
10 WGB, IV, 344.
Berkeley himself notes the progress of Spain and the threat of "an utter extirpation of our colonies, on the safety whereof depends so much of the nation's wealth."\(^{11}\)

The success which at first seemed certain was not forthcoming. Berkeley's royal warrant for the payment of the grant was ignored in 1726. Opposition based on a fear that such an institution would make the colonies less dependent on England became widespread. After two fruitless years Berkeley decided to go to America and attempt to develop the project there, until the negotiations were completed.

He did not go to Bermuda, since to have done so would have voided his Deanery within a year. He settled near Newport, Rhode Island, bought a farm, and awaited news of his grant. The colonists greeted him with much acclaim, and he spent two quiet years with his newly married wife, preaching, and finding congenial philosophical company in Samuel Johnson, later the founder of King's College (Columbia University). Enforced idleness and the stimulation of Johnson led Berkeley back to actual philosophical speculation. This resulted in the *Alciphron*, the first philosophical work published by him since *Hylas and Philonus* (1713), except for *De Motu*, an essay on the scientific problem of motion, written in 1720.

A minor crusade made by Berkeley while in America has been

\(^{11}\) WGB, IV, 356.
overshadowed by the Bermuda project. As was the custom, he kept slaves. But he did not conform completely as is shown by the fact that three of his negroes were admitted to Trinity Church, Newport, June 11, 1731.\textsuperscript{12} Heretofore, the policy of the Church had been to deny the comforts of baptism to slaves. Berkeley opposed this and sought an opinion on the matter from the King's Attorney. The legal opinion coincided with Berkeley's, and he saw to having it published throughout the colonies.\textsuperscript{13} He held that the gospel should be preached to all, but also he held that slavery was consistent with the New Testament.\textsuperscript{14}

By 1731 it was evident that the Bermuda grant would not be paid. The practical fear that the colonies' dependency on England would be lessened, coupled with resentment against Berkeley's receiving the material benefit of his deanery, though abroad for over two years, definitely closed the incident. Walpole assured Berkeley's friends that the grant would not be paid. The Bishop of Down wrote, calling him home, and recommending the church Papists to his conscience.\textsuperscript{15}

Disillusioned, and rather embittered against the freethinkers whom he felt were largely responsible for the failure of his project, Berkeley returned to England. He writes to

\textsuperscript{12} Rand, BAS, 39.
\textsuperscript{13} WGB, IV, 404.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 381.
\textsuperscript{15} Hone and Rossi, BB, 163.
Percival:

What they foolishly call free-thinking seems to me the principal root or source not only of opposition to our college but of most other evils in this age, and as long as that frenzy subsists and spreads, it is in vain to hope for any good, either to the mother country or colonies, which always follow the fashions of old England. 16

This attitude, coupled with the *Alciphron*, a systematic attack upon free-thinking, is the clue to the following few years of his life. He set himself up as the defender of the Church against its foes—the deists within, and the free-thinkers without. The *Theory of Vision, or Visual Language Vindicated* (1733) was directed primarily against deism. In the *Analyst* (1735) he attacks free thinkers, though primarily the mathematicians, pointing out the element of faith on which the arbitrary assumption of mathematics and physics must be based.

Meanwhile events were transpiring which were to take him from the scene of controversy. In 1734 he was rewarded with the See of Cloyne in the south of Ireland. He retired thither the following year and lived henceforth a quieter existence. His interests turned to practical affairs. The backwardness of Irish agriculture and industry amazed him and inspired the *Querist* (1735, new editions in 1736, 1737). He called evil officials to task in the *Discourse to Magistrates Occasioned by the Enormous Licence and Irreligion of the Times* (1735).

16 Rand, BP, 273.
As a Bishop he was entitled to a seat in Irish House of Lords, but seems to have been in attendance only once. In 1737 he attended the trial of Peter Lens, the leader of a blasphemous club.\(^\text{17}\) He did not address the House, and his suggestion that the sumptuary laws be revived gained no support.\(^\text{18}\)

Two factors weigh heavily in the next few years of Berkeley's life—a widespread famine in Ireland from 1738-41, and much reading in Greek philosophy, especially Plotinus. The former led him to medicinal speculation; the latter, to the final stage of his philosophy; the two are combined in the *Siris* (1744). This book, extolling the virtues of tar-water as a cure for all ills, was his greatest popular success. All England drank tar-water for a time. The triumph was far more medical than philosophical.\(^\text{19}\) Berkeley propagated his panacea with ardor and was soon engaged in controversy—this time with the doctors.

He continued living quietly at Cloyne, extending kindly admonishings to the Catholics of his see, and maintaining in his home a strong cultural influence upon his parishioners until 1752. In ill health he returned to England, living with his son at Oxford until his death January 14, 1753.

The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from a survey of

\(^{17}\) Cf. *WGB*, IV, 502.

\(^{18}\) Hone and Rossi, *BB*, 206.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 236.
Berkeley's life is that he was, emphatically, not a "closet" philosopher. He traveled widely and was a familiar figure in the political and social activity of his time. The Church was always a central interest, both in thought and practice. He was a man of great personal charm; no one could say anything against him as a man, no matter how perturbing his philosophy may have been. A central trait in his character seems to have been a touch of crusading zeal. His whole life is colored by a series of highly idealistic enterprises. Whether or not he was a humanitarian and a visionary at the expense of reason it is the business of this study to determine.

C. The Influences on Berkeley's Philosophy

The independency of Berkeley is a matter of question. Campbell Fraser, who may with safety be pointed out as the first scholar to make a comprehensive and fruitful investigation of his work, considered him highly original in his thought. Later research has indicated his judgment, "It does not seem that his scholarship or philosophical learning was extensive," to be unjustified. The large number of references to various writers, chiefly Locke, which appear in the Commonplace Book, belie such a statement. Wild notes the originality of this document but also remarks that "the sense in which Berkeley's

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20 WGB, I, 4.
early thought developed in and through a close study of pre-
ceeding authors is made manifest on almost every page.  
To point out that Berkeley leans upon his predecessors does not
deny his originality. Genuine philosophical originality does
not consist in breaking away from and ignoring the past; rather
does it consist in making creative use of the philosophical
heritage. That Berkeley accomplished the latter cannot be
denied.

Further controversy lurks in the problem of upon which one
of his predecessors Berkeley was most dependent. It is tra-
ditional to consider him as a link between Locke and Hume, and
a strong case may be built for attributing his paternity to
Locke. Fraser22 and Johnston23 agree with this interpretation.

On the other hand, Luce would take a more "balanced" view.

To neglect the Lockian element in Berkeley would be
to fly in the face of the facts, and I have no wish
to go from one extreme to another. The balanced
view would be that both Malebranche and Locke ex-
erted a potent influence upon the young Irishman
in his plastic days, and that the two influences
were so heterogeneous that a comparison of weight
and value is futile.24

Wild chooses to view Locke as his point of departure and Plato
as his guiding star.25 Further, Kantonen finds Descartes a
wide and varied influence on Berkeley.26

21 Wild, GB, 53.
22 WGB, I, xi.
23 Johnston, DBP, 67.
24 Luce, BAM, 6.
25 Wild, GB, 77.
26 Kantonen, IDB, 318-22.
The problems of how independent or dependent Berkeley was as a philosopher, and which influence, if any, can be said to be primary is of no immediate importance here. Luce's view that the influences upon him were heterogeneous and extensive is acceptable. The essential point of this discussion is just what influences are to be found. What problems or theories bequeathed by the past are important in Berkeley's thought?

(1) The Church. "Berkeley was first and foremost a Churchman."27 This statement as it stands is largely true, though its author implies by it unjustly that Berkeley's relations with the Church warped his allegiance to philosophic truth. Religious motivations do not detract from the sincerity of a man's philosophy. Luce says that Berkeley

Began and continued to philosophize primarily to defend four fundamental religious convictions, namely, that a God certainly exists, that he is pure spirit, that he associates himself providentially with mankind, and that the human soul is immortal.28

The avowed enemies of religion and the propagators of theories he considered antithetical to religious truths were his lifelong foes. A glance at the titles of his works conclusively establishes this.

(2) Locke: It is very evident that Locke was more in-

27 Hone and Rossi, BB, 169.
28 Luce, Art. I, 278.
fluential than any other philosopher in Berkeley's early development, if the number of references constitute a criterion. His acquaintance with Locke's thought dates probably from the time of his matriculation at Trinity College, and the *Commonplace Book* attests his absorption with it.

The most apparent connection between Locke and Berkeley is the use of the empirico-psychological method. Berkeley continues Locke's analysis of the human understanding. He accepts the Lockean conception of ideas, that they are either sense impressions or perceptions constructed from these impressions with the aid of memory and imagination.

Undoubtedly Berkeley's New Principle would never have been born had it not been for Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities. For Berkeley the idea of abstract qualities such as extension inhering in a material substance led directly to a materialistic metaphysics. The denial of this distinction between qualities and the causal efficiency of matter is Berkeley's chief advance over his fellow-countryman.

Wild finds that the "spiritism" which Berkeley substituted for Locke's material causal agency is also found in Locke. Of course at Trinity within two years of its publication. (1690)

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29 Cf. Luce, *BAM*, 6. Luce notes that Locke's *Essay* was on the course at Trinity within two years of its publication. (1690)
vague concept cannot be denied, and he does find active power most clearly recognizable in the idea of spirit. Wild maintains that the most significant aspect of Berkeley is not this subjective "spiritism," as it appeared in his early works, but in the development of a more concrete logic. This, Wild affirms, was suggested to Berkeley by Locke's distinction between "mental" and "verbal" propositions, and between "real" and "trifling" knowledge. Whether or not this be accepted, it is apparent that Berkeley was repelled by Locke's verbalism, and that he remains a foe to abstraction throughout his works.

The conclusion that Berkeley found much of his epistemology and at least some of his metaphysics in Locke seems warranted. Especially interesting for this study is the fact that he seems to have got nothing at all from Locke's Treatise on Civil Government, which is as significant a document in political theory as the Essay on Human Understanding is for epistemology. Not one reference to the Treatise is found in the Commonplace Book. That he was familiar with Locke's theories on government is apparent from Passive Obedience, but whatever influence may be found here is purely negative. He attacks Locke's theory that government is based on the free consent of the governed, established in a contract which is voided when the public good is violated. For Berkeley government is based

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32 Wild, GB, 53 ff.
on necessity and obligation, not consent; it has its origin in the divine law of nature and is not merely a human institution. Locke says that men should have the "common privilege of opposing force with force,--self-defense is a part of the law of Nature." Berkeley recognizes that self-preservation is a natural law. But the rule, "Thou shalt not resist the supreme power," is also a natural law, and "no negative precept ought to be transgressed for the sake of observing a positive one." Hence, it is apparent that wherever Berkeley received inspiration for the social scene, or at least for political affairs, it was not from Locke.

(3) The Cartesians: In the Commonplace Book many references are found to Descartes and his followers, primarily to Malebranche. He was conversant with the writings of both of these chief figures of the rational-idealistic school. Here above all should be noted the Cartesian emphasis upon the self, a concept which came to dominate Berkeley's thought. Likewise, in attributing to God all movement in the universe, he borrows a fundamental Cartesian tenet, though it must be recognized that Berkeley's God was immanent, while for the Cartesians he was transcendent. Malebranche's tendency toward

34 WGB, IV, 117.
35 Locke, TCG, 313.
36 WGB, IV, 123.
37 Kantonen, Art. I, 483.
38 Johnston, DBP, 70-1.
immaterialism may have guided Berkeley in his discovery of subjective idealism.\textsuperscript{39} His interest in mathematics led him into the wider reaches of Cartesian speculation, but this need not be considered further than his discovery of the faith element in mathematics as put forth in the Analyst.\textsuperscript{40} In epistemology he remains antithetical to the Cartesian theory of conceptual knowing, holding with Locke, that knowledge is perceptual.

Other influences might be traced with ease. Newton's physical universe with its deistic implication was a permanent object of attack. He was familiar with Hobbes and revolted against his materialism. Numerous references to Hobbes are found in the \textit{Commonplace Book}. Berkeley speaks of the "horrible consequence" of Hobbes' distinction between existence and perception, and calls him an enemy of religion.\textsuperscript{41} In assailing the contract theory in \textit{Passive Obedience}, he was of course arguing against Hobbes' classical formulation of the theory. However, Berkeley uses almost the same argument and arrives at a conclusion practically identical with Hobbes in his theory of absolute non-resistance.\textsuperscript{42} In basing his ethical theory on self-interest he comes dangerously near to Hobbes' selfish theory of morals. The effect of Platonic and

\textsuperscript{39} Luce, \textit{BAM}, 57, \textit{et passim}.
\textsuperscript{40} WGB, III, 59-60.
\textsuperscript{41} Johnston, CB, 98; 100.
neo-Platonic philosophy must be recognized. The Siris indicates a close affinity with much of this thought.

D. Berkeley's Philosophy

It is impossible to give anything like a complete survey of Berkeley's thought within the limits of this treatise. Yet it is necessary that the general trend of his thought and the major conclusions he reached be clearly in mind if his social significance is to be rightly understood. An adequate summary is made extremely difficult by the fact that his philosophy is not expressed in one extensive and systematic work. His philosophy is not an organic whole; in justice to him it can only be understood as a development, and a not too continuous development at that.

Obviously the first thing to be noted in Berkeley's philosophy is his "New Principle"—esse is percipi—i.e. the being of things consists in their being perceived. Analysis of conscious experience revealed to him that any reference to anything was impossible without the existence of a mind. He attacked Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities, showing that both types are only ideas existing in mind. Further, and of primary importance, he finds that no idea of a pure, abstract, extended, material substance is

43 WGB, I, 259.
44 Ibid., 262.
possible save when sensory qualities are attributed to it, that such a substance conceived as existing objectively is a contradiction in terms, since the sensory qualities allegedly inherent in it can exist only in a mind. Hence material substance cannot exist.  

Hence all existing things are of the nature of thought. Berkeley finds in his conscious experience, in addition to ideas, an active, thinking being which operates with ideas, and which acts. In reference to such a being is esse percipii. But the existence of nature must certainly continue even though all human minds are unconscious of it for a time. The human self continues to exist. To explain this Berkeley points to spirit as the only active principle known. All things must arise from or be associated with spirit, i.e. God. "It is evident that the being of a Spirit--infinitely wise, good and powerful--is abundantly sufficient to explain all the appearances of nature." All things, then exist in God's mind.

Berkeley does not mean to deny the reality of perceptions, or in any way to discredit the evidence of the senses.

Ideas imprinted on the senses are real things, or do really exist: this we do not deny; but we deny they can subsist without the minds which perceive them, or that they are resemblances of any archetypes existing without the mind.

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45 WGB, I, 261.
46 Ibid., 258.
47 WGB, I, 297.
48 Ibid., 308.
Berkeley uses "idea" to signify sense objects rather than "thing" in order to make emphatic their necessary relation to mind. Further, "thing" can refer to "thinking things" or "spirits" whose existence cannot be denied.\(^{49}\)

This brings up a basic problem in Berkeley's philosophy. Existence is *perципи*, but it is also *percipere*. Thinking things must exist before anything else can have existence. How is their existence known? Not by ideas, for ideas are sensory perceptions and purely passive, but by notions is the thinker assured of the reality of himself, or soul, as an active, understanding being.\(^ {50}\) The self is passive in knowing but active in willing. The problem of how this can be is never completely explained by Berkeley. In the *Principle* knowledge arises "not by discovering our necessary connexion between our ideas, but only by the observation of the settled laws of nature."\(^ {51}\) But still man acts and knows that he is accountable for his actions. For ethical reasons Berkeley must maintain human freedom.

Central to the later stages of Berkeley's thought is this problem of the passive and active self. The empirical logic of the *Principles* and *Hylas* and *Philonus* admits no solution. But Berkeley moves to a more rationalistic and concrete logic

\(^{49}\) *WGB*, I, 278.

\(^{50}\) *Ibid.*, 272.

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in the *Alciphron* and in the *Siris*. A careful study of these works reveals this, and all the critics and commentators on Berkeley, however varied their judgments of him may be, agree that his philosophy develops in this direction. ⁵²

The mystic atmosphere of the *Siris* may belie this. The emphasis he places on intuitions of the divine are certainly far from concrete. ⁵³ On the other hand, his epitome of the *philosophica vita* which concludes the work, may be taken as representing his own attitude and development.

Truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few. Certainly, where it is the chief passion, it doth not give way to vulgar cares and views; nor is it contented with a little ardor in the early time of life; active, perhaps, to pursue, but not so fit to weigh and revise. He that would make a real progress in knowledge must dedicate his age as well as youth, the later growth as well as first fruits, at the altar of Truth. ⁵⁴

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⁵³ WGB, *III*, 275; 287.
⁵⁴ WGB, *III*, 299.
CHAPTER III

THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS STATUS

As has been said, society is made up of unique units—human individuals. Before any affirmation about social relations, institutions, or processes can be made, it must be made clear just what is related, controlled, or moved. What is the nature of the individual? What can he do, and how? What should he be and do? These are questions which must be answered.

A. The Nature of the Individual

(1) Definition of "Persons": It is apparent from the summary of Berkeley's philosophy that the being which has, or rather, is a mind is for him of the utmost importance. Early in his philosophical development appears the statement:

Nothing properly but persons, i.e. conscious things exist. All other things are not so much existences but manners of ye existence of persons.¹

This declaration gives rise to a problem of major proportions, however, when the following entry is noted:

The concrete of the will and understanding I must call mind; not person, lest offence be given, there being but one volition acknowledged to be God. Mem.-- Carefully to omit defining of

¹ Johnston, CB, 3-4.
Persons, or making much mention of it.  

From these quotations it may be inferred that Berkeley proposed an unmistakably personalistic metaphysics. By mind he means apparently the same thing as person. At any rate, the "concrete of the will and the understanding" are certainly human possessions. Hence, human beings, insofar as they will and understand are basic metaphysical existents. The "concrete" referred to is designated variously by Berkeley as spirit, soul, mind, or self.

The self includes both the will and the understanding, but it is neither a volition nor an idea. By the word spirit he means "all that is active." Though he vacillates on this problem, Berkeley quite definitely rejects the separation of the will and the understanding.

It seems to me that will and understanding—volitions and ideas—cannot be severed, that either cannot possibly be without the other. And again, "While I exist or have any idea I am eternally, constantly willing; my acquiescing in the present state is willing." Hence the spirit or self is something active, which acts in certain ways. Its acts or functions are willing and understanding, and these faculties are inseparable both in

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2 Johnston, CB, 87.
4 Johnston, CB, 104.
5 Ibid., 101. "The Will is purus actus."
6 Ibid., 103.
7 Ibid., 97.
themselves—from particular understandings and volitions—and from each other. The complete statement appears in the Principles.

A Spirit is a 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.8

The self is, then, above all active and unitary. Its unity derives chiefly from its volitional character of which the thinker is aware. In the Siris Berkeley again discusses the self, though at this final stage in his thought the account given is Platonic, and far from the empirical discussions of his early work. He finds in the mind

There is an instinct or tendency of the mind upwards, which sheweth a natural tendency to recover and raise ourselves from our present sensual and low condition, into a state of light, order, and purity.9

He adapts gladly the Platonic doctrine of existence as unity to his empirical assurance of the reality of selves. "Upon mature reflexion, the person or mind of all created beings seemeth alone indivisible and to partake most of unity."10 Accordingly, selves, or human individuals, are the most real things in the temporal universe.

Concerning this conception of the individual as a most real, active, understanding, and inspired being three things

8 WGB, I, 272.
9 WGB, III, 269.
10 Ibid., 290.
may be said. First, obviously, the individual as a thinking spirit, is. Second, Berkeley fails to show concretely what the individual is, hence does not show how he can be what he is, which leads to the third criticism. The failure to show what the individual is and how he can act and understand lies in a distinction made by Berkeley not readily apparent from the foregoing exposition. The mind is active in willing but passive in understanding. Esse is percipi, but also esse is percipere. Ideas are purely passive, but the mind is also active. How can these active and passive elements exist in a unitary being? Berkeley was on the verge of a solution of this problem when he noted that ideas and volitions are inseparable and that he was "constantly, eternally willing." But his affinity for the Lockean conception of ideas and his own theory of active spirit kept him from a realization of the actual "concrete" and rationally willing self.

(2) Knowledge of the Self: This problem is intimately connected with the foregoing discussion. If the self is, how is it known? How is its "is-ness" known? This problem gave Berkeley no little trouble. Early, he concludes that the very existence of ideas constitutes the Soul—"Consciousness, perception, existence of ideas seem to be all one."11 But he proceeds with the analysis and concludes, as Hume did later,

11 Johnston, CB, 69.
that "mind is but a congeries of perceptions. Take away the perceptions and you take the mind. Put the perceptions and you put the mind." 12

But Berkeley does not stop here. Common sense and the fate of his entire system drive him to the contrary conclusion. The existence of active spirit and the self must be upheld. In Hylas and Philonus, Hylas says that there can be no more meaning to spiritual substance than there is to material substance. Philonus replies,

I know or am conscious of my own being;—I myself am not my ideas but somewhat else, a thinking, active principle that perceives, knows, wills, and operates about my ideas. 13

A knowledge of the self in the sense of having ideas of it is impossible. But by reflection and introspection, a notion or intuition of its unifying activity is gained. 14 Its reality is undeniable, but Berkeley fails to give any rational reason why. His empirical logic made the self untouchable; his only resort was the basic Cartesian tenet, Cogito, ergo sum, though he would substitute volo for cogito. 15

(3) Freedom of the Self: The individual is an active, thinking being. He is the necessary presupposition to all action and knowing, though Berkeley fails to show exactly why

12 Johnston, CB, 69-70.
13 WGB, I, 450.
14 Ibid., 307; Cf. Johnston, CB, 66.
15 Hone and Rossi, BB, 216-7.
he is. But is man, as presupposed, free to act? And if so, how? The metaphysics of the Principles leaves little room for human freedom. Nothing can be more evident, he says,

Than the existence of God, or a spirit who is intimately present to our minds, producing in them all that variety of ideas or sensations which continually affect us, on whom we have an absolute and entire dependence, in short, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.\(^{16}\)

That an individual existing so intimately within the divine Mind should be free in any way seems impossible. However, for ethical reasons, man must be free and accountable for his actions. In the Principles Berkeley avoids imputing all the evil in the world to God by the Spinozistic expedient of noting the narrowness of the finite mind. When viewed sub specie aeterni what appears evil to man must be wholly good.\(^{17}\)

In Hylas and Philonus he points out how freedom is possible. Hylas holds that if God is the immediate cause of all motions, he must be the source of all immorality. Philonus replies that for him God is immediate cause of only physical actions hence not responsible for moral evil which consists in the deviation of the will from the laws of reason and religion. There are no other agents in the world but spirits,

But this is very consistent with allowing to thinking, rational beings, in the production of motions, the use of limited powers, ultimately indeed derived from God, but immediately

\(^{16}\) WGB, I, 342.
\(^{17}\) Ibid., 345.
under the direction of their own wills, which is sufficient to entitle them to all the guilt of their actions.¹⁸

Two things may be said in connection with these quotations. First, Berkeley has shown that freedom is necessary if the infinite goodness of God is to be maintained. Second, he has not shown that man is free, but only that it is possible to suppose that God created man a free moral agent. The discussion is purely logical and abstract—a kind of argument which Berkeley himself rails against consistently.

In the Alciphron, however, Berkeley points to the empirical evidence for freedom. The former logical argument is repeated—that no contradiction is involved in supposing an infinite power to have created a free agent, one who knew that he acted, and who either condemned or approved his act. But he will not base the case for human freedom on a mere non-contradictory supposition.¹⁹ The only natural and just way of thinking is to begin with concrete particulars and proceed to generalizations; the contrary leads only to confusion.²⁰ By complex and abstract reasoning he says to free-thinkers, it is possible to prove almost anything, but I am conscious of my own actions, this inward evidence of plain fact will bear me up against all your reasonings, however subtle and refined; --I am conscious that I am an active being, who

¹⁸ WGB, I, 454.
¹⁹ WGB, II, 350.
²⁰ Ibid., 354.
can and do determine myself.—and thus, by an induction from particulars, I may conclude man to be a free agent.  

Berkeley upholds the empirical fact of conscious choice and responsibility against logic-chopping.

But how does man act? If he is free to will, what determines the will? The will is not determined, says Berkeley, and such an enquiry is only a foolish abstraction.  

"Men think they are free," says Berkeley, "but this freedom is only the freedom of doing as they please, which freedom is consecutive to the will."  

"as they please" implies that the will is closely related to desire. This is borne out by the following:

Suppose an agent which is finite perfectly indifferent, and as to desiring is not determined by any prospect or consideration of good, I say, this agent cannot do an action morally good.

Again:

I’d never blame a man for acting upon interest.  

He’s a fool that acts on any other principles.

Man is never indifferent in his choices; he chooses to suit his interests. For self-love is found to be "a principle of all

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21 WGB, II, 352.  
22 Ibid., 355.  
23 Johnston, CB, 78.  
24 Ibid., 66.  
25 Ibid., 18.  
26 Ibid., 65.
others the most universal, and the most deeply engraven in our hearts."

Judgments of good and evil depend upon the augmenting or impairing of man's happiness. In his natural state man always wills to preserve himself and his own happiness. His freedom consists in choosing in accordance with his interests.

(4) The Thinking Self: It is obvious that if man acts in accordance with his interests he must know what they are. That he thinks and that in some way his thinking is connected with his willing has been mentioned. This brings out the crucial problem in Berkeley; the relation of the passive and active aspects of the mind, and no complete treatment is possible. Some of the explanations offered by Berkeley will be indicated, however. Man's knowledge, he says, in the Principles, is gained "not by discovering any necessary connexion between our ideas, but only by the observation of the settled laws of nature." If man follows the light of reason he notes the "constant, uniform method of our sensations," he is led to a knowledge of what is good for him and to the knowledge of a good and perfect Being.

Ideas are imprinted on the mind; their origin is beyond

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27 WGB, IV, 104.
28 Ibid., 123.
29 WGB, I, 274.
30 Ibid., 279.
the mind that perceives them, and the mind in knowing is only
the passive recipient of impulses from God by the mediation
of ideas. As long as man remains passive and recognizes only
the orderly succession of ideas, he has true knowledge; the
eternal laws of Nature are "engraved on his heart." Any at-
ttempt to reason abstractly from the relations of ideas in
themselves without respect to their external origin leads only
to error.

Man is distinguished from animals in possessing reason, but reason is only the power of recognizing divine laws in
nature. Man acts according to his interests which are divinely
revealed in the light of nature. Reason and truth exist
only in God, and man's rational freedom consists only in
acquiescing. He thinks and he wills as his thinking indicates
it is best for him to will. But he is not rationally self-
active; he remains subservient, is led to the eternal laws of
nature. Hence, rational freedom in any meaningful sense, is
not the possession of man—at least in the early phases of
Berkeley's thought.

B. The Moral Individual

The foregoing discussion merges into the problem of how

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31 WGB, I, 308.
32 WGB, II, 93.
33 Hudson, PLBH, 68-9.
man ought to act. The relation of thought to action and man's freedom therein lead to the heart of Berkeley's ethical theory. The intimate nature of the individual is for Berkeley significant primarily for its ethical implications. The importance of the individual can best be discovered by a treatment of the Berkeleyan ethics.

(1) Abstract Ethics: The Commonplace Book bears witness of Berkeley's early interest in Locke's suggestion that morality could be mathematically demonstrated and determined. This interest bore fruit in Passive Obedience, his first ethical treatise.

The "Eternal Law of Reason," he says, is the immutable, universal, and necessary standard of morality.\textsuperscript{34} All men recognize the existence of moral laws but no agreement is found as to how these laws should be determined. Berkeley believes they can best be determined by the deductions of reason.\textsuperscript{35}

Man by nature seeks his own interests, first in sensory pleasures, later in higher and more permanent goods. But the temporal world is as nothing in the sight of eternity. Hence man is prompted to look to his eternal interests. Now it is evident, by the light of nature, that there is a sovereign omniscient Spirit, who alone can make us forever happy or forever miserable, it plainly follows that a conformity to this will, and not

\textsuperscript{34} WGB, IV, 109.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 104.
any prospect of temporal advantage, is the rule whereby every man who acts up to the principles of reason must govern and square his actions. 36

God's design for mankind and the laws promulgated to effect it must be traced out in nature, for these are the moral laws. Since God is infinitely good, he necessarily wills the good of mankind and his laws, which are means to the furthering his design, must be good. God makes no distinction between persons; only moral goodness, conformity to his laws entitles one man more than another to his favor. Hence, God's design must have been that the well-being of mankind is to be procured by the concurrent action of each individual in accordance with law. 37

Berkeley has no use for the theory that the well-being of mankind is best gained by merely enjoining individuals to act with the utilitarian maxim in mind. Rather, certain established laws should be observed, "which, if universally practised, have from the nature of things an essential fitness to procure the well-being of mankind." 38 He saw only chaos in the former alternative; few men are wise enough to see the public good; every man would have his own conception of what is good.

Moral laws are found by a comprehensive survey of human

36 *JGB*, IV, 105.
37 Ibid., 106.
38 Ibid., 107.
Whatever practical propositions doth to right reason appear to have a necessary connexion with the Universal well-being included in it, is to be looked upon as enjoined by the will of God. 39

As such they admit of no exception; they are in themselves eternal rules of reason, resulting from the nature of things. No private misfortune can be counted wrong if the moral laws are observed. Act rationally, i.e. by the divinely ordained precepts, though the heavens fall. 40 Truth, chastity, justice are obviously connected with the universal well-being. So is submission to society. Propositions enjoining these virtues are not sufficient for Berkeley's ethics. Propositions positively stated are necessary for definition, but the statement of a moral precept must admit of no exception or fulfilment in degree. Hence they must be stated negatively in practice, e.g. "Thou shalt not resist the supreme civil power." 41

The most obvious criticism to be made of this ethical system is that it is completely out of accord with Berkeley's anti-abstractionist position as stated in the "Introduction" to the Principles. 42 Moral laws as guides to practical action are not derived empirically, and their authority is supported by no experiential evidence. The laws and their authority are

39 WGB, IV, 108.
40 Ibid., 109.
41 WGB, IV, 133.
42 WGB, I, 237 ff. The following criticism leans heavily on Wild, GB, 144 ff.
deduced formally from the postulate of an infinite God. But while he is inconsistent with his own principles, Berkeley is also inconsistent within the formal method he employs. He introduces a synthetic proposition into the traditional ontological argument for God. God is conceived as infinitely perfect and rational. But Berkeley predicates infinite goodness of Him also, which no analysis of "infinite, perfect, rationality" can reveal. For Berkeley God must will the well-being of mankind since he is infinitely good as well as rational. For the utilitarian principle introduced he offers no proof; he merely assumes it. He is empirically correct in asserting happiness to be the sumnum bonum, but he fails to justify its introduction into a formal argument.

The ethical system presented here is an absolute, rationalistic rigorism. Moreover, it is a theological rigorism; moral goodness consists entirely in the relations of God and man in the conformity to God's will. Berkeley has been called a theological utilitarian, but this cannot be maintained in the face of the statement "that nothing is a law because it conduceth to the public good, but because it is decreed by the will of God." He is certainly theological, but utilitarianism is true for him here only because God has willed the good of mankind and has established the laws necessary to its

43 Cf. WGB, IV, 98; DNB, IV, 355; EB, III, 439.
44 WGB, IV, 121.
attainment. Utility and happiness are only incidental to such an absolutistic ethics. Berkeley's attempt to establish objective morality by this formal method led him to formulate moral laws negatively, thereby thinking to avoid all but absolute and perfect obedience. He wanted an infallible standard of right and wrong, and apparently forgot that the essence of morality is that it precedes action. In making moral laws negative he failed to see that not acting may be just as positive as acting, and that man looks to morality more for guidance in what he should do, than in what he should refrain from doing. In practice, Berkeley's doctrine of passive obedience is not moral but non-moral in any case, and is definitely immoral in that no positive duty to act is established.

This abstract ethics destroys the significant active character of the human being. Berkeley attempts to avoid this in distinguishing between natural and moral laws; the former are observed in the orderly course of nature; the latter are also natural but their moral character lies in the fact that they may be broken, while natural laws cannot. Moral laws presuppose the voluntary actions of reasonable agents. But when morality rests solely in the observance of negative precepts, "voluntary agents" becomes meaningless.

The trouble roots in Berkeley's conception of "right

45 WGB, IV, 123.
reason." Man only receives the divine commands; he cannot infer them, but they are pressed upon him from without. Rational self-activity reduces to a state of passive acquiescence. The "light of nature" reveals God. Natural moral laws ordained by God necessarily work for the good of mankind; the path of duty is clear. Government is the chief source of peace, order, and well-being; and since it is the guardian of these divine advantages, any resistance to civil authority is a sin against God.\(^{46}\) The combination of the "New Principle" and formal ontology reduces the individual to a nonentity and annihilates morality. This is not the whole of Berkeley's ethics, however. Passive Obedience merely marks the barren harvest of the Lockean mathematical seeds, sown early in his development.

(2) Concrete Ethics: The beginnings of a less abstract account of the individual and morality are found in Berkeley's Guardian essays. The emphasis on self-interest gives way to a more benevolent view.

... and as the attractive power in bodies is the most universal principle which produceth universal effects, and is a key to explain the various phenomena of nature; so the corresponding social appetite in human souls is the great spring and source of moral actions.\(^{47}\)

Charity is the moving principle of human activity. It is man's

\(^{46}\) WGB, IV, 112-13.
\(^{47}\) Ibid., 188.
duty as well as his interest to cherish and develop it. It is his duty because it is agreeable to the intention of God revealed in implanting this sentiment in the hearts of men; his interest, because the good of the whole is inseparable from that of its parts. Christianity is verified by its stress on this sentiment so agreeable to God and to the hearts of men. But still the "goodness" of charity is largely dependent on its coincidence with God's will. Though more mellow, this statement infringes but little on the formal argument for God.

Berkeley becomes realistic and practical in the *Alciphron*, twenty years later. Here is found a new criterion of moral truth.

But is not the general good of mankind to be regarded as a rule and measure of moral truths, of all such truths as direct or influence the moral actions of men?48

That this is not just an inadvertent statement is proved conclusively on external evidence. In his *Discourse to Magistrates* (1736) Berkeley makes a similar statement, "the general good of mankind being the rule or measure of moral truth," and cites the above-quoted section of the *Alciphron* in support.49 He applies this test to the principles of the freethinkers, saying, "Their truth is not what I am now considering. The point at present is their usefulness."50

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48 WGB, II, 63.
49 WGB, IV, 494.
50 WGB, II, 115.
abstract consistency is of no consequence when the public good is at stake. Nothing is to be gained, but much is to be lost by upholding logically correct but socially hurtful theories. 51

From this practical foundation Berkeley proceeds by the light of empirical fact to attack the theories of the free-thinkers, which he considered wholly pernicious and socially harmful. The argument put forward by Mandeville in the *Fable of the Bees* he shows to be entirely contrary to fact—Private vices are not public benefits, for they defeat their own ends. The incontinent consumer is soon destroyed by his vices, and his spending contributes only to further vice, not to beneficial industries. 52 Further, the true good of the public is not wealth but happiness which consists of a healthy condition of body and soul. 53 Reasonable pleasures are more fitting to the dignity of human nature; *rational* pleasures are the highest. 54 The condition in which these higher pleasures are realized constitutes virtue. Hence, virtue, not vice, is the most useful notion for society.

He turns then to Shaftesbury's moral sense theory and shows that virtue cannot be its own reward. The mind which finds good in an action is carried beyond that action in evaluating it. The individual considers whether others would

51 WGB, II, 152. Cf. Ibid., 62.
52 Ibid., 76 ff.
53 Ibid., 86.
54 Ibid., 96.
value it similarly. Also, in choosing to act in a certain way
he considers whether this action or another would not afford
more pleasure.\textsuperscript{55} There is in every act of choice some rational
activity, implying reference to some standard or ideal beyond
the immediate choice. But there must also be some motivation
to seek an ideal. Berkeley finds that there is no stronger
motive to action than one's own interest. Now, since man's
highest interest is in rational or notional pleasures, the
achieving of which constitutes virtue, he must be motivated by
virtue.\textsuperscript{56} But virtue in this sense goes far beyond immediate
action, implying the real existence and significance of these
higher pleasures. There must be some active, vital principle
in the universe which endures. Man's deepest motivation lies
in faith in the existence of such a principle and its identi-
fication with a kindly and intelligent Providence. To identify
it with fate, chance, or any unthinking principle is monstrous.
The theistic God, rewarding and punishing mankind, is an emin-
ently necessary motivation. "The belief of a God and Providence
ought to be encouraged in the state, and tolerated in good
company, as a useful notion."\textsuperscript{57}

Berkeley continues, showing that though the being of God
cannot be denied, human beings can have no demonstrable know-

\textsuperscript{55} WGB, II, 127.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 129.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 244. Cf. 339.
ledge of his nature. And his nature, the essential thing, determines what he wills for man. Human reason is limited, and all knowledge must be based on faith.

Knowledge, I grant, in a strict sense can not be had without evidence or demonstration; but probable arguments are a sufficient ground of faith.

Thus, faith in the kindly deity of Christianity is justified. The opposite conclusion, that the world is at the dispensation of chance, necessitates likewise the use of propositions of which no distinct ideas are possible; hence faith must enter into agnosticism. Man should have faith in that conception of the universe which best supplies his needs.

Berkeley has shown that some idea of a God is necessary. He proceeds to argue that the Church of England has met this utilitarian necessity. Further, the Church has an actual good as history illustrates. He admits it has at times been guilty of practices which are prejudicial to the public happiness. But this is to be attributed not to Christianity but to Christians. The principles of Christianity stand above its actual practice. To support it by unchristian methods only indicates that some unchristian principle has supplanted true Christianity for the time being. But Berkeley holds that Christianity has been the source of far more good than evil. Its support

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58 WGB, II, 178.  
59 Ibid., 311.  
60 Ibid., 333.  
61 Ibid., 219.
of institutions of learning in England has contributed more than any other factor to English culture and learning. Even the free-thinkers must acknowledge a debt to the universities. Further, it is a cornerstone of the English constitution and "the only thing that makes us deserving of our freedom, or capable of enjoying it." Hence, the positive good of Christianity as a motivation to virtue, its supplying of man's religious needs through revelation, and the practical service it has rendered and renders, justify human faith—not formal logic.

The most significant thing about this ethical system is the emphasis on the practical reason. Berkeley recognizes the significance of the early entry in the Commonplace Book, in which he proposes to abandon all propositions of which no clear idea is possible, save those relating to the Scriptures. Here he says "an humble implicit faith becomes us," since these matters are "altogether above our knowledge, out of our reach." Abstract reason and implicit faith are side by side, yet absolutely separate in his early philosophy. But now this separation breaks down. The faith element in all true reason is recognized; faith becomes reasonable through the recognition that it is not an end in itself, but has an essential contribution to make to human well-being.

62 WGB, II, 223.
63 Ibid., 239.
This is of primary importance for the conception of the individual. As long as God was an absolute source of moral laws directed to the public good, which are impressed upon human minds, human freedom and knowledge depended on passive acquiescence alone. But when this system is seen to be purely arbitrary, when it is seen that there is an element of faith in all knowing, rigorism breaks down and freedom counts for something. For faith is purely a human act, whose direction lies with the individual and cannot be impressed on him from above. Berkeley becomes a sceptic in knowing, recognizing the limitations of reason and is well content with probability and utility. He asks that the individual have faith, only requiring that this faith be justified by a recognition of human needs for motivation and by evidence of a positive tendency toward the higher—the rational goods.

The emphasis on faith leads into Berkeley's theory of practical social control. He says

There is a natural religion which may be discovered and proved by the light of reason, to those who are capable of such proof. But it must be withal acknowledged that precepts and oracles from heaven are incomparably better suited to popular improvement and the good of society than the reasonings of philosophers.64

Men must be led by faith in all activity, social, moral, or civil. The vast majority have neither inclination nor ability

64 WGB, II, 203.
to act rationally. In practice men do live by faith; enterprise in the social or moral field must make use of this method. Here Berkeley is not referring to the same type of faith which he finds underlying all scientific or philosophic speculation. He simply means faith in the powers that be, both civil and religious. Man must trust those who direct his destiny.

C. Summary

Though the nature of the individual remains an unresolved problem in Berkeley's philosophy, this does not detract from the fact that "persons" are for him very real and significant. The mind which by perceiving gives existence to "ideas" must exist, though how it exists remains uncertain. The individual is free; he acts and knows that he acts. He guides his actions in accordance with law and revelation in which he believes because he has probable knowledge that they work to his and to all men's interests. He cannot be said to be a utilitarian for, though his ultimate goal is the "general happiness," it is a goal made possible only by fealty to laws and institutions. In his later ethics he is far from the mathematical formalism of Passive Obedience. Law must be observed, in the interests of moral goodness, but moral goodness is good not because of conformity to law in itself. Conformity to moral law is good

65 WGB, II, 283.
because the well-being of mankind is thereby insured.

The well-being of the whole is paramount in Berkeley's mind. Each individual is but part of a whole and is not to be considered as independent. He is free and morally responsible, but his is only a "legal liberty." Berkeley's account of the individual and his responsibilities seems never to get beyond the problem of the relation of man to law. In his early thought this relation was absolute. Man accepts law directly from God. Later this absolute relation breaks down in the recognition that man and God are mediated by faith. But man is still viewed in juxtaposition to law, even though the end of law becomes human happiness. "Human happiness" can be no more than an abstraction, in this generalized sense. Berkeley's moral philosophy seems to reduce to the relations between an unresolved problem and an abstraction—-even though the abstraction is willed by God. Berkeley never examines the concrete relations of man and man. But still he is practical. For him individuals do exist and live harmoniously and morally under the laws of the English constitution and the precepts of the Anglican Church.

66 WGB, II, 117; 238.
CHAPTER IV

BERKELEY'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Thus far in the discussion the social scene has been very much in the background. The present chapter will be concerned with Berkeley's direct references to social processes and institutions.

A. Political Philosophy

As has been seen, Berkeley's moral philosophy reduces to the obligation of the individual to observe law, whether established by divine or human necessity. A discussion of political organization or structure, which constitute law in civil life entails answering the following problem: What is the basis of political authority? Who shall hold this authority? What are the functions of civil government? How are these functions to be carried out? And what is the status of the members of political society?

(1) The Basis of Political Authority: In Passive Obedience Berkeley points out that social control is, first of all, necessary. There is in all men "a natural tendency or disposition to social life."¹ But social life is impossible

¹ WGB, IV, 117. This, he says, distinguishes men from beasts.
without laws, "the bond and cement of society." Without laws only a state of anarchy can exist.

So insufficient is the wit or strength of any single man, either to avert the evils, or procure the blessings of life, and so apt are the wills of different persons to contradict and thwart each other, that it is absolutely necessary several independent powers be combined together, under the direction—of one and the same will—I mean the Law of the Society.²

Hence, there must be in every society some supreme civil power which makes laws and enforces their observance. The peace, order and well-being of society must be insured, since man must live in society, and these can be made possible only by laws made and enforced by political authority.

Since political authority must exist, the next problem is, what right does any particular organization holding such authority have to exist? Where does political sovereignty lie? In Passive Obedience Berkeley does not account for the sovereignty of the supreme civil powers; he merely assumes that there is such a power in every state.³ He refuses to discuss the contract theory, pointing out that whatever the origin of government might be does not affect one's obligation to obey government.⁴ He recognizes the theory that sovereignty lies with the people but holds that arguments from this can in no way impeach upon the absolute obedience due the supreme civil

² WGB, IV, 111.
³ Ibid., 103.
⁴ Ibid., 115.
power since that power is rendered untouchable by the divine laws of nature. Here sovereignty lies with God.\(^5\)

In Berkeley's *Discourse to Magistrates* appears a statement which in some measure clarifies his views.

There is no magistrate so ignorant as not to know that power—physical power—resides in the people; but authority is from opinion, which authority is necessary to restrain and direct the people's power; and therefore religion is the great stay and support of the state.—-

Obedience to all civil power is rooted in the religious fear of God.—Take away this stay and prop of duty, this root of civil authority; and all that was sustained by it, or grew from it, shall soon languish.\(^6\)

While Berkeley recognizes the fact that actual sovereignty lies within the power of the people, true sovereignty lies in a higher plane. The only authority worth recognizing lies in religion, "the first link of authority being fixed at the throne of God."\(^7\) Berkeley has no use for republican schemes, especially those which overlook religion. Men must be religious; and without a religious principle men can never be fit materials for any society, much less for a republic.\(^8\)

But still this does not establish the authority on which government is based in actual practice. Berkeley recognizes as shown above that actual sovereignty is in the people.\(^9\) But

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5 *WGB*, IV, 124.
6 Ibid., 490-1.
7 Ibid., 490-1.
8 Ibid., 492-3.
9 Cf. *WGB*, IV, 446.
true sovereignty rests with God. How are these to be reconciled in one actual government? The solution to this problem lies in a recognition of the fact that Berkeley is not interested in establishing a government, but in defending the established government of England with its national Church. Throughout his political thought the defense of existing institutions is of paramount importance. This makes the tracing out of his actual political philosophy very difficult. It would be grossly unfair to a thinker to infer that his views expressed in a polemic would be identical with those he might have expressed in a detached, critical treatise.

But all Berkeley's writings on political subjects are polemics. He believed that the English constitution and the Anglican Church were necessary for the well-being of the English people, and accordingly defends them. His political philosophy demands that the authority of the state be supported by religion. The English government is supported by the national Church, and in accord with religious truth. Though this would indicate a static political society, he does provide for change and modification. But modification of laws is a serious matter, one which few are capable of doing rightly. Those most fitted to oversee the changing of the laws or the constitution are those who are in power, those who direct the government.10 Berkeley is essentially a Tory in politics.

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10 WGB, IV, 132.
as attested by other evidence than his writings. He was very certain of the end which political organization should serve—
the good of mankind—and the religious truth it must embody. But he was also certain that the present organization best met these qualifications.

(2) The Governors: From the foregoing discussion it is apparent that those who rule, those who make and enforce the laws of the state, have a very responsible position in Berkeley's political philosophy. In Passive Obedience only those who are in power are capable of framing laws conducive to the public good and consonant with God's will. This sounds like a rather glib way of solving the legislative problem, and a solution which is really no solution at all. But behind this lies a very fundamental presupposition. Those who rule must be capable of ruling. They must be able to see what is good for society in the long run and what God's will for man is.

Two quotations, one from the Commonplace Book, and one from the Siris—the first and the last stages of Berkeley's thought—reveal his conception of how the holders of governmental positions should be prepared.

It were to be wished that persons of the greatest birth, honour, and fortune, would take that care of themselves, by Education, Industry, Literature, and a love of virtue, to surpass all other men in knowledge and all other qualifications neces-

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11 Wild, GB, 143-4.
sary for great actions, as far as they do in Quality and Titles; that Princes out of them might always choose men fit for all employments and high trusts.\(^\text{12}\)

And forty years later:

And, whatever the world thinks, he who hath not much meditated upon God, the human mind, and the \textit{sumnum bonum}, may possibly make a thriving earthworm but will most indubitably make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman.\(^\text{13}\)

Three things must be noted in connection with the qualifications which Berkeley sets up for governors as set forth above. First, they must be \textit{educated}. This point stands above all others in Berkeley's political philosophy. The prime mover of the state, the legislature, must be "well considered and understood."\(^\text{14}\) The legislator must be a man of reflexions and thought, having a good understanding of human nature and of the true interests of mankind.\(^\text{15}\) Second, those who rule must have more than "vulgar" knowledge. He must be imbued with the highest principles of religion—"Order, Virtue, Duty, and Providence."\(^\text{16}\) All men act by their principles; hence the principles of the rulers must be of the highest. But third, it is men of great birth and rank who should thus be prepared for the positions of government. If this be true, Berkeley's government is not only aristocratic in the intellectual sense, but

\(^{\text{12}}\) Johnston, CB, 108.
\(^{\text{13}}\) WGB, III, 291.
\(^{\text{14}}\) WGB, IV, 476.
\(^{\text{15}}\) Ibid., 453; Cf. Ibid., 438.
\(^{\text{16}}\) WGB, IV, 485.
is also an hereditary aristocracy. Is the conclusion to be inferred that Berkeley remained at heart an aristocrat?

Too much faith cannot be put in the implications of the above entry in the Commonplace Book. There is no way of knowing whether it represented Berkeley's own view, or whether it was merely a theory which he set down for future consideration. In so far as there is a major stress on the necessity of educating the nobility, and those of great wealth, it is in keeping with the rest of his thought. But the requirement that Princes should select officials only from the higher class is distinctly unphilosophical. However, the same requirement is implied in the Querist. In Query 346 he demands the legislators be wise and educated. Following this in Query 347 he asks,

Whether it does not follow that above all things a gentleman's care should be to keep his faculties sound and entire?\(^{17}\)

In other words every "gentleman" should look to his knowledge. Why? Because gentlemen were the only persons who could possibly enter the legislature or assume any government office in Berkeley's time. Hence while "birth, title, or fortune--add nothing of real worth either to mind or body,"\(^{18}\) for Berkeley, anything he says concerning the qualifications of legislators must be directed to those possessing these pre-

\(^{17}\) WGB, IV, 453-4. Cf. Ibid., 438.
\(^{18}\) Ibid., 500.
rogatives. Again it must be recognized that Berkeley was not attempting to establish a new social institution but was defending an established one. He points out the defects and the needed remedy for the status quo. An aristocratic form of government existed. His faith in reason, in education, and in the power of religion led him to believe that it was the best possible arrangement. Within its organization were legal means and methods for improving itself and for better serving the public end. There is nothing perfect under the sun, he says, yet men should strive for perfection, especially in government. For Berkeley the present government was far more perfectible than anything the free-thinkers offered.

(3) The Functions of Government: The chief functions of government are directed towards securing the peace, order, and well-being of society. Above all these were to be secured, for Berkeley, by religion and education. The principles of religion require the protection of human government as well as the interest and aid of all good and wise men. God's will must be seconded by human authority. Education is a prime factor, as has been seen. Berkeley queries, "Whether a wise State hath any interest nearer heart than the education of youth." The government should establish institutions for

19 WGB, IV, 453.
20 Ibid., 495.
21 Ibid., 439. Cf. Ibid., 453.
education and support them.  

Berkeley recommends other practical functions of the state. In times of depression he would have a public works program supported by both the poor tax and by direct appropriation. Such a program would work for the public good in two ways; by keeping money in circulation, and by appealing to patriotism. Public works should be in the form of national monuments, triumphal arches, etc. Further, the government should encourage and support private industry. He asks "whether private endeavours without assistance from the public are likely to advance our manufactures and commerce to any great degree?" Berkeley considered the first step toward the well-being of the state to be to "clothe and feed our people." But this was to be accomplished by promoting an honest "industry," which required public support of private enterprise.

To this end Berkeley proposed a National Bank. Throughout the Querist are found references to and arguments for this agency. It seems that Berkeley was considering two types of national bank. First, he speaks of the whole wealth of the nation as constituting the national bank. But he also speaks of a bank established by public act and supported by public

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22 WGB, IV, 438. Cf. Ibid., 164.
23 Ibid., 333.
24 Ibid., 596.
25 Ibid., 421.
26 Ibid., 460, 461, 591.
credit, as an agency separate from the national wealth.\textsuperscript{27} On
the basis of his suggestions for the former type of bank, Berkeley has been accused of implying a communism.\textsuperscript{28} This
does not seem justified. The bank which he hoped to set up
was an agency which, though established by the legislators and
directed by them, was distinctly separated from the public
treasury. It was to carry on business much as any private in-
stitution, though at more liberal terms. Its stock was to be
provided by a special tax. Loans were to be made "either to
particular persons on ready money or on mortgage, or to the
uses of the public on its own credit."\textsuperscript{29} By the "public"
Berkeley means the public in the abstract, i.e. the government
of the state, not the public at large. Berkeley's National
Bank was primarily a means to supply Ireland's lack of a fluid
capital, and hence make industrial and commercial expansion
possible, and not a gesture of benevolence toward the people
at large.

That there was no communistic tendency in Berkeley's
political philosophy is proved by his emphasis on property.
He asks, "Whether it can be reasonably hoped, that our state
will mend, as long as property is insecure among us?"\textsuperscript{30} True,
he does argue for a more equal distribution of wealth,\textsuperscript{31} but

\textsuperscript{27} WGB, IV, 588.
\textsuperscript{28} Hone and Rossi, (BB, 203), hold this view.
\textsuperscript{29} WGB, IV, 597.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 575.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 431, 440.
he does so because he thinks industry will thereby be encouraged. Property is to be guarded by law; to determine property by any other rule than the established law he considers dangerous.32

Another government function suggested by Berkeley which is worthy of note is the proposal that schedules of trade and records of foreign commerce be made.33 Industry was to have a sound theoretical basis. Berkeley also held that government should watch over fashions and amusements. Fashions, particularly in women's clothing, he thought absolutely pernicious. He urges "reasonable" fashions34 and the resumption of the sumptuary laws.35 A rigid censorship should be maintained, he thought, over public "diversions," those prohibited which have a direct tendency toward moral corruption, and a reformation of the Drama be effected.36

(4) The Methods of Government: The aim of all civil and religious institutions, says Berkeley, is to tame this animal, man, and fit him for society—"to 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." The best method of achieving these ends is a "proper

32 WGB, IV, 452.
33 Ibid., 437, 472, 595.
34 Ibid., 423.
35 Ibid., 328, 436.
36 Ibid., 331.
education. "Men's behavior is the result of their principles," hence a government must look to the principles of its citizens. "A prevailing disorder in the principles and opinions of its members is ever dangerous to society and capable of producing the greatest public evils." Order is necessary for the existence of a state, Berkeley argues.

There must, therefore, of necessity, in every state, be a certain system of salutary notions, a prevailing set of opinions, acquired either by private reason and reflexion, or taught and instilled by the general reason of the public; that is, by the law of the land. Every state must have its ideology. Because most men have not ability to acquire this by their own reasoning, the bulk of mankind must be indoctrinated. "You shall find all men full of opinions, but knowledge only in a few." The minds of men, especially in youth, must be filled with good opinions or "prejudices," lest they acquire bad prejudices by themselves.

Religious awe, the precepts of parents and masters, the wisdom of legislators, and the accumulated experiences of ages supply the place of proofs and reasonings with the vulgar of all ranks.

Hence Berkeley's government is to proceed by distinctly distinct

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37 WGB, IV, 484.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., 485.
41 Ibid., 486. Cf. Ibid., 488.
42 Ibid., 486.
43 Ibid., 488.
totalitarian methods, recognizing men's affinities for prejudice rather than reason, and adapting man's weaknesses to its conceptions of his true interest. Berkeley does not deny freedom of rational inquiry. He says that no man should deny the laws and "notions" instilled in him by Church and State without "good reason." But even if someone should think they had such "good reason," he has no right to preach his private judgment to others, against the civil and religious laws which protect him.\textsuperscript{44} Men must live under and accept the "set of salutary notions" embodied in the civil constitution and the doctrines of the Church. The acceptance of this ideology is to be assured and maintained by religious awe, by fear of punishment and hope of reward.

(5) The Status of Citizens: The public aim in every intelligent state, says Berkeley, should be that each member, according to his just pretensions and industry, should have power.\textsuperscript{45} For power is property and is the goal of all industry.\textsuperscript{46} There are two ways of acquiring power, through inheritance and through industry. Above all, the citizens are entitled to the fruits of their industry. Industry rather than inheritance has, or should have, the prior claim to the protection of law.\textsuperscript{47} Law should be completely impersonal,

\textsuperscript{44} WGB, IV, 488.  
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 422.  
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 424.  
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 463.
each person having equal rights in a just civil society. 48

In return for this assurance of the security of property the citizens are obligated to be industrious. The poor should labor. If they do not or cannot find employment, the public has a right to employ them or find employment for them. 49 The upper classes should also labor, as befits their rank. At any rate, they have no right to be idle. 50 Berkeley's conception of the most thriving state is one in which the lower part is industrious and the upper part wise. 51 Every individual has qualities, either mental or physical, which are useful to the state, and each should make the best possible use of his position and his powers. 52

The main point is to employ and also to multiply the people. The citizens are obligated to procreate and to raise up children who will become good citizens. To this end Berkeley would do away with the dowery system and allow marriages to be made with "good-liking." 53 He even goes so far as to suggest the application of practical genetics, proved successful in horse-breeding, to the human species. 54 As further encouragements to procreation he would penalize all old bachelors

48 VGB, IV, 440.
49 Ibid., 456.
50 Ibid., 439.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., 454. Cf. Ibid., 422.
53 Ibid., 440.
54 Ibid.
by forcing them to support asylums for orphans and foundlings, reward those having a certain number of children, and demand the forfeit of half the unentailed estates of those who die unmarried.

The citizen is ensured his temporal security. His obligation to become industrious is also his interest. He is enjoined to procreate and to inculcate good habits in his children. If of high rank he should be wise and learned and busy in the important activities of the state. Good and happy citizens are the necessary constituents of the good state. "To be a real patriot, a man must consider his countrymen as God's creatures, and himself as accountable for his acting towards them." The good citizen desires the public good, studies it and strives to promote it. He aims at his own good in the public good, considering himself as subservient to it and as a part of a whole, not as a whole in himself. The good of the whole can only be gained by good laws, enforced by wise rulers who are supported by religious truths.

There seems little possibility, according to Berkeley's political philosophy, that the general citizenry should initiate any changes or reforms in government. There are some few statements to be found which may signify some slight

55 WGB, IV, 456.
56 Ibid., 324.
57 Ibid., 562.
58 Ibid.
possibility of such a happening. In *Passive Obedience* he says that, in the event of an extreme tyranny, while the people may not resist the tyrant directly, they may call upon his ministers, representing to them their limitation by the laws of God and nature. Divine authority is supreme. Men ought never to act contrary to God's law. But still man ought never to put his conscience above the laws under which he lives. There seems an antimony here which is unresolved. In the *Essay Toward Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*, Berkeley reminds the politicians that if either Whig or Tory party were to ruin the other, the result would be fatal for the country. Political battles must exist, apparently, but conflict should be directed toward the good of the country, not merely to the downing of the opposing faction. In his *Maxims Concerning Patriotism* appears this statement: "A patriot could hardly wish there was no contrast in the state." To what exactly this statement refers is only a matter for conjecture. The following maxim is in the same vein. "Ferments of the worst kind succeed to perfect inaction." Whatever the specific reference may have been, it seems valid to infer that Berkeley recognized the need for discussion and difference of opinion.

59 WGB, IV, 131.
60 Ibid., 490.
61 Ibid., 334.
62 Ibid., 334.
63 Ibid., 563.
in political matters, felt that a certain amount of dissension was a healthy sign, and feared the consequences of a too placid domestic scene. The true patriot must admit the possibility of an honest difference of opinion. But this difference and discussion is reserved for legislators, and those who understand the public needs. There could be no question in Berkeley's mind about the fundamentals of the constitution and the Church. He remains doubtful "whether those men who move the cornerstones of a constitution may not pull an old house down on their heads?"\(^\text{64}\)

\((6)\) **Summary:** If it is probable that Berkeley's epistemology was largely inspired by Locke, it seems just as probable that his political philosophy, particularly in his later life, had its roots in Plato. He refers to the Platonic emphasis on the observance of religion (in the *Laws*) in arguing the necessity of religion in government.\(^\text{65}\) He says, "Certainly where the people are well educated, the art of piloting a state is best learned from the writings of Plato."\(^\text{66}\) He speaks of him, along with Pythagoras and Aristotle, as "most consummate in politics," and is completely at one with his combination of practical philosophy with "abstracted and sublime speculations; the clearest light being ever necessary to guide

\(^{64}\) WGB, IV, 453.  
\(^{65}\) Ibid., 496.  
\(^{66}\) WGB, III, 284.
the most important actions." 67 The qualifications Berkeley sets up for "legislators" would make them very similar to Plato's "guardians." Berkeley's government is to be headed by wise men, by "philosophers." He proposes no great change in organization. The uneducated gentry were to him the greatest disgrace and calamity of Ireland. Berkeley's faith in education led him to attempt to make the gentry philosophers. He never suggests that the philosophers should become members of the gentry. His failure to recognize the latter possibility may be excused by the uncertainty of his times. However, Plato hoped to place philosophers in political positions by the latter method in times no less uncertain. Berkeley's position as a churchman may have contributed to his aversion to changing the political constitution. His polemics on behalf of the constitution are focussed on the arguments against the national Church. Whatever his motivations, his political theory is constructive only in so far as it aims at improving the existing institutions of government. He offers no new institutions. He does point out that the existing ones may work if administered through reason and divine insight.

B. Economic Theory

Since Berkeley lived within the period known as the "Age

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67 WGB, III, 291.
of Mercantilism"—1500-1800—it is reasonable to expect that his economic theory was predominantly mercantilistic. Raffel, after a critical study of the Querist, concludes: "Was Berkeley uns bietet, ist praktische Politik im alten Fahrwasser des späteren Merkantilismus."  

The immediate problem here is not whether Berkeley was more or less a mercantilist, but exactly what his economic views were. This entails a discussion of the nature of wealth, the nature of economic organization, national self-sufficiency, and foreign trade.

(1) The Nature of Wealth: Berkeley's conception of wealth is implied in the very first entry in his Querist: "Whether there ever was, is, or will be, an industrious nation poor, or an idle rich?"  

It is made explicit in the fourth entry: "Whether the four elements, and man's labour therein, be not the true source of wealth?"  

Wealth for Berkeley is industry and its products, in whatever form they may be. The true end and aim of men is power; to this end all industry is directed. Wealth, power, and property are synonymous for Berkeley. The true wealth of the nation consists in the securing and developing of this stock of power. Property is the means whereby, and the form under which power is counted, transferred, and

68 Raffel, IBF, 5.
69 WGB, IV, 422. This may be a foreshadowing of the Smith-Marx labor theory of value. See below, 83, n.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid., 422; 424; 432; 450; 453; 582; 585.
Secure property and incite the people to gain control of it, says Berkeley. The wealthy nation is that one which is industrious, in which each individual sets himself to the securing and developing of power through property.

Money for Berkeley is purely extrinsic. It is useful only in so far as it stirs up industry, enabling men to participate mutually in the fruits of their labor. Real wealth is the power to command the industry of others. But this necessitates some medium, some system of tokens or symbols, by which power may be recorded. Money serves this function. It is of no consequence what it is made of.

Provided the wheels move, whether it is not the same thing, as to the effect of the machine, be this done by the force of wind, or water, or animals?

Since money is only a symbol, the important thing to the nation is not the amount of money but the rate at which it circulates. Too much gold within the country might even be harmful. Berkeley speculates on the effects which the discovery of a gold mine in Ireland would have. He concludes that, if the amount of increase were more than was necessary for circulation, the results would be ruinous. There would be an influx of foreigners. Honest industry would be neglected.

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72 WGB, IV, 424.
73 Ibid., 422.
74 Ibid., 425.
75 Ibid., 448; 460; 464; 466; 472.
and every man possessing money would attempt to set himself up as a gentleman. High prices would result and the poor would suffer. Anything which tends to lessen industry is pernicious. Too much money, either gold or silver, has this result, as shown by the example of Spain since the discovery of precious metals in America.

Berkeley proposes that a paper currency be provided through the agency of a national bank, based primarily on land. Such a currency, he argues, would be very secure. There would be no danger of its being lost through an unfavorable balance of trade. Obviously, land could not be exported, and paper money would be of no use to those outside of the country. For the foreign trade, bills of exchange could be offered, and the absence of gold and silver would not be missed. Such a bank would be established and supervised by the legislature, its sole purpose to be the furthering of industry.

(2) Economic Organization: Berkeley's economic theory is based on the industry of individuals. The aim of every wise state, he says, should be to encourage industry in its members. The security of private property is insured by the protection of law. Berkeley suggests that an equal distribution of wealth

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76 WGB, IV, 428.
77 Ibid., 425.
78 Ibid., 451.
79 Ibid., 424.
80 Ibid., 441; 585.
would be most conducive to industry and to the public good.\textsuperscript{81} He does not imply by this any socialistic scheme, any actual redistribution by mandate. He believes that it can be effected by industry, chiefly by a change in agricultural practices. He inquires

\begin{quote}
Whether large farms under few hands, or small ones under many are likely to be made most of? And whether flax and tillage do not naturally multiply hands, and divide lands into small holdings, and well improved?\textsuperscript{82}
\end{quote}

A great bar, he thinks, to this change from sheep-raising to flax has been the shortage of small coins. The circulation of power among the common people, whose industry feeds the state, must be facilitated. With an ample currency of small denominations he thinks that the agricultural laborers will be enabled to secure small holdings, hence breaking up the large farms and ending wasteful practices.\textsuperscript{83}

While industry arises with individuals, Berkeley would organize it on a more comprehensive scale. The divided force of men is but a rope of sand.\textsuperscript{84} The whole nation is to be considered as a family.\textsuperscript{85} The "momentum," the sum of all the active faculties, both corporeal and intellectual, of the members of a state, constitutes its true stock of wealth.

\begin{footnotes}
81 WGB, IV, 440.
82 Ibid., 431.
83 Ibid., 466.
84 Ibid., 476.
85 Ibid., 437.
\end{footnotes}
This "momentum" must, in the wise state, be a united action. The concerted action of the corporeal faculties of the state—its supply of raw materials and labor—is impossible without the aid of the intellectual faculties. The economic forces of the state must be subjected to a wise plan, conceived and directed by the legislature. Without such a plan the particular members of the state will by their opposing movements destroy the "momentum" of the whole. Berkeley proposes a planned economy. The wealth of the state and its members is to be guaranteed by comprehending the industry of each member under a plan for the whole.

(3) National Self-Sufficiency: Berkeley is very much at one with the mercantilists in maintaining the theory of the closed state:

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? He wonders why "an Hyperborean island inhabited by reasonable creatures" might not be supposed as an Atlantis, or a Utopia have been." He marvels at the disparity between the fertility of the Irish soil and the poverty of its inhabitants. The domestic industry should be developed at all costs; if such is

86 WGB, IV, 426; 475-6.
87 Ibid., 434.
88 Ibid., 447.
done, Ireland need depend on no foreign country for either food or raiment. The materials to be used in building can be well supplied at home "without ransacking the four quarters of the globe." Ireland, he feels, is determined to an "inward commerce" by nature. The natural facilities for transportation—the rivers and harbors—should be supplemented by canals and roads. In domestic industry lies Ireland's salvation. By exploiting this, by encouraging industry through a national bank, Ireland could easily become a self-sufficient nation.

(4) Foreign Trade: As seen from the foregoing discussion, Berkeley felt that Ireland had no great need, if any, for foreign trade. Domestic industry, if developed, would provide for the most pressing needs—the feeding and clothing of the poor—and, he feels, is this were accomplished, the conveniences of the rich would soon follow. But, if it be concluded that foreign trade is necessary, it should be very carefully decided which branches should be entertained. National wants should be the rule of trade and the most pressing wants should be considered first. His chief objection to foreign trade is that it is chiefly devoted to luxuries. Foreign commodities...
should be imported in exchange for domestic superfluities. Manufactured articles rather than foodstuffs should be exported; there is a great scarcity of the latter, and the former are a chief support of domestic employment. \[91\] Imports which have a tendency to promote industry should be encouraged, while those which tend to promote luxury should be discouraged. \[92\]

He recommends friendlier relations with England, disparaging the enmity between the two countries. The Irish should strive to gain the English as friends, since they cannot hope to compete with them as rivals. \[93\] They are one and the same people, with the same prince and the same interests. Would not it be far wiser to cultivate this interest than to distrust and deny it? \[94\] The chief bone of contention, England's forbidding the wool trade to Ireland, is more of a blessing than a curse. Sheep-raising requires much land and few laborers. Ireland is well rid of it since the other uses to which land may be put require much labor, hence greater domestic industry.

As far as foreign trade in general is concerned, Berkeley is distinctly a mercantilist. Foreign commerce is to be carried on only when absolutely necessary and then in such a way that the "power" of the nation is maintained, if not

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91 WGB, IV, 436-7.
92 Ibid., 473.
93 Ibid., 462.
94 Ibid., 590.
enhanced. He holds to the balance of trade theory consistently, though in a modified form. His view of the extrinsic character of gold and silver led him to deny the older form of the theory. His query,

Whether the general rule, of determining the profit of a commerce by its balance, doth not, like other general rules, admit of exceptions?95

is not to be interpreted as a denial of the fundamental theory. He is questioning only the traditional method of measuring the profit of the balance. As Raffel points out,

Berkeley's Handelsbilanztheorie ist also auf einen mehr liberalen Boden erwachsen, insofern sie nicht die Geldquantitäten, sondern die heimische Betriebsamkeit zur Grundlage hat.96

But it is still very much a balance of trade theory as is shown by many other references.97 The power of the nation must be guarded by a judicious balancing of exports and imports.

(5) **Summary:** Much the same criticism is to be directed against Berkeley's economic theory as directed against his politics. He only proposes ways of making an old structure efficient. Few innovations, if any, are to be found in his contributions to economic theory.98 His emphasis on the

95 WGB, IV, 473.
96 Raffel, IBN, 19.
97 WGB, IV, 431; 436-7; 458; 467; 473.
extrinsic character of money is an advance over the earlier mercantilists but their emphasis on "treasure" has ceased to be accepted as characteristic. 99 His National Bank was nothing new. The Bank of England had been established in 1695. A Scotchman, John Law, had advocated a bank based on land for the purpose of issuing paper currency in 1705. 100 The governmental regulations he proposed in commerce are typical of the mercantilist era, and should not be interpreted as a socialistic move of government into business. 101 Berkeley's emphasis on industry as the true measure of wealth, may anticipate in a general way the labor theory of value, but Berkeley does not elaborate his affirmation. It seems to be more of a generalized descriptive statement rather than the basis of a new view of value, and has only an apparent resemblance to the theory developed by Hume, Smith and Marx. 102

C. Social Theory

There still remain some points to be discussed in Berkeley's social philosophy which are of note in themselves aside from their pertinency to political and economic matters. Berkeley's views on social structure per se, and on education

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99 Haney, HET, 119. He admits they were confused about the exact nature of wealth.
100 Haney, HET, 126.
101 Ibid., 121-2.
102 For the labor theory of value see Hume, EMPL, I, 293-4; Smith, WN, I, 44; Marx, CAP, I, 45.
and religion as ends in themselves, must be noted.

(1) The Structure of Society: Throughout Berkeley's practical philosophy are to be found references to social classes. He recognizes the existence of gentlemen and commoners, of men of wealth and laborers. The idea of a classless society was completely foreign to him. He simply recognized the fact that the bulk of mankind were naturally inferior, less intelligent, and less fitted in every respect for the responsible positions of society. All of his practical proposals for society are based on this recognition. Because the gentry are by birth and wealth, by force of circumstance, the most important for social control, he enjoins them to become wise so that their influence may be extended in a manner befitting their position. And because the great mass of the people are born to a condition which makes them laborers and followers rather than leaders, he enjoins them to labor honestly and to have faith in the counsels of their natural and legal superiors. He does not deny that one may rise from a lower to a higher position. In the Word to the Wise he mentions an example of a self-made man. But he makes no provision for such a rise. He is content to develop the qualities of the ranks of society as he finds them.

At many occasions he proposes to achieve social harmony

103 WGB, IV, 552.
and the good of the state by pitting one rank against another, or considering them as necessary complementary forces in society. He queries,

Whether it is possible that a state should not thrive, whereof the lower part were industrious, and the upper part wise?104

And again,

Whether facilitating and quickening the circulation of power to supply wants be not the promoting of wealth and industry among the lower people? And whether upon this the wealth of the great does not depend?105

Speaking in behalf of domestic industry, he asks whether "it would not provide equally for the magnificence of the rich and the necessities of the poor?"106 Both upper and lower classes must be accounted for in some way, for the one cannot exist without the other.

From the fact that mankind is governed by imitation rather than reason he finds further use for classes. Frugal fashions in the upper rank and comfortable living in the lower is most effective in multiplying the inhabitants.107 The lower always attempt to emulate the upper classes. It then behooves the upper classes to be reasonable and frugal in their adherence to fashions and customs. For a general good taste in a people conduces much to their thriving.

104 WCB, IV, 439.
105 Ibid., 466.
106 Ibid., 458.
107 Ibid., 423.
Further, it is sometimes good that the upper classes spend freely, though within limits. The industry of the lower people depends much upon the expense of the upper.\(^{108}\) "Conspicuous consumption," while of direct economic benefit to the common people, is also a spur to industry. Berkeley queries, "Whether the creation of wants be not the likeliest way to produce industry in a people?"\(^{109}\) And again, "Whether comfortable living doth not produce wants, and wants industry, and industry wealth?"\(^{110}\) "Conspicuous consumption" and class emulation are seen to be very important auxiliaries in society as conceived by Berkeley.

Berkeley does not seem to have been very sympathetic in regard to the poor, nor to have had a very deep insight into the causes of poverty. The chief factor recognized by him is indolence. He speaks of the obligation of the state to provide employment for its commoners but lays a major emphasis upon its right to demand industry of them.\(^{111}\) The threat of hard labor he considers the best cure for indolence, not recognizing that there might actually be no employment available.\(^{112}\) The system he suggests for caring for the poor, the setting up of workhouses in which those who are able to work could support

\(^{108}\) WCB, IV, 457.
\(^{109}\) Ibid., 423.
\(^{110}\) Ibid., 431.
\(^{111}\) Ibid., 456.
\(^{112}\) Ibid., 457.
those less fortunate, may have been workable after it was once in operation. But in recommending the fixing of the poor-tax at a medium in every parish, he was laying a heavy burden on those parishes having the most poor and hence less able to support it. 113

Berkeley was particularly uncritical in his attitude toward the Roman Catholic poor of Ireland. The condition of these unfortunate he considered due almost entirely to their "innate hereditary sloth" and "antipathy to labour." 114 It was to be remedied by inculcating in them the spirit of "honest industry," which virtue he called upon the Roman Catholic clergy to exhort. 115 He would have the laborer work all hours, and demanded that his wife and children also labor. For in Holland a child of five years is supported by its own labor. 116 He recognizes the restrictions against Catholics, i.e. against owning land, and entry to civil positions. (In the Querist he had advised allowing them to purchase forfeited lands, 117 and to enter Trinity College, 118 since it rendered them more tractable to proselyting.) He disparages the want of these spurs to industry, holding them of little account, and pointing out that life itself is temporary,

113 WGB, IV, 524.
114 Ibid., 543.
115 Ibid., 543, et passim.
116 Ibid., 553.
117 Ibid., 446.
118 Ibid., 439.
hence estates are not greatly to be desired.\textsuperscript{119}

Berkeley's attitude toward crime and criminals should be noted. He queries,

Whether some way might not be found for making criminals useful in public works, instead of sending them either to America or to the other world?\textsuperscript{120}

He considered death an inadequate punishment for felony. The free-thinkers had so destroyed the belief in a future state, that death held no fears for criminals.\textsuperscript{121} Servitude, hard labor and chains he thought would be more discouraging, and in this manner criminals would be forced to repay the damage done to society. Crime could best be eradicated by prevention. The best preventive measures would be to make examples of criminals. No compassion should be shown, but all crime should be vigorously prosecuted.\textsuperscript{122}

(2) \textit{Education}: The primary emphasis on education, by indoctrination or otherwise, has been noted throughout Berkeley's philosophy. It was for him the best method for the gaining of any end. Education is not purely instrumental, however. The pursuit of intellectual pleasures was for him the highest of all values. He regarded the public schools and universities as the finest "nurseries of men for the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[119] WGB, IV, 548-9.
\item[120] Ibid., 426.
\item[121] Ibid., 457.
\item[122] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
service of the church and state." But they were also of intrinsic value

as places designed to teach mankind the most refined luxury, to raise the mind to its due perfection, and give it a taste for those entertainments which afford the highest transport.123

Public institutions of learning owed their existence to religion. The church had been responsible for the safekeeping of the knowledge of the ages. Private persons and the state had contributed bountifully to the support of schools and had done so, according to Berkeley, largely from religious motivation.124 Education remained under the supervision of the church, supported by the public treasury. He saw no benefit for the public in the proposal that the revenues for the encouragement of religion and learning be made hereditary in the hands of certain lay-lords and "overgrown commoners."125 For Berkeley education and religion lay together.

(3) Religion: Throughout Berkeley's practical philosophy religion has been the supremely necessary instrument. Human authority must be supported by a fear of the divine authority. Through religion the state is enabled to require industry and obedience of its members. Without religion patriotism

123 WCB, IV, 164.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid., 453.
and temporal power are meaningless. Berkeley would use religion as an instrument in extending the colonial empire and commerce. He recommends it as an insurance of better slaves, in the American colonies, arguing with the planters that it would be of advantage to their affairs to have slaves who should obey in all things their master's 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 Christians.

Religion is the most effective instrument in discouraging crime. It is the guardian and motivation of higher education. Religion is the protector of the instrument by which its own principles are carried out—the church—and of the revealed truths by which its own existence is insured.

Religion is far more than an instrument for Berkeley. It meets the deepest needs of mankind. But he will not identify it with any one church—not even his own. In a letter to Sir John James, a friend who was considering entering the Roman Catholic Church, he says:

I think it a peculiar blessings to have been educated in the Church of England. My prayer, nevertheless, and my trust in God is, not that I shall live and die in this Church, but in the true Church. For, after all, in respect

126 WGB, IV, 356. Berkeley was probably the first to use the term "religious education." WGB, II, 151. Education was always for him a religious enterprise directed toward a religious ideal.

127 WGB, IV, 347. This is not to go unqualified.
of religion, our attachment should only be to the truth.\textsuperscript{128}

For Berkeley, the final judgment in all things was, is it true? For practical reasons he saw that existing institutions which had, and still continued to work toward the highest good of mankind, must be supported. The practical reason must be the standard of temporal affairs. Making religion a "notional" matter he feels has been an "infinite disservice." For

The Christian religion was calculated for the bulk of mankind, and therefore cannot reasonably be supposed in subtle and nice notions.\textsuperscript{129}

Faith is necessary for the harmonious conduct of practical affairs. Only by faith in government, its laws, and in the wise men who direct it, in the light of truth and religion, can the peace, order, and well-being of society be insured and perpetuated.

\textsuperscript{128} WCB, IV, 532.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 410.
CHAPTER V

BERKELEY AS A SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER

The evaluation of Berkeley as a social philosopher is made difficult by the apparent inconsistency between the different stages of his thought. It is made even more difficult by what seems an obvious disjunction between his theoretical philosophy—particularly the Principles and Hylas and Philonous—and in his later practical philosophy, especially the Alciphron, the Querist, and his various Discourses. Empirical logic finds a violent contrast in concrete reasonable faith. The transcendental idealism of the Siris seems only to add to the perplexity. One school of interpretation would accept Berkeley's thought at its face value and would find no essential congruence or logical development. The Alciphron is a religious polemic having no roots in Berkeley's earlier thought. The Siris seems entirely removed and in itself incoherent.¹ On the other hand, the majority of scholars have arrived at an opposite conclusion—that Berkeley's thought follows a continuous, though indeed often inconsistent, course of development. Here the Alciphron is recognized as a polemic, but an underlying shift of position to a more con-

¹ Hone and Rossi, 3B, 215 ff.
In his philosophy, Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology are paramount. The mind is central to his philosophy of knowledge. He has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology.

The latter view seems more defensible. The problem for this study is whether human limitations and the ideal of truth are the key to Berkeley's thought, through his recognition of social philosophy was defined as a comprehensive view of society, its members, its processes, its instruments, and its ends. Is such a view to be found in the instruments, and the ends. As such a view to be found in a consistent whole? Social philosophy can be considered as a consistent whole. Social philosophy was defined as a consistent whole. Social philosophy was defined as a consistent whole. Social philosophy was defined as a consistent whole.

The Status of the Individual: As has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology.

The Consistency of Berkeley's Social Thought

Social thought is what does Berkeley's social thought offer for present philosophy. What does Berkeley's social thought offer for present philosophy? From this internal criticism, some historical evidence suggests that the individual or rather his primary attribute, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology. The individual is morally responsible. In his obedience lies the wild, G-B, 488, ff. Super, 32. Supra, 33. Super, 32.

As has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology. As has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology. As has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology. As has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology.

The Status of the Individual: As has been shown, the mind, is central to Berkeley's metaphysics and epistemology.
strength of the state, and only by his honest industry is the economic well-being of society made possible.

Berkeley's emphasis on the passivity of the mind in knowing carries over into his theory of society, at least as far as the great mass of mankind is concerned. There is, however, a significant change underlying this transition. Passivity of mind in the Principles is an epistemological fact. In his political writing he calls for passivity through faith. Though theoretically untenable, this superficial aspect of passivity indicates the true status of the individual in society for Berkeley. The individual is subservient to the whole. This is Berkeley's position in Passive Obedience and the Alciphron. The lesson of Berkeley's political philosophy is that no man may set his private conscience against the national conscience. Berkeley's economic theory requires the concurrence of each individual in the design of national economy.

In Passive Obedience Berkeley shows little respect for the intellect of the masses. The public good is best assured by indoctrination; the state must have its ideology. Imitation rather than reason is the rule of fashion, and class

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5 Supra, 58.
6 Supra, 77.
7 Supra, 43.
8 Supra, 53.
9 WGB, III, 498.
10 Supra, 78.
11 Supra, 44.
12 Supra, 68.
emulation is a basic spur to economic endeavor.\textsuperscript{13}

Though the individual is empirically free and, to a degree, rational, the good of society is paramount. Therein consists the true good and happiness of its members. The inferiority of the great mass of individuals makes imperative their indoctrination. The individual is by nature and should be by law subservient to the whole. Berkeley's conception of the status of the individual is uniformly consistent throughout his writings.

(2) \textbf{Self-interest:} This principle Berkeley regards as the primary motive of human nature. Morality and religion turn this to good use in making men seek their eternal interests.\textsuperscript{14} This tendency of religion to turn men from their immediate selfish interests to their eternal interests Berkeley regards as one of the chief reasons government should support the church. An appeal to self-interest in the form of future rewards and punishments is an effective bar to crime.\textsuperscript{15}

In his economic and political philosophy Berkeley's emphasis on self-interest takes a decidedly materialistic tinge. One of the chief functions and responsibilities of government is the security of property.\textsuperscript{16} Power is the aim of all

\textsuperscript{13} Supra, 21.
\textsuperscript{14} Supra, 51.
\textsuperscript{15} Supra, 88.
\textsuperscript{16} Supra, 65. Haney (\textit{HBT}, 139-40) says that the characteristic philosophy of Mercantilism was materialistic and based on self-interest.
human industry, and while Berkeley demands that private industry should be in concert with the design of the state, the good of the state is insured by encouraging private industry. For Berkeley, self-interest, whether in a materialistic or idealistic sense, was always the real basis of human activity. Though his essay on Moral Attraction with its emphasis on charity would seem to belie this, he was too realistic to have any practical theory on the more mellow aspects of human nature. All practical projects must recognize man's selfishness and exploit it.

(3) Laws: For Berkeley man as an individual is subservient to the whole of society. But man is essentially selfish. Since he is by nature social and is nothing apart from society, his subservience and his selfishness must be

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17 In this essay Berkeley points to the analogy between the mutual attraction of all natural bodies in the universe and man's social appetites, his charity and benevolence toward his fellows. "And as the attractive power in bodies is the most universal principle which produceth innumerable effects, and is a key to explain the various phenomena of nature; so the corresponding social appetite in human souls is the great spring and source of moral action." WGB, IV, 188. Barnes and Becker note the significance of this application of physical science to social life. STLS, I, 356-59. It seems to have been the first interpretation of this sort. This had no bearing on Berkeley's practical thought. He attributes the existence of this "attractive force" to divine action and finds in it a further proof of God's benevolence. All of his ethical theory grows out of the principle of self interest.

18 WGB, IV, 109.
reconciled by law. Law and civil authority are the bond and cement of society.\textsuperscript{19} Man's moral duties and obligations are defined by law. Moral values are established by law, either formally and abstractly as in \textit{Passive Obedience},\textsuperscript{20} or by a reasonable faith as in the \textit{Alciphron}.\textsuperscript{21}

Political law is the essence of government. The individual owes an absolute overt adherence to the civil constitution.\textsuperscript{22} The state superintends all economic activity, comprehending it within a wise plan or system of laws.\textsuperscript{23} All changes in the civil constitution are to be brought about legally, i.e. by those whose position in the organization of the state entitles them to this power.\textsuperscript{24}

The concept of established law as the basis of social control runs throughout Berkeley's thought. Society consists of individuals whose conflicting interests are mediated by law, either divinely or humanly established.

(4) Religion: Religion is for Berkeley a necessary ingredient of the social process. Only religion, with its system of future rewards and punishments, can make moral laws effective.\textsuperscript{25} The national religion makes obedience to the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{19} Supra, 57.\textsuperscript{20} Supra, 43.\textsuperscript{21} Supra, 52.\textsuperscript{22} WGB, IV, 490 n.\textsuperscript{23} Supra, 78.\textsuperscript{24} Supra, 61.\textsuperscript{25} Supra, 51.}
state a moral obligation. Without this support no government can endure, or retain the obedience of its members.\footnote{Supra, 60.} Slavery is made effectual by religion. Civilization was to be furthered, as well as English commerce, by the Bermuda project.\footnote{WGB, IV, 356 ff.} Religion makes economic industry obligatory; sloth is completely unbecoming to a Christian.\footnote{Ibid., 545-6.}

(5) Education and Reason: Berkeley has an implicit faith in education and an even greater faith in reason. But he was realistic enough to realize that few could be expected to become so learned and so wise that no social control, religious or civil, would be necessary. Truth he considers to be the "game" of only a few. Hence education for the masses must take the form of instilling sound prejudices concerning the constitution of the state and its religion.\footnote{Supra, 68.} Reason, he says, should be the rule of all things in the state; when the members do not think for themselves, the public should think for them.\footnote{WGB, IV, 426.} Only a firm faith in the laws of the state and its religious principles will assure the well-being of society. This faith can be gained only by education.

Berkeley's trust in reason and education is at its highest point in his views on legislation. The rulers of the
state must above all be wise men. They must be fortified by knowledge and reason if the functions of the political organization are to be effective. The chief point in Berkeley's political theory is: educate the governors. He would allow more rational freedom in the education of the superior people, for those who are capable should follow the light of truth to a natural religion. 31

Despite the disparity in methods the educational principle remains intact. Berkeley is certain that better principles of social action and control can be taught. Education and religion are better guards against tyranny than rebellion.

(6) Existing Institutions: An unmistakable element of Berkeley's social thought is his faith in existing social institutions. This is most obvious, of course, in his polemics in behalf of the Church of England. The national church had for him a necessary relation to the government. This relation must be maintained and can be done so only by upholding the constitutional status of the Church. 32 He defended the just and legal liberty of the English Constitution. 33 Government support and religious control of the higher institutions of learning must be maintained. 34 The authority of the church

31 Supra, 54.
32 Supra, 53.
33 Supra, 53.
34 Supra, 39.
in moral matters was not to be questioned. 35

In society Berkeley's implication is that social classes will continue to exist. Hence class relations and conflicts should be recognized and utilized. 36 Foreign trade should be carried on by mercantilist principles. 37

Existing institutions, then, must be maintained. They represent the best means to the ends of mankind. All change should arise from within the institutions not from without by popular pressure. 38

(7) The Public Good: In Passive Obedience Berkeley's conception of the goal of man was purely formalistic—conformity to God's will. 39 Formalism is relinquished in his later thought in favor of the utilitarian principle. The welfare of mankind is the test of moral truth. 40 This criterion is the basis on which he judges all institutions. The subservience of the individual to society is necessary for the general happiness. The state is necessary to effect this subservience. Religion is justified by its necessary relation to government and as a contributor in itself to public welfare. 41 Private industry is necessary to support the economic

35 Supra, 69.
36 Supra, 85.
37 Supra, 81.
38 Supra, 60.
39 Supra, 44.
40 Supra, 50.
41 Supra, 53.
well-being of society.\footnote{42 Supra, 78.}

In making the utilitarian principle and the practical reason paramount in his social thought, Berkeley does not become a thorough-going utilitarian, however. The public well-being in any sense, he holds, presupposes social organization and law. Utility is secured only by law. His application of the utilitarian principle takes the form: Which institutions or laws most effectively secure the public happiness? Pure utilitarianism spelled only chaos.\footnote{43 Supra, 51.}

\textbf{(8) Summary and Criticism:} The foregoing principles may be accepted as constituting Berkeley's social philosophy. The members of society are free, selfish, and educable agents. The possibility of their happiness lies in their subservience to the whole. This subservience is to be effected by law and is best brought about by education and religion. These functions are best carried out by the existing institutions of Church and State. All change in the social structure and its instruments is to be made, if necessary, by the reason of those in power. The end of society is the greatest happiness of the whole, which properly includes the happiness of each individual, with the presupposition that law is forever necessary.
One major defect mars the internal consistency of Berkeley's social philosophy. It lies in his conception of education in relation to the rulers of society. Man is essentially selfish, Berkeley maintains. By education the masses can be brought to accept and support the laws of society and the authority which directs them. This acquiescence is gained through indoctrination, the impressing of established principles on the minds of the people. The rulers of society are subordinate to these same principles. But also, theirs is the power to modify these principles. All modification must be directed toward the public good. But human nature is fundamentally selfish. How is Berkeley to be certain that the rulers will not subvert the public good to their own private interest? Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?

Berkeley's rulers are of course limited by legal constitutions. But they have the power to change these. Their only real limitations are God and truth. Berkeley's faith in education and reason led him to believe that if properly prepared the rulers could do nothing antithetical to the best interests of their subjects. Hence education serves two functions. It is a restraining influence on the common people; it is both a restraint and a guide to positive action for the rulers. His theory of rule is based on the assumption that those in power are superior in intellect and that unlimited education will bring them to transcend their selfish
interests. There is in his system no positive check on authority and no explicit recognition of the reciprocal relations between the rulers and the ruled, which alone would make his theory of education consistent with his view of human nature.

B. The Adequacy of Berkeley's Social Philosophy

(1) The Status of the Individual: While Berkeley's lack of respect for individuals, particularly commoners, may have been justified in his time, he is to be faulted for not proposing any means of bettering them. The ignorance of the peasantry in Ireland certainly did not justify allowing them any voice in the government. If their condition was to be improved, it would have to come from above. A wise government would be the first necessity. But Berkeley would apparently have never permitted the people to express their own opinions. He was too prone to identify ignorance with lack of ability. Further, he tended to regard the needs of the common people as largely material. The scarcity of material comforts was certainly the dominant feature of the peasantry, but it was far from the only one. Religion was to be provided for their spiritual needs. Religion for men of intelligence was justified by reason and required a rational faith. Implicit faith was to be expected from the masses. Berkeley demanded the education of the gentry but did not commit himself to any program of enlightenment for the common people. The most crying
necessity of his time was the need for intelligent government, but the ignorance of the peasantry was a more fundamental problem. The Bermuda project may to some extent indicate a desire on Berkeley's part to improve the illiterate, but its primary motive was religious.

Berkeley did extend religious values to all ranks, but some persons were to be reasoned with and the majority preached to. Economic values were secured for all, and all men were to be equal under the law. Aside from these points Berkeley's concern for the individual is rather cursory. His "Society of Persons" seems to be one in which most of the people are followers who work hard, are well-fed and clothed, who look to God for their eternal interests, and who have faith in their leaders for the remainder of their temporal interests.

(2) Self-interest: Berkeley's emphasis on self-interest in his practical philosophy seems quite justified. Self-interest is a factor in human nature which must be recognized. But it is not the only factor, and it is doubtful if it will bear the weight Berkeley puts on it.

In his ethical theory, self-interest in the guise of future rewards and punishments looms large. Virtue is not its own reward, or at best is an insufficient reward.43 Virtuous action, for Berkeley, requires a deeper motivation, and this

43 Supra, 51.
he finds in the religious assurance of a future state. Berkeley feels that religion, by extending man's selfishness to an interest in his future life, will make him a better social unit. Berkeley could not, or at least did not, develop the factor of self-interest in the social scene to the extent that Hobbes did. He does not recognize that the individual's true interest is furthered by social benevolence. The tendency of this interpretation to support the social contract theory of the state may have been Berkeley's reason for avoiding it. Logically, he should have.

The factor of self-interest led Berkeley to place a major emphasis on the security of private property in his economic theory.\(^\text{44}\) Private industry is motivated by the desire for power in a secure form of property. The fact that this leads to competition forced him to speak of a planned rational economy. But he fails to point out how conflicting economic interests can be reconciled.

Self-interest on a national scale led Berkeley to propose self-sufficiency for Ireland and a mercantilist theory of foreign trade. He never considers the pernicious effects of nationalism in commerce. While internationalism was unheard of in his day, the form of closed state which Berkeley proposes is even more medieval than it is mercantilist. Such a proposal

\(^{44}\) Supra, 75.
shows that Berkeley was rather short-sighted in economics. This short-sightedness arises from the self-interest theory. Nations are dependent on each other even as individuals are. The best interests of a nation can be served only by cooperative effort and mutual interaction with other nations.

(3) **Law:** That Berkeley was right in affirming the necessity of law is obvious. Only legal liberty is really liberty. In pointing to the public welfare as the end of law he uncovers another truth. Law arises from public necessity. The test of law is whether it meets that necessity. Berkeley's theory that law should only be changed by wise legislation demands consideration. The ignorance of the general public in Berkeley's time undoubtedly justified this theory. In denying the general public's right to raise objections to law Berkeley is laying the cornerstone of a dictatorship. Wise legislators responsible only to God and their own logic are apt to lose sight of the public's true interest. In denying the right of men to voice their private consciences Berkeley closes the only rational channel of controlling or influencing legislators, making rebellion, which he abhorred, the only alternative.

(4) **Religion:** The central position of religion in Berkeley's thought seems somewhat at odds with the utility he claims for it as a social instrument. It seems hard to believe that a sincere religious idealist would advocate religion on
purely utilitarian grounds. That he does so at many times cannot be denied. One of Berkeley's chief arguments for the Bermuda project was that it would further colonial enterprises. He argues for the baptism of slaves on the grounds that it would make them better workers. But these statements may be partially explained by their appearance in literature designed to gain popular support for an enterprise which grew out of purely idealistic motives. Berkeley does not hesitate to use practical arguments as propaganda. But a discussion of the purity of Berkeley's religious idealism is not particularly profitable here. It is evident that religion was for him a very effective social instrument. The problem here is whether it is worth the reliance he puts in it.

It is obvious, considering the ignorance of the common people, that in Berkeley's time the "fear of God" was a much stronger motive to good action than it may have been in a much more enlightened period. All sorts of superstitions thrive upon ignorance as well as religious fears. Berkeley does not propose to base the public welfare on mere superstition, but in an implicit faith in religious principles and institutions as established by the councils of the wise. In the face of ignorance he proposes the most feasible solution. As a stop-gap, religious faith may curb the passions of the populace and

45 Supra, 18.
46 Supra, 90.
direct the masses to good works. But doubters arise and reason penetrates to the lower ranks of society. Berkeley provides a valuable tool in religious fear, but he does little to dispell the ignorance which makes it usable. If religion is to continue as an efficient social factor, the masses must be educated and the prerogatives of a reasonable faith extended to them.

As a moral motivation the idea of a future state does not warrant the weight Berkeley gives it. Visions of purgatory do not deter any hungry man from theft. Temporal welfare is much more attractive than infinite bliss. In urging men to think more of their eternal interests, Berkeley leaves himself open to the Marxist "opium of the people" criticism of religion. Moral principles must derive their authority from their social effectiveness not from their assurances of eternal reward or punishments. Now this does not imply that morals are divorced from the basic reality. Berkeley is justified in holding that such values as moral goodness and beauty must be attributed to an active and reasonable principle supreme in the universe. But their true value is intrinsic and immediate and does not derive from transcendent hope or fears.

Berkeley's argument that religion has been a chief support of civilization is just. The cultural influence of the church

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47 Supra, 51.
48 Supra, 51.
through its support of education cannot be denied.\textsuperscript{49} The national religion which he supports has, however, been of dubious value in other respects.\textsuperscript{50} Too close a relation between religion and politics is never healthy. Religious principles must be embodied in government. Thus far, Berkeley can be agreed with. But national establishment of religion introduces political venality into a sphere which cannot endure such influence without destroying the faith of its adherents. Berkeley's conception of a "national conscience"\textsuperscript{51} is a meaningless abstraction, but it fits in well with his economic nationalism. The national "power" certainly needs to be supplemented by a national conscience.

(5) \textit{Education and Reason}: Berkeley's major emphases on education and reason are the most valuable aspects of his social philosophy. The use he makes of education cannot be fully endorsed, however. The essence of education is that it should be free and reasonable. Berkeley's system of education for the great mass of people was neither. He would indoctrinate the populace with a body of principles decided by the rulers. By rational argument where possible, by exhortation and demands of faith where reason failed, the people were to be given a set

\textsuperscript{49} Supra, 52.
\textsuperscript{50} Supra, 53.
\textsuperscript{51} WGB, IV, 498.
of principles which embodied the truths of revealed religion, the basic moral virtues, the fundamentals of the civil constitution as interpreted by those in power. 52

The only criticism to be made of Berkeley's theory that reason should be the rule in all things is that he did not extend it far enough. His lack of respect for the bulk of mankind led him to restrict the prerogative of reason to those in power. It is true that only a few ever attain truth or have sufficient insight to direct mankind according to its best interests. But it is also true that no harmonious society can ever exist in a nation where one's private conscience may not be rationally expressed.

(6) Existing Institutions: What attitude should be taken toward existing institutions? This is a basic problem of social philosophy. Should present institutions be discarded and new instruments be supplied? Or should existing institutions be preserved but criticized and modified to more adequately meet the present needs?

Berkeley's view is obviously the latter qualified by a firm belief that the present forms were adequate and that any change, if necessary, should be made from within, by those in power. The only change recommended was the improvement of the rulers through education. This improvement he demanded

52 Supra, 68.
emphatically. He did propose an extension of function is his scheme for a National Bank. The currency reforms he proposed required only an improved use of existing functions.

The institutions he hopes to preserve are: (1) The English government and the constitution by which it is supported; (2) the church of England with its intimate relation to the civil constitution of which it is a chief cornerstone. Extending the concept "institution" one finds Berkeley supporting: (3) the public universities, government-supported and church-controlled; (4) the class system (He makes no move to remove class-qualifications and balance classes against each other in his economic theory.); (5) private property: (6) and, the mercantilist conception of national economy and foreign trade.

The first and last institutions noted above have suffered changes in succeeding years which refute Berkeley's opinion of them. The English government has become steadily more democratic. Mercantilism has been dead for two hundred years though nationalism still lingers.

Though Berkeley's conservative tendency to cling to existing institutions is not in itself a fault, his refusal to permit external criticism cannot be condoned. His view of society and its control is essentially static. The empirical facts of social change demand a more liberal view.
(7) The Public Good: This conception requires only a word. Berkeley's insight into the necessary relation of human happiness and law is essentially sound. He does not live up to his own view, however, in failing to recognize many of the values which are necessary to human happiness. The intellectual values were apparently not for the masses. He does not recognize the reciprocal relations of individuals in society and the values resulting from them as such.

(8) Summary: Perhaps the most obvious criticism which can be made of Berkeley's social philosophy is that of inadequacy. It is inadequate in that many problems are unnoticed, in that it lacks insight in many cases, and that no adequate provision is made for change and growth. This criticism must be qualified, however, for Berkeley never intends to expound a full, systematic social philosophy. The materials from which his social philosophy must largely be gleaned are of the nature of practical suggestions on particular problems. The plea of human frailty suffices for the second criticism. The third must be moderated by the fact that Berkeley's social-philosophical writings are to a great extent polemical in character. He defends the Church and, to a lesser degree, the state against the free-thinkers who, he thought, would destroy them. To find Berkeley's social philosophy this polemical veil must be penetrated, though the existence and the direction of this polemic are valuable clues in themselves.
First of all should be noted a lack of respect for intelligence and for the efficacy of reason in the masses, coupled with too much faith in the intelligence and reason of the rulers.

Second, Berkeley tends to subordinate the individual to the social whole and put him at the disposal of those in power.

Third, Berkeley proposes to gain this subordination by methods destructive to the dignity of human nature—indoctrination and religious fear.

Fourth, he over-emphasizes self-interest as an attribute of human nature. This mistake arises from a psychological atomism which Berkeley strove unsuccessfully to transcend.

Fifth, basing his ethics on self-interest, transmuted in religion to eternal self-interest, he fails to arrive at an effective guide to morality.

Sixth, his faith in existing institutions and in the potential intelligence and benevolence of those controlling them led Berkeley to make no adequate provision for social change.

But on the positive side of the ledger must be noted:

First, Berkeley recognizes the necessary relations of human freedom, happiness, and law.

Second, he emphasizes education, though limiting it, as the basic method in social action and control.

Third, Berkeley recognizes the general welfare of mankind as the supreme standard of morality.

Fourth, he recognizes the need for religion and would ex-
tend Christianity to all, regardless of race or condition.

Fifth, he emphasizes the need of wise men in government.

And sixth, Berkeley demands that reason be made the rule of all things and that truth, even in religion, be recognized as the highest aim.

Berkeley's social philosophy is, on the whole, a consistent development of certain well-defined principles. He recognizes the empirical facts of human ignorance and limitation. Rational methods are for him the best in coping with social problems. Though inadequate in many respects, his social philosophy indicates a deep and fairly acute interest in social problems. As a whole his social philosophy contributes little to present issues. Conservatism is too prone to remember past glories and overlook present evils. But in demanding wisdom and reason in practical affairs Berkeley has indicated the timeless condition of the good society.
SUMMARY

Three considerations justify a study of Berkeley's social philosophy: his personal and public life, the social implications of his epistemology and metaphysics, and his writings on numerous social matters. A survey of his life reveals a deep interest in social problems. His life is characterized by a firm stand against the free-thinking which he considered so dangerous to religion, morals, and politics. A positive social interest is attested by his Bermuda project and his panacea for all human ills in the Siris. Berkeley's theistic metaphysics and epistemology provide an adequate theoretical basis for social theory, but he fails to work it out coherently. The significance of the individual is recognized but never justified. Berkeley fails to exploit the rational self-activity of the concrete self. Though his social writings are chiefly polemic and propaganda, certain well-defined principles are found consistently throughout.

The antinomy of the self passive in knowing but active in willing is never transcended by Berkeley. The significant unity of the self is assumed despite its unknowability by empirical logic. This leads to a denial of real human freedom and intelligence in his early thought. The situation is to a degree remedied later by a more concrete logic. The Lockean epistemology gives way to notional ideas and a recog-
nition of the necessity of faith. This is apparent in Berkeley's moral theory. The absolute and negative formalism of his early moral theory gives way to a system requiring faith and the practical reason. By this change actual freedom is secured since the acceptance of moral responsibility as dictated by religion is an act of personal faith.

For Berkeley the chief basis of social authority is necessity. He recognizes implicitly the political sovereignty of the people but mistrusts it. The existence of a certain political organization, the weight of tradition, and consonance with established religious truths are for him the principal bases of political authority.

The greatest need in political organization is not a modification of structure or function but the improvement of the authorities or rulers. This improvement is to be effected by education and the inculcation of religious truths.

The functions of political authority are the maintaining of the peace, order, and well-being of the citizen. This is accomplished by law bolstered by religion. Religion makes obedience to law a moral obligation without which no effective civil organization can be maintained.

The method par excellence for supporting the government is education. For the great masses of people this must be indoctrination. The principles of government and religion and the moral virtues must be formulated by wise rulers. This
ideology is to be impressed upon the people.

The status of citizens for Berkeley is one of industrious material activity and passive faith in intellectual and spiritual matters. The people as such has no direct voice in political matters. Government gives them the necessary spur to industry by securing private property and equality under the law.

Wealth for Berkeley is the power to command industry and raw materials. On the national scale wealth is combined industry of the citizens directed toward the power of the whole state. Berkeley recognizes the extrinsic character of money and urges that circulation be stimulated through a more adequate currency. The industry of the individual is the economic unit. In the nation Berkeley's wish is a sort of a planned economy. This planning, however, is not to eliminate competition but only to direct industry into more profitable and advantageous channels. Berkeley considers indolence the real cause of poverty and fails to recognize other factors such as unemployment and restrictions put upon the Irish Catholic peasantry.

Berkeley is an economic nationalist of the medieval type. He argues for self-sufficiency in nations. Though seeing the fallacy of the purely monetary balance of trade theory, he retains the fundamentals of the mercantilist theory. Foreign trade is to be carried on, if necessary, in such a way that
the national power is increased.

Berkeley apparently retains the class-system. He makes no move to remove class-qualifications in the civil government. He balances them against each other in his economic and cultural theory. Conspicuous consumption and class emulation are to be exploited. They offer the best means of inciting the lower classes to industry and to intellectual development.

Education is, according to Berkeley, an end in itself to those most capable. For the mass of people it is the primary method for gaining adherence to established institutions. Berkeley offers no expansion of free education beyond the members of the gentry. Similarly for religion, reasonable faith can be expected of only a few. For the masses implicit faith and the fear of God suffice. Religion is a chief support of all human action. It is an instrument without which morality, civil harmony, education, and industry cannot thrive.

Berkeley views individuals as free, selfish, educable, and for the most part inferior. Their true interest can be gained only by reconciling their self-interests through law and existing institutions administered by wise rulers. Reason for the rulers, indoctrination for the masses—that is the modus operandi of the good community. All change must be reasonable and effected from within or above existing institutions. The happiness of the whole is the ultimate moral and social criterion.
Berkeley's social philosophy is at best inadequate. His conception of the goal of society is correct, but the means he proposes are inadequate. His faith in education and reason are justified, but to be successful these means must be available for all. In placing the rulers and their principles beyond the reach of the masses Berkeley has made rebellion the only possible means of insuring social change.
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