Although scholars have long explored the relationship between the philosophies of Berkeley and Kant, there appears to be at least one respect in which Berkeley was a precursor of, though probably not an influence upon Kant that has hitherto escaped notice. Berkeley’s attack on the doctrine of abstract ideas reveals his employment of distinctions which parallel Kant’s distinctions between both the analytic and synthetic a priori, and the phenomenal and noumenal worlds.

Berkeley introduces three types of abstract ideas in “Introduction” sections 7, 8 and 9. For present purposes, the characteristics of these ideas are less important than Berkeley’s demonstration of their (literal) inconceivability. In “Introduction” section 10 Berkeley re-describes the abstract ideas he has just introduced in the preceding three sections and then writes, “I deny that I can abstract from one another, or conceive separately, those qualities which it is impossible should exist so separated; or that I can frame a general notion by abstracting from particulars... And there are grounds to think most men will acknowledge themselves to be in my case.” This personal thought experiment is Berkeley’s “proof”. His reasoning is brought out explicitly in the seventh dialogue of the Alciphron (section 6). Euphranor there remarks to Alciphron that “that... which it seems neither you nor I can frame an idea of..., we may suppose others have no more an
idea of than we.’ For ‘men’s minds and faculties [are] made much alike.’ (Fraser, Vol. II, p. 329) Thus, Berkeley concludes from his personal thought experiment in ‘Introduction’ section 10 that human beings are universally incapable of forming abstract ideas of the types in question.

This judgment constitutes what Kant later called a synthetic judgment known a priori. Like Berkeley, Kant believed that there are limitations to one’s experiences that are universal among human beings. Space, for example, is ‘the form of all appearances of outer sense.’ (A26, B42) Also like Berkeley, Kant relies upon thought experiments to reveal what we all can and cannot experience; for example, ‘We can never represent to ourselves the absence of objects,’ (A24, B38) and ‘We can represent to ourselves only one space.’ (A25, B39)

Kant uses the resulting information about the universal properties of human experience to determine the spatial properties of objects ‘synthetically, and yet a priori.’ (B40) The knowledge is synthetic because it is knowledge of the object beyond what is contained in the concept of the object. The knowledge is a priori because ‘necessity and strict universality are... sure criteria of a priori knowledge’ (B4). Universality is guaranteed by the fact that the knowledge rests upon ‘conditions... which limit our intuition and which for us are universally valid’ (A27, B43), and necessity follows from this universality. What universally characterizes all experiences necessarily characterizes each experience.

Berkeley’s demonstration of the inconceivability of the first three types of abstract ideas follows the kantian pattern very closely. A thought experiment yields a judgment about the universal limits of human experience. This leads to the view that no human being can have any such idea and therefore that these abstract ideas are ‘impossible.’ (Intro, section 21)

Berkeley’s judgment about these ideas cannot, however, be a Kantian synthetic a priori judgment unless it is appropriately limited. Kant maintained that the necessity and universality of any such judgment is relative to ‘the limitation under which the judgment is made.’ It must be limited to ‘things... viewed as objects of our sensible intuition’ (A27, B43). The reason for this is that the limits of our sensible intuition are not necessarily (or known to be) shared by all beings. So what is universally true of things as viewed by human beings is not necessarily true of

all things in themselves by whatever subject they are intuited, or whether they be intuited or not. For we cannot judge in regard to the intuitions of other thinking beings whether they are bound by the same conditions as those which limit our intuition and which for us are universally valid. (A27, B43)

Berkeley expresses exactly the same opinion about the limits of human experience relative to the possible experiences of other beings. He writes in section 81 of the Principles that there may be ‘a great variety of spirits of different orders and capacities, whose faculties, both in number and extent, are far exceeding those the Author of my being has bestowed on me.’ From this he concludes, ‘for me to pretend to determine by my own few, stinted, narrow inlets of perception, what ideas the inexhaustible power of the Supreme Spirit may imprint upon [spirits with capacities exceeding my own], were certainly the utmost folly and presumption.’ Thus, Berkeley’s judgment that the first three kinds of abstract ideas are inconceivable shares the limitation characteristic of a kantian synthetic a priori judgment. Because it is based upon the limits of human experience, and Berkeley acknowledges the possibility that the experiences of other beings extend beyond these limits, Berkeley’s conclusion is limited to the claim that the abstract ideas in question are impossible or inconceivable relative to human experience.

So far one of Berkeley’s arguments against abstract ideas has been shown to result in a synthetic judgment known a priori. It will now be shown that two other arguments against abstract ideas of different types result in what Kant would call an analytic judgment known a priori.

An analytic judgment, according to Kant is one ‘in which the connection of the predicate with the subject is thought through identity... in accordance with the principle of contradiction.’ (A7) To arrive at it ‘I have merely to analyze the concept, that is, to become conscious to myself of the manifold which I always think in that concept.’ (B11).

In ‘Introduction’ section 13 Berkeley introduces the general idea of a triangle by quoting Locke’s description of it
as "neither oblique nor rectangle, neither equilateral, equicrural nor scalenon, but all and none of these at once." By adding the emphasis to "all and none" and rejecting this idea of a triangle on the basis of its "inconsistencies" (sections 13, 14 and 16), Berkeley indicates that his objection to its possibility is a logical objection. His judgment upon it is therefore analytic.

Similarly, in section 5 of the Principles Berkeley rejects the abstraction of "sensible objects from their being perceived, so as to conceive them existing unperceived." He analyzes the concept "sensible object," finds it equivalent to "our ideas or sensations," and then analyzes "idea or sensation" so as to identify it with what is perceived. Thus, the separation of "the existence of sensible objects from their being perceived" involves "a manifest contradiction." Again, the judgment is analytic.

The distinction Berkeley makes in his attack on abstract ideas between judgments that are synthetic a priori and those that are analytic a priori is not at all accidental. It is maintained perfectly in An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision (sections 122, 123, 125 and 130) and A Defense of Free Thinking in Mathematics (sections 45 and 46). It is ignored only in the first and second editions of the Alciphron (seventh dialogue, sections 5 and 6), and the offending sections were omitted by Berkeley from the final edition.

More important, Berkeley's adherence to and understanding of the distinction is clearly indicated in Principles 81, where he allows that the universal limits of human experience may not be shared by other beings. He takes pains there to contrast impossibilities resting upon experiential limits peculiar to human beings (synthetic a priori) with impossibilities unrelated to such limits. "A notion of Entity or Existence, abstracted from spirit and idea... is... a downright repugnancy and trifling with words." It's impossibility is truly universal because it is demonstrated by conceptual analysis. The impossibility is, in Kant's terms, analytic rather than synthetic.

The analytic-synthetic distinction commits Berkeley to an epistemological bifurcation of reality similar to that between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds in Kant. The ideas that God has chosen to bestow upon human beings constitute for Berkeley what the phenomenal world is for Kant. There is in Berkeley a counterpart to Kant's noumenal world, as well.

Any abstract idea whose impossibility is relative to human experience (synthetic a priori) could exist in a reality which, like Kant's noumenal world, transcends human experience. Again, for Berkeley, as for Kant, nothing is known of this noumenal world except that it contains no contradictions. Hence, those abstract ideas which are self-contradictory can be known (analytic a priori) not to exist even there.

Due to Kant's lack of first hand knowledge of Berkeley's works, it is unlikely that Berkeley's employment of the analytic-synthetic and noumenal-world phenomenal-world distinctions directly influenced Kant. I conjecture that the similarities between their views result from the following. Their common philosophical heritage features the claim that the law of contradiction is absolutely universal. But the religious tradition includes the claim that there are aspects of reality, namely, God and heaven, which human beings can apprehend in their lives only "through a glass darkly." These two views suggest the existence of a noumenal realm to which only the law of contradiction applies, and, therefore, about which only analytic a priori truths can be known. The phenomenal world is then conceived by contrast with the noumenal, and synthetic a priori truths constitute knowledge about what is peculiar to this phenomenal world. Both Berkeley and Kant embraced such truths in their respective battles against scepticism.

Notes

1. Berkeley, George, Works ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser (1901) 4 vol. All quotations from Berkeley's writings are taken from this edition and noted parenthetically in the text.
2. For more on these characteristics see Peter S. Wenz, "Berkeley's Two Concepts of 'Impossibility': A Reply to McKim," Journal of the History of Ideas, forthcoming in 1982.
4. See Wenz, "Berkeley's Two Concepts of Impossibility: A Reply to McKim".
As we know from the Preface, Berkeley issued his *Passive Obedience* under social pressure. Accused of having delivered pro-Jacobite sermons, he defended himself by publishing his discourse. Some points might have been added *ad hoc*, therefore. It is on this background interesting that there is another —hitherto unknown—version of *Passive Obedience* in which all political material is cut out; and in which the term “passive obedience” does not occur at all, not even a synonym for that term, except in its title as a reference to the published work.

The new discovery is a manuscript of eight pages written at the end of (the American) Samuel Johnson’s copy of *De Motu*. This copy is now in the Johnson Memorial Library at Columbia University, New York (catalogued as BK100 B4 55).

The manuscript is beautifully written; not in Berkeley’s hand; not in Johnson’s. It has the following heading:

The Sense of Dean Berkeley upon the Foundations of Moral Good, extracted from his Discourse of *Passive Obedience*

The text that follows consists of thirteen numbered sections; they correlate with the published work as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The extract</th>
<th>The published work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sect. I–XI</td>
<td>Sect. 5–15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sect. XII–XIII</td>
<td>Sect. 27–28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some differences between the two texts are obviously intended to make this extract a separate, self-contained, text; such as these:

| Sect. XI (end):... & the like might be observed of all other Instances. |
| Sect. XII (end):... And from the same Principle, by the very same Reasoning, it follows that Loyalty is a moral Virtue; and, *Thou shalt not Resist the Supreme Power*, a Rule or Law of Nature, the least breach whereof hath the inherent stain of moral Turpitude. |

| Sect. XIII (end):... The right understanding of what hath been said will, I think, afford a clear Solution of all Difficulties that may occur in the Consideration of Moral Subjects. |
| Sect. 28 (end):... The right Understanding of what hath been said will, I think, afford a clear Solution to the following Difficulties. |

To this group of alterations also belongs the omission of the phrase “as hath been already proved” in sect. 27 from sect. XII of the extract. As all other differences, which are few, between the extract and the printed work are negligible, anyone could easily reconstruct this manuscript from an ordinary edition of *Passive Obedience*.

When was this extract included in Johnson’s book? The first piece of information is a mistaken remark in a bibliographical note by Johnson written on the first page of his copy of *De Motu*. He listed four books that he had received from Berkeley (*De Motu*, *New Theory of Vision*, *Principles* and the *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*) and added in Latin:

*qua omnia sunt Reverendi Auctoris Opera* (which are all the reverend author’s works)

As we know, these were not Berkeley’s complete works at the time. Apart from the early Latin tract on mathematical issues, one is missing: *Passive Obedience*. Obviously, Johnson did not know about this work at that time. He would have known about it, of course, if he had seen this extract. It is very likely, therefore, that the extract was not there when Johnson wrote his bibliographical note.

When did Johnson write his bibliographical note then? It
includes among other things the following remark (on the first page of the book):

_Hunc Tractatum De Motu... a Reverendo admodum hujusce Tractatis Auctore D. G. Berkeley Derensis Decani dono gratissime accepi_ (I have most gratefully received this treatise On Motion as a gift from its author the right reverend Dr G. Berkeley, Dean of Derry)

On page three, at the bottom of the title-page, however, we have this dedication in Berkeley's hand:


It would be awkward to repeat on the first page what Berkeley had written already on the first. It is very likely, therefore, that Johnson's bibliographical note was written first, Berkeley's dedication second. Johnson's note would then have been written before June 1730 (the date of the dedication). As Johnson probably received this and other books from Berkeley in May 1730, we may assume that he wrote this note as soon as he received this book.\(^2\)

So far, I have argued that Johnson was unacquainted with _Passive Obedience_ in May 1730 (when he probably wrote his bibliographical note). Thus our extract seems to belong to some later period. But not much later, because among the books Johnson read in 1730, we find:\(^3\)

59. Dr Berkeley's Treatise De Motu
60. — His Discourse of Passive Obedience

The book listed as no. 57 was read in May; no. 64 in July; 59 and 60, therefore, sometime between May and July 1730. As Johnson was informed about the existence of _Passive Obedience_ before the latter date, it is a good guess, I think, that Johnson had this information from Berkeley himself when they met in June 1730. Who else could possibly have told him about this little known, 18-year old text in those days? As there is no copy of _Passive Obedience_ in the Johnson Memorial Library,\(^4\) it might have been this extract he read shortly after his visit to Berkeley. The extract should then have been copied in June 1730 when Berkeley and Johnson met in Newport.

The extract presents some of the paragraphs of the printed work almost word by word. But, in a sense, it goes beyond the printed text; as these paragraphs have now the more general importance of expressing Berkeley's view on "the Foundations of Moral Good". This can hardly have been done (in Newport 1730) without being authorized by Berkeley himself.

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**Notes**

1. The differences are either orthographical details: "&" for "and"; underlined words that are not emphasized originally; changes from first capital letter; or obvious mistakes such as "invovle" for "involve"; or such unimportant variants as "best of men" for "Best Men", "is sin" for "is Vice or Sin", "these" for "those", and even "certain rules" for "certain universal Rules" (that those rules are universal is clear from the text).
2. For evidence, see Berkeley's letter to Johnson of March 24, 1730.
4. I am grateful to Brian Torode, who checked this point on my behalf at Columbia University.
Did Berkeley write *Guardian* 130?

David Berman

In his 1943 *Mind* article, “Berkeley’s essays in the *Guardian*”, Dr Luce attributes nos 27, 35, 39, 49, 55, 62, 70, 77, 83, 88, 89, and 126 to Berkeley (pp. 247–263). I have argued elsewhere (*Hermathena* cxxv 1978, pp. 69–70) that no 69—and probably no 81—must be added to the list, because no 69 is confidently ascribed to Berkeley by his friend and disciple, the American Samuel Johnson. And since, as Dr Luce points out (p. 251), no 81 goes with no 69, it seems likely that Berkeley also wrote no 81.

Clearly, the question of Berkeley’s contributions to the *Guardian* has not been conclusively settled. In this note I should like to consider one of the longest *Guardian* essays, no 130, about which Dr Luce writes:

No. 130 contains, I think, the nearest approach to Berkeley’s style and manner, and I have sometimes wondered whether there could have been a confusion between the names which sound so similar, Deane Bartelett and Dean Berkeley; but on reflexion I cannot think that Berkeley would have written of the gentleman and the mechanic as this writer does. Berkeley would not identify the gentleman with the rational part, nor the mechanic with the animal part, and the quaint passage about ogling with the eye and flirting with the fan is not in his manner. (p. 263)

The attribution of no. 130 to “the modest and good... Rev. Mr. Bartlett” was made by Richard Steele, the editor of the *Guardian*, in his *Apology for himself and his writings* (1714), p. 45; and one may indeed wonder whether Steele had confused the names, since such carelessness would not have been uncharacteristic. In his biography *Richard Steele, M.P.* (1970), Mr. Calhoun Winton writes:

> Unfortunately, this carelessness extended to his [Steele’s] writings. An obvious error in one of his plays, for example, he suffered to go through five editions in his lifetime; in twenty-five years, that is to say, he did not bother even to glance through the printed version of a play that had cost him a great deal of effort and vexation. Rarely did he revise anything he had written... (p. 257)

Of course, Winton’s observation does not establish that the Rev. Mr. Bartlett was in fact the Rev. Mr. Berkeley; it provides, at the most, what may be called counter-counter evidence. However, I think that I have found enough positive evidence to warrant reopening the case of no. 130.

To begin then: (1) Steele’s laudatory description of the writer as “modest and good” corresponds with his opinion of Berkeley as expressed in a letter in *Guardian* 90: “Till I knew you, [writes Steele] I thought it the privilege of angels only to be very knowing and very innocent... Your contempt of pleasure, riches and honour, will crown you with all of them...”. (2) The writer of *Guardian* 130 attempts to debase the name ‘freethinker’; and this was something that Berkeley was concerned to do at the time. For example, in the Preface to the *Three dialogues*, published some three months before *Guardian* no. 130, he speaks of that “loose, rambling way, not altogether improperly termed free-thinking, by certain libertines in thought...” (*Works*, vol. II, p. 168). (3) The way in which the writer of 130 tries to discredit ‘free-thinkers’ also coincides with Berkeley’s distinctive view on how we know other minds. According to the *Guardian* writer: “The Mind being itself invisible, there is no other way to discern its Existence, than by the Effects which it produceth. [But because the] modern productions of our Free-thinkers... look rather like the Effects of Chance, or at best Mechanism, than of a Thinking Principle... [the essayist therefore recommends that we should] speak of Free-thinkers in the Neuter Gender, using the term it for him.” This statement is strikingly similar to what we find in section 27 of Berkeley’s *Principles of human...
knowledge (1710): “Such is the nature of spirit or that which
acts, that it cannot be of it self perceived, but only by the
effects which it produceth.” Notice that the last six words
here are exactly the same as in the first sentence quoted above
from the Guardian.

There are other correspondences between this Guardian
essay and Berkeley’s writings. I have argued that some of
Berkeley’s novel views on the functions of language are reflected
in this essay.3 But as that subject is beyond the scope of this
note, I shall mention here a final correspondence more super-
ficial but probably even more decisive. (4) In his De ludo alge-
braico (1707), Berkeley answers those who are contemptuous
of mathematics by quoting (loosely as we shall see) the testi-
momy of Sir William Temple, that it is mathematics “quae
vos a barbaris distinguunt... Vide Tentamen Anglicum de
Hortis Epicuri, a Gulielmo Temple. Equite Aurato, conscrip-
tum.”; see Works, vol. IV, p. 219. Now in Guardian 130 the
essayist mentions the same aperçu:

The Mathematics are so useful and ornamental to Human
Life, that the Ingenious Sir William Temple acknowledges,
in some part of his Writings, all those Advantages which
distinguish Polite Nations from Barbarians to be derived
from them.

Berkeley does not, especially in his earlier works, often quote
from other authors. But when he does quote, he frequently
uses the same quotation more than once. Thus the passage in
Locke’s Essay concerning human understanding IV. vii. 9 about
the impossible triangle is employed in the New theory of
vision (1709), sect. 125, then in the Principles, Introduction,
sect. 19. St. Paul’s words from Corinthians (concerning what
“eye hath not seen...”) are also quoted in at least three of
Berkeley’s writings of 1708–1713. But even more noteworthy
in the two paraphrases of Temple’s aperçu is that they are
closer in thought and expression to each other, I think, than
to the original; for Temple’s statement from the “Gardens of
Epicurus” reads:

... I know no Advantage Mankind has gained by the
Progress of Natural Philosophy, during se many Ages it
has had Vogue in the World, excepting always, and very

justly, what we owe to the Mathematicks, which is in a
manner all that seems valuable among the Civilized
Nations, more than those we call Barbarous, whether
they are so or no, or more so than ourselves.4

That the writer of Guardian 130 should adapt Temple’s remark,
speak about our knowledge of other minds in nearly Berkeley’s
own words, be so concerned to debase the name ‘free-thinker’,
and be eulogized by Steele—all this persuades me that that
writer was Berkeley.

Notes

1. In Elementa philosophica (1752), which is dedicated to Berkeley; see Samuel Johnson: his career and writings (1929) eds. H. and C.
2. See Luce’s editor’s Introduction to the Guardian essays in vol.
VII of the Works of George Berkeley (referred to as Works), pp. 176–177.
Quotations from the Guardian are from the original 1713 edition.
3. In Meaning and method in Berkeley’s theology, a Ph.D. thesis,
RECENT ARTICLES ON BERKELEY

(2) —, “Berkeley’s Philosophical Reception after America” Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie (1980) 311–320

BERKELEY ALS

On 21 July 1981 Sotheby auctioned Berkeley’s ALS to Gervais, 12 Jan. 1741/2, which is printed in Works VIII, p. 256–7. One page of Berkeley’s ms is reproduced in Sotheby’s catalogue. Sotheby estimated that the item (no 396) would probably fetch between £1000 and £1500 (sterling).

A reprint of New Studies in Berkeley’s Philosophy, edited by Warren E. Steinkraus, has been issued (with Addenda) by University Press of America.
We regret to record the death on 10 September 1980 of the eminent Berkeley scholar, Professor T. E. Jessop, formerly Ferens Professor of Philosophy at the University of Hull. Berkeley scholars will know of him as the joint-editor, with the late A. A. Luce, of the definitive edition in nine volumes of Berkeley’s *Works* (1948–1956). Each editor was responsible for four volumes. They joined forces for the last. He had other Berkeley writings to his credit, in particular a model edition of Berkeley’s *Principles* (1937). Both he and his fellow-editor were awarded the MC during the First World War.

He held honorary doctorates from the Universities of Hull and Dublin. His work for adult education earned him an O.B.E.

He held High Office in the Methodist Church, being Vice-President of the Methodist Conference in 1955. In Trinity College, which has friendly relations with Oriel College, where Jessop had been a student, he was sure of a warm welcome on the occasions when he found time to visit it. Despite his achievements in many spheres he was a modest and very likeable man.

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The *Berkeley Newsletter* appears once a year in late autumn. It includes notes on Berkeleian topics. A note should not normally exceed five pages and should be type-written. The *Newsletter* also lists items of Berkeley interest. Authors wishing to have their books, articles or notes listed should send the requisite information to the editors, who would be grateful for any other information relating to Berkeley publications.