CHAPTER - I
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INTRODUCTION

Why should philosophers be interested in perception at all? To the layman perception seems to be a problem for psychologists, or else no problem at all. Since traditionally philosophy is concerned with the examination and clarification of concepts, and since perception is a concept like any other, we can naturally expect such question as 'What is it to perceive something?' or 'What do we mean when we say that something is perceived?' Yet it is hard to see why these questions should be especially important, why they in particular should attract so much attention. One reason is that the philosopher has a special interest in the mind and mental phenomena, and in so far as perception is some sort of mental process, so far he will be particularly interested in perception. But more important still is the fact that many philosophers have held that to perceive something is not to be aware of the sorts of things we naturally think of ourselves as perceiving for example horse, table etc., but to be aware of certain mental entities termed as ideas, sensations, sense-impressions, sense-data, percepts, etc.
We can say that the analysis of the concept of perception raises two related questions: What is it to perceive something? and What sorts of things do we perceive? It seems obvious that it is by perception, and by perception alone, that we are aware of the world around us, so it seems plausible to say that it is by perception, and by perception alone, that we come to know of the existence and nature of the world. So in considering our knowledge of the 'external world' the philosopher will want to consider the way in which perception can and does provide us with that knowledge, and the nature, extent and certainty of the knowledge it provides us with.

In philosophical theories of perception external objects are contrasted with sense-dependent entities known variously as ideas, sensations, sense-impressions, sense-data etc. but for the convenience, here, we will use the term 'ideas' to denote all such words. The main feature of certain theories of perception is that they claim that we always and can only perceive ideas i.e. we never perceive external material objects. These sense-dependent ideas might also be said to be mental, in the sense that they have no spatial location. They can be said private also in the sense that they can be perceived by only one person.
There has been a tendency to use ‘sense datum’ as the name for what we are calling here ‘idea’. This has been a source of great confusion. “For whoever may have invented the term, most of the philosophers have always insisted that it is a ‘theory-neutral’ term, that talk about sense data does not commit us to any particular theory of perception.”\(^3\) For Price ‘it is meant to be a neutral term. The use of it does not imply the acceptance of any particular theory’.\(^4\) Moore always allowed it possible for sense data to exist unperceived.\(^5\)

The first and most important element in perception is the basic process, activity, state of awareness by which we are acquainted with the objects we perceive. This activity is referred by some as ‘sensation’. There has been two attempts to define this process or state of awareness. The first is that of Ryle who argues that perception is not a process at all, rather it is an ‘achievement’, something which takes no time.\(^6\) The second attempt is that of Armstrong. He argues that the concept perception is a complex concept, definable in terms of such concepts as knowledge, belief and inclination to believe. He defines perception as “perception...is the

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acquiring knowledge of, or inclination to believe in, particular facts about the physical world, by means of the senses, normally accompanied by knowledge of the means. It is often suggested that perception involves not just a sensory element of awareness but also an intellectual element of judging or something of that sort. I can not be said to perceive a table in full sense unless I realize, judge that it is a tree.

Here is a question: What is the nature and status of the things we perceive. The question is asked with the distinction between 'ideas' and the 'external objects' in the mind. And the usual answer is either that we perceive external material objects or that we perceive ideas only. If it is held that we always perceive ideas, it is possible to add that there exist external material objects as well as ideas, even though we never perceive them except in the sense that we perceive ideas caused by them, or to add that there are no external material objects. In this way we get the three traditional theories of perception:

1. The Realist theory of perception that we can and usually do perceive external material objects.
2. Causal theory of perception that we never perceive external objects but only the ideas they produce in our minds and

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3. Idealist theory of perception that we perceive nothing but ideas and there are no external objects at all.

These are not the only possible theories. The causal theory of perception is sub-divided into Representative and non-Representative theories, depending on whether our ideas resemble or represent external material objects or not.

The difference between the three theories can also be brought out by considering what they have to say about physical objects. The causal theorist gives a special interpretation to ‘perceive’: according to it we perceive physical objects only in the sense that we perceive their effects, the ideas that they produce in our minds. The idealist gives a special interpretation to ‘physical objects’: according to him physical objects are not external objects, they do not exist independently of our perception of them, and to perceive a physical object is just to perceive the appropriate sort of ideas.

Thus, these are the main philosophical theories of perception. We are leaving phenomenalism here for the time being, which we propose to
discuss in detail while giving an exposition of the philosophical position of Ayer in chapter III.

Before we proceed to discuss John Locke’s causal theory of perception, we propose to say that Locke is greatly influenced by Descartes (1596-1650) and like him, he is also a dualist. Here let us mention that we will take up only certain issues which are relevant to our study. Like Descartes, in Locke too there is a separation of mind and matter but in order to do so let us first see what are the main features of Cartesian philosophy.

So, let us begin with the analysis and examination of some of the features of ontology and epistemology of Descartes. Descartes is a dualist. His claimed train of thought can be expressed in the following form - doubting-cogito-clear and distinct ideas-God-world and then dualism. But it seems to us that dualism is the first step in his philosophy. In doubting he immediately abstracts consciousness from body (matter), and holds mind and matter two be two basic realities which are independent of one another. To understand his position let us now see what is Cartesian dualism.
Dualism, in common parlance asserts that there are two fundamental realities, namely, mind and matter; which exist separately and neither of these can be reduced to the another. In modern philosophy, dualism. as stated by Descartes is known as Cartesian dualism. Descartes also maintains that mind and matter are two fundamental realities. But being a rationalist he says that it is easier to know the mind than the body or matter. He writes: “The mind by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from the body and even that it is easier to know than the body, and moreover, that even if the body were not, it would not cease to be all that it is.”

He claims dualism to be the last step of his philosophy doubt but we shall attempt to show that dualism constitutes the very first step of his philosophy. In other words, on the basis of our analysis we will bring into light the fact that he already assumes dualism. in order to do so, let us examine Descartes’ original claim which he has stated in his Meditations. Descartes in his Meditations holds that in order to have certain, universal and necessary knowledge like mathematics, we need to follow the same method that is being followed by mathematics. The mathematical method consists of deducing conclusions from self evident premises on the basis

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of deduction. In philosophy, thus Descartes states, we must search for such evident propositions which are indubitable. It is with this end in view that Descartes adopts the method of doubting. By doubting everything he claims we arrive at a proposition which can not be doubted and this proposition, according to him, is that 'I doubt therefore I exist' or 'Cogito Ergo Sum'. The above proposition, according to him, is clear and also distinct.

Descartes begins his methodic doubt with the assumption that there is some certain knowledge about the world which must be self evident. He makes his position clear when he writes: "I had long ago noticed that, in matters relating to conduct, one needs sometimes to follow, just as if they were, absolutely indubitable opinions, one knows to be very unsure.... but as I wanted to concentrate solely on the search for truth, I thought, I ought to do just the opposite, and reject as being absolutely false anything in which I could suppose the slightest reason for doubt, in order to see if there did not remain after that anything in my belief which was entirely indubitab Ie."9

Thus Descartes says that we can systematically arrive at a single certain truth only through deliberate doubt. He rejects the source of

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9 Ibid., p. 53.
sense-testimony in his search for truth because according to him, senses deceive us at times as in the case of illusions, hallucinations etc. He writes: “But I have sometimes found that these senses play false and it is prudent never to trust entirely those who have once deceived us.”

He further writes in Discourse “....and because there are men who make mistakes in reasoning, even with the simplest geometrical matter,.... I rejected as being false all the reasoning I had hitherto accepted as a proof.”

It follows that Descartes rejects the senses and all sorts of mathematical and geometrical reasoning in his search for the certainty. He believes that everything can be doubted. At the same time he expresses that when doubt is pushed to its farthest limit, it reveals something which is not only indubitable but is also clearly perceived; and that is the doubter, who doubts and thus thinks. Descartes writes: “I resolved to pretend that nothing which had entered my mind was anymore true than the illusions of my dreams. But immediately afterwards I became aware that, while I decided thus to think that everything was fake, it followed necessarily that I who thought thus must be something; and observing that this truth; I think therefore I am, was so certain and so evident that all the most extravagant suppositions of the sceptics were not

10 Ibid., p. 96.
11 Ibid., First Meditation, p. 53.
capable of shaking it, I judged that I could accept it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking.”

In this way, on the basis of his methodic doubt, Descartes claims to arrive at the first final certainty, I think, therefore I am, which in his own language is expressed as ‘Cogito Ergo Sum’. This constitutes the first principle, the first true proposition of his philosophy. In Second Meditation he writes: “....after having thought carefully about it, and having scrupulously examined everything, one must then, in conclusion, take as assured that the proposition ‘I am, I exist’ is necessarily true every time I express it or conceive of it in my mind.”

Thus Cogito implies the attribute of thinking consciousness in Descartes philosophy. He, thus, derives his existence from his thinking. He writes: “I am, I exist, this is certain; but for how long? For as long as I think, for it might perhaps happen, if I ceased to think, that I would at the same time cease to be or to exist.”

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12 Ibid., Discourse-4, p. 54.
13 Ibid., Second Meditation, p. 103.
14 Ibid., p. 95.
It follows, according to Descartes, that there is no other function apart the conscious function which can guarantee the existence of the self. This is evident when he says that it would not be correct to say 'I walk therefore I am', because walking without being conscious can not imply self-existence. Descartes, thus, arrives at the indubitable truth of the inseparability of thought and existence. He says: "I am, however, a real thing, and really existing; but what thing?...a thing which thinks."\(^{15}\)

This thinking thing constitutes the mental substance in Descartes. In other words, he already assumes the existence of the mental substance. In this connection he writes: "I thereby, concluded that I was a substance, of which the whole essence or nature consists in thinking."\(^{16}\) This mental substance or the thinking thing or the self is the one which, according to Descartes, thinks, doubts, imagines, senses, desires etc. This is made clear when he says: "What us a thing that thinks? That is to say, a thing that doubts, perceives, affirms, denies, wills, does not will, that imagines also and which feels."\(^{17}\) Beyond this he maintains: "I am not this assemblage of limbs called the human body."\(^{18}\)

\(^{15}\) Ibid., Second Meditation, p. 105.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., Discourse-4, p. 54.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., Second Meditation, p. 107.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., Second Meditation, p. 105.
He, thus, tends to isolate all attributes, which also constitute one's consciousness from their very physical and biological base. 'Cogito' for him is nothing but pure consciousness. But we find that there is nothing as pure consciousness; because the various activities like thinking, willing etc. can not take place in isolation from a corresponding biological organ which is nothing but part of a body. Furthermore though Descartes asserts the existence of mind through the method of doubt, yet, he also argues that there exists a corporal body which is completely independent of mental reality. In other words, for Descartes, mind and body are two independent substances. Here it also becomes clear that Dualism is not the last step in his philosophy as he claims but it constitutes the very first step.

Now reverting back to 'Cogito'; since this constitutes a self evident proposition, Descartes holds that it is also clear and distinct, and therefore true. As a result, he makes a general rule that all things which are clearly and distinctly perceived are true. He writes:

"And having noticed that there is nothing at all in this 'I think therefore I am' which assures me that I am speaking the truth, except that I see very clearly that in order to think one must exist, I judged that I could take it to
be a general rule that the things we conceive very clearly and very distinctly are all true."\(^{19}\)

It follows that on the basis of the certainty of 'Cogito Ergo Sum', Descartes derives the criterion of truth. From the truth of the 'Cogito' he further makes an attempt to examine all such ideas which can be proved to be true. But at the same time, he maintains that no idea can be certain as long as we are confounded with the notion of a deceiving God. Therefore he classifies all ideas into three categories:

1. Those which are innate
2. Those derived from outside and
3. Those which are our own innovations.

Of these ideas Descartes holds that there is only one innate idea of God which is eternal, infinite and perfect. Thus he arrives at the existence of God as a clear and distinct idea in his ontology. We find that by asserting God, Descartes consequently asserts pure consciousness. In other words he gives priority to mind over matter. Besides the idea of God, Descartes holds that we also experience ideas such as colour, taste, smell, as well as the feelings of pleasure, pain etc. He says that we

imagine that these must be caused by bodies outside us but we can not rely on their existence through our senses as our senses deceive us. Neither we can produce by ourselves these ideas. Hence he holds that they must be produced either by God or by the things outside. But if these ideas are produced by God then God must be a deceiver. Hence he concludes that these ideas must be caused by real bodies and corresponding to this clear and distinct perception he holds that there must be an external world of bodies. In this connection he writes: "For perception by senses is very obscured and confused in many ways but at least I must admit that all that I conceive clearly and distinctly ....all that is comprised in the object of speculative geometry, is truly to be found in corporal things....I may conclude with assurance that I have within me the means of knowing these things with certainly."\textsuperscript{20}

Thus he attempts to establish the existence of corporal things or the material substance on the basis of clear and distinct idea. According to him the essential attribute of a corporal substance consists in its being extended which is perceived clearly and distinctly. He writes: "I recognize in myself certain other faculties such as changing place, adopting certain posture...But it is very evident that these faculties, if it be

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., Sixth Meditation, p. 158.
true, that they exist, must be attached to some corporal or extended substance and not to an unintelligent substance, since in their clear and distinct concepts there is indeed contained some sort of extension."21

We find that the way consciousness forms an essential property of the mind, extension constitutes the essential property of the body in Descartes' ontological framework. From this account it is clear that this position is dualistic. Mind and matter, thus, constitute the two relative substances in the ontology of Descartes which are independent of one another. According to him, consciousness can exist without the body and he, thus, assumes 'I' as independent of body. Thus, when he tries to prove material things on the basis of clearness and distinctness, he already assumes dualism.

Descartes says that what we clearly and distinctly perceive in a body is its extension, so extension constitutes the attribute of the body. But a question arises at this point i.e. we also perceive the qualities of colour, taste etc. along with the extension of the body. So how does Descartes explain these qualities?

21 Ibid., Sixth Meditation, p. 157.
In his attempt to accommodate above mentioned qualities, Descartes makes a classification of the qualities. According to him, basic qualities are the attributes of the body as we perceive them clearly and distinctly. These are the qualities of extension, figure, motion, number, rest and duration. Of these, he holds, only extension constitutes the main attribute of the body as it can exist on its own, whereas figure, motion etc. are all modes of extension, so they are dependent on it.

The neutral qualities, on the other hand, according to him, are the confused ideas, present in the perceiver's mind. He says we do not perceive them clearly and distinctly. Consequently, they do not form the attribute of the body. According to Descartes, the qualities of colour, taste etc. belong to this category. He maintains that the confused ideas give rise to error when we give our assent or dissent to them; whereas there is no room for error in the case of clear and distinct ideas. In fact it is actually Galileo who set forth the distinction between objective and subjective qualities of matter. What he means by objective qualities are more or less same which Descartes regards as basic qualities of matter. Galileo regards the other kind of qualities as subjective. To quote him: 

"Tastes, odors and colours, and so on are no more than mere names so far as the object in which we place them is concerned, and they reside in
consciousness. Hence if the living creatures are removed, all these qualities would be wiped away and annihilated.”

Descartes also cognizes these qualities as mere sensations in the mind, yet, he cognizes them to be produced by various dispositions in objects. As we will find, it is the same scientific trend which Locke has accepted in terms of primary and secondary qualities.

Thus we find that in his ontology, Descartes advocates dualism of mind and body. Descartes attempts to resolve the problem of mind-body interaction through the introduction of the ‘pineal gland’. The soul, he suggests, has its principal seat in this small gland, it is transmitted through the nerves to that gland and the soul being very close to it, gets affected by this movement, various movements giving rise to mediatious thoughts. But the pineal gland which is supposed to mediate between body and mind is itself a part of the body. Hence the original problem, i.e., how the body movements ultimately gets transferred into mental thoughts remains unsolved.

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Descartes dualism also poses the problem of knowledge of the external material world. As for him, the mind is completely distinct from the body, it can have thoughts only. He further says “Of my thoughts, some are, so to speak, images of the things and to these alone is the title ‘idea’ properly applied.”23

Now, the ideas are in one’s mind. How can one know that they are conformable to the things which are outside him? Descartes seeks solution in terms of innate ideas. Some of our ideas, he claims, are there in the very nature of the mind and do not come from without. He calls these ideas ‘innate’; since these are inscribed on the understanding, he argues that the mind perceives them clearly and distinctly. It implies that they are true; and hence there must be things corresponding to these ideas. As we shall find, Locke vehemently opposes all sorts of innate knowledge. In his view, all our ideas are derived through sense experience.

When it comes to sense perceptions, Descartes holds that we can never attain certainly through it, because in case of sense perception, the mind gets conjoined with the body. In his view “....it is mind alone, and not

mind and body in conjunction, that is requisite to a knowledge of the truth.²⁴

According to Descartes, at the time of sense perception, the mind becomes conditioned by bodily phenomena and as a result, it can not perceive clearly and distinctly and gets confused thoughts alone. Confused thoughts, he clarifies, are those thoughts "which the mind does not derive from itself alone but experiences as a result of something happening to the body with which it is closely conjoined."²⁵

Even though Descartes claims that we can have certain knowledge only through the intellect, we find that in the Regulae, he acknowledges sense perception and imagination as two other "instruments of knowledge we possess in addition to the intellect". He also adds "truth and falsity often originate from the other two modes of knowledge."²⁶

In his 'Mediations on First Philosophy', we find him accepting three kinds of 'ideas' based on the above mentioned three different sources viz. 'innate', 'adventitious' and 'fictitious'. While he considers 'innate ideas'

²⁴ Ibid., p. 163.
²⁶ Ibid., p. 30.
as implanted in our understanding and fictitious ideas as creations of our imaginations, he views the 'adventitious ideas' as productions of sensations. He distinguishes sense perception from reason on the ground that the former is liable to illusions, and hence needs to be judged by reason before being accepted as truth. His only point of warning is that we should not accept reports of sense perception "Without having (carefully and maturely) mentally examine them before hand." 27

A similar observation is found in Michael Ayer's interpretation of Cartesian position with regard to sensation and reason "the senses uncorrected by reason are intrinsically liable to illusions, and reason is the providential faculty by which truth may be securely distinguished from falsehood and which stands in judgment over the senses." 28

Hence, we may take it as implied by Descartes (though it is not apparent) that sense perception, when checked by reason, may provide us with knowledge. With Locke also, we shall find that in spite of his claim for empiricism, he holds that sense experience furnishes us with probability


alone and that certainly can be attained only through the intellectual operations.

According to Descartes, mathematical sciences are the model of knowledge. In his words "Of all the sciences so far discovered, arithmetic and geometry alone are free from any taint of falsity and uncertainty."\textsuperscript{29}

He provides two reasons for that. First, the objects of mathematical sciences are "So pure and simple that they make no assumptions that experience might render uncertain."\textsuperscript{30} Secondly, they deduce their conclusions by rational arguments. Like Descartes, we observe that Locke also reposes faith in the certainly of the mathematical sciences for the same reason, viz. that their concern is only with the logical relations between ideas which can be ascertained by pure thought and not by experience.

In fact there are three basic assumptions in Cartesian dualism which can be stated in the words of Suman Gupta as stated below.


\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 2.
1. That mind and matter are basic realities which can exist completely independent of one another.
2. That being separate they can not have even causal connections.
3. Though mind and matter are two independent substances, yet, mind is logically prior to matter.”

Descartes propounded his dualism when feudalism was collapsing and capitalist economy was replacing it. Capitalist economy needed the development of science and technology. Therefore a new philosophical outlook was needed in which a better place may be assigned to matter in ontology.

As Locke is influenced by Descartes (this point we have discussed in the second chapter), so is Ayer by Berkeley and Hume. We will try to trace the development of Ayer’s phenomenalism through the philosophical systems of Berkeley and Hume, which, in turn, is the further continuation of Lockean philosophy. Here we may again mention that we will take up only those issues which are relevant to our study. So, let’s give a short exposition of the salient features of the philosophies of Berkeley and Hume.

Proceeding from the same Lockean premises, viz., that what we directly know are our own ideas, Berkeley (1685-1753) concludes that things exist in as far as they can be perceived. His basic principle is 'to be is to be perceived' (esse est percipi). He stressed that a thing can not exist unperceived. According to Berkeley, the ideas are passive and are perceived by an incorporeal substance. The soul, which is active, produces ideas. He holds that ideas exist potentially in the mind of God but actually exist in the human mind. Berkeley opines "We perceive a continual succession of ideas; some are anew excited, others are changed or totally disappear. There is therefore some cause of these ideas, whereupon they depend, and which produces and changes them. That this cause can not be any quality, or ideas, or combination of ideas is clear .... It must, therefore, be a substance, but it has been shown that there is no corporeal or material substance: it remains therefore that the cause of ideas is an incorporeal active substance or spirit." He further says "Sensible things do really exist; and if they really exist, they are necessarily perceived by an Infinite mind: therefore, there is an Infinite mind, or God. This furnishes you with

a direct and immediate demonstration from a most evident principle of the being of a God."\textsuperscript{33}

It shows that for Berkeley, even if the things are not perceived by the Finite minds, they must, nevertheless, exist because some other spirit (God) perceives them. Regarding the existence of God, he says that we can have a direct notion of Finite minds and God. But he never provides any definition of the term ‘direct notion’.

Matter, for Berkeley, is ridden with internal contradictions and is useless in the quest for knowledge. He denies the objective existence of Locke’s primary qualities and holds that they are as subjective as secondary qualities. According to him, both are mind dependent. That is to say that they are effects produced by the spiritual substance. Hence, for Berkeley, there is no material substance underlying these qualities. In this context Suman Gupta writes “Accepting Locke’s premises that knowledge can be derived only through sensations in abstraction, Berkeley concluded that only sensations can be known. And since as an empiricist, he maintained that what can not be known, can not exist, consequently, only ideas in

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 198.
Finite and Infinite mind exist. That is, for Berkeley, objects exist because they are perceived."34

Matter, argues Berkeley, does not exist because it can neither be perceived nor apprehended by the mind. He holds the view that the idea of substance has no defining characters. It is, therefore, not an idea at all. He holds that whenever we wish to conceive of any object, we find that we can do so in terms of its qualities which are mind dependent. He says "The table I write on, I say exists, that is I see it and feel it; and if I were out of my study, I should say it existed, meaning thereby that if I was in my study, I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it. There was an odor, that is, it was smelt; there was a sound, that is, it was heard; a colour or figure, and it was perceived by sight or touch. This is all that I can understand by these and the like expressions."35

It follows that for Berkeley, nothing but spirits, finite and infinite and ideas in them can exist. He believes that entire material world is nothing but a representation of mind. He attempts to confuse the issue regarding the independent existence of material objects. He says "I do not argue against the existence of one thing that we can apprehend either by

34 Gupta, Suman., 'The Relation of Political, Ethical, Epistemological and Materialistic Doctrines in the Philosophy of Locke, Berkeley and Hume', A paper presented in an All India Seminar organised by the Department of Philosophy, Andhra University (Waltair), April 1981, p. 17.

sense or by reflection. That the things I see with my eyes and touch with my hands do exist, really exist, I make not the least question. The only thing whose existence we deny is that which philosophers call Matter or corporeal substance. And in doing of these, there is no damage done to the rest of the mankind, who, I dare say, will want the colour of an empty none to support his impiety.”

Berkeley asserts that belief in the reality of substance is an unwarranted act of blind faith and says “If so, it shall seem good, use the word “matter” in the same sense as other men use “nothing”. Berkeley’s use of the word ‘idea’ is a misnomer because for him, a thing can net be real, it is only an idea in the mind.

It follows that for Berkeley objects are simply ‘collections of ideas’. In his famous dialogue between Hylas and Philonus, Berkeley illustrates “I am content, Hylas, to appeal to the common sense of the word for the truth of my notion. Ask the gardener, why he thinks yonder cherry-tree exists in the garden, and he shall tell you, because he sees and feels it; in a word, because he perceives it by his senses. Ask him, why he thinks an orange-tree not to be there, and he shall tell you, because he does not perceive it. What he perceives by senses, that he terms a real being, and saith it is, or

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36 Ibid., p. 81.
37 Ibid., p. 104.
exists; but that which is not perceivable, the same, he saith, hath no being. \textsuperscript{38}

Thus, for Berkeley, ideas imprinted on the senses are real things and they really exist in so far as the mind (finite and infinite) perceives them. This position of Berkeley falls under solipsism, because it leads to the conclusion that nothing exists except mind (self) and ideas in the mind. As it is pointed out by Suman Gupta "Berkeley's philosophy is idealism because the ultimate reality is of the nature of mind and it is subjective because ideas, for their existence are dependent upon the perceiving subject. This philosophy is subjective-idealism." \textsuperscript{39}

Since matter does not exist, according to Berkeley, our sensations are, therefore, not caused by the action of material objects upon us. He maintains that the real origin of sensation must be God. Thus God is a nucleus of Berkeley's philosophy. In this way Berkeley reaches subjective-idealist conclusions. We may note here that the distinction between subjective and objective idealism consists in the fact that in the case of objective idealism, the object of knowledge, which is mental, is

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., pp. 224-225.

\textsuperscript{39} Gupta, Suman., 'The Relation of Political, Ethical, Epistemological and Materialistic Doctrines in the Philosophy of Locke, Berkeley and Hume', A paper presented in an \textit{All India Seminar} organised by the Department of Philosophy, Andhra University (Waltair), April 1981, p. 17.
independent of a knowing subject; whereas in the case of subjective idealism, the object of knowledge is dependent upon the mind for their existence. For Berkeley, ideas depend upon the mind for their existence but minds, finite and infinite, do not depend upon ideas for their existence.

After giving an exposition of the main features of Berkeley's philosophy, let us give an account of Hume who continues the Berkelean tradition started by Locke. Hume, (1711-1776) accepting Berkeley's idealistic empiricism states that an adequate philosophy must be built upon sense 'impressions'. For Hume, the denial of material substance and only the existence of sense-impressions constitutes the basis of the empirical knowledge. Thus Hume denies both material and mental substance. He argues that all that exist are 'impressions' and 'ideas'. To quote Suman Gupta: “Hume drew the logical conclusions from Locke's premises. He argued that if we can directly know nothing but the objects of our sense-experience (ideas or impressions) then there is no logical justification for asserting the existence of anything but these impressions. Ontologically speaking, these impressions, for Hume, are transitory, mental, discrete, unconnected subjective elements out of which the whole mental and material world is constituted. Hume denied the existence of both mental and material substances. Scientific inquiry, for him, consists of discerning,
through induction, the regularity of impressions on which it makes probable predictions."\textsuperscript{40} This is the reason why Hume's philosophy is regarded as an 'idealistic pluralistic world view and in his ontology, he was an idealistic-empiricist'.\textsuperscript{41}

We have already shown that both Locke and Berkeley believe in the principle that all our ideas are derived ultimately from sense-experience. Berkeley accepts ideas as a source of knowledge and rejects Locke's view of material substance. Hume claims that empiricism is inconsistent with the existence of material and spiritual substances and tries to develop Berkeley's idealistic empiricist principles with greater consistency.

Hume begins his \textit{A Treatise of Human Nature} by stating "All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call impressions and ideas"\textsuperscript{42} The ideas, he states, are copies or faint images of impressions. Impressions, which are vivid and clear, include colour, sound, smell, taste, touch etc. Hume divides 'impressions' and 'ideas' into simple and complex ones. According to him, "Simple perceptions, or impressions and ideas are such as admit of no distinction

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 29.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 23.
\textsuperscript{42} Hume, David., \textit{A Treatise of Human Nature}, ed. by D.G.C. Macnabb, Glasgow, 1975, Book I, p. 45.
nor separation. The complex are the contrary to these, and may be distinguished into parts. Though a particular colour, taste and smell are qualities all united together in the apple, it is easy to perceive they are not the same, but are at least distinguishable form each other.\footnote{Ibid., p. 46.} In this way Hume holds the view that simple impressions and ideas can not have any distinction and separation, whereas complex impressions and ideas can be distinguished from one another. Hume draws the conclusion: “We may observe, that it is universally allowed by philosophers, and is besides pretty obvious of itself, that nothing is ever really present with the mind but it’s perceptions or impressions and ideas, and that external objects become known to us only by these perceptions they occasion.”\footnote{Ibid., pp. 113-14.} and asserts “Now since nothing is ever present to the mind but perceptions, and since all ideas are derived from something antecedently present to the mind; it follows, that it is impossible for us so much as to conceive or form an idea of anything specifically different from ideas and impressions. Let us fix... our imagination to the heavens or to the utmost limits of the universe, we never really advance a step beyond ourselves, nor can conceive any kind of existence, but those perceptions, which have appeared in that narrow compass.”\footnote{Ibid., pp. 113-14.}
Regarding the existence of substance, Hume asks- Does such substance come from the senses? He answers that our senses supply us only with specific qualities, not with a unique substratum. So the idea of substance can not be derived from impressions of sensations or reflection. Like Berkeley, Hume states that if it is perceived by the eyes, it is a colour, if by the ears, a sound, if by the palate, a taste etc., but nobody says that substance is a colour or a sound or a taste. He asserts that if at all there is an idea of substance, it must be derived from impressions or reflections. But these impressions or reflections, maintains Hume, can be resolved into our 'passions and emotions'. In this way Hume argues that the idea of substance is not derived from impression or reflections. Therefore, says Hume, we can not have a perfect idea about anything except a perception; a substance is entirely different from perception. He states: “The idea of substance ... is nothing but a collection of simple ideas, that are united by the imagination, and have a particular name assigned to them, by which we are able to recall, either to ourselves or others, that collection.”

This shows, according to Hume, substance is derived from a group of simple ideas with the help of imagination. Hume uses Berkeley’s

46 Ibid., pp. 59-60.
criticism of Locke's notion of unknown and unknowable substance to draw his conclusions. He also rejects Berkeley's conception of spiritual substance as well. Hume's position may be termed as phenomenalism. It is this position where the complex impressions and ideas are reduced to simple 'impressions and ideas' (Hume's perceptions) through the laws of association.

Hume classifies knowledge into two kinds- 'relation of ideas' and 'matters of fact'. For him "there is no interaction between the rational and the empirical aspects of knowledge." Hume holds that relations of ideas "are the sciences of Geometry, Algebra and Arithmetic, and in that, every affirmation which is intuitively or demonstratively certain. That the square of hypothennese is equal to the square of the two sides, is a proposition which expresses a relation between these figures. That three times five is equal to the half of thirty, expresses a relation between these numbers. Propositions of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on what is anywhere existent in the universe. Though

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there never were a triangle in nature, the truths demonstrated by Euclid would forever retain their certainty and evidence.\textsuperscript{48}

According to him, this class comprises statements of mathematics and logic which are independent of experience and self evidently true. In other words, we can say they are a priori in nature, for example, 'three multiplied by five is equal to fifteen' expresses a relation between numbers. Hence, for Hume, they do not require any confirmation from experience and are worked out according to the laws of logical implication. They are universal and necessary.

Regarding matters of fact Hume asserts: "Matters of facts, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner, nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature forgoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible; because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality."\textsuperscript{49}


\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 504.
He holds that the knowledge of the matters of fact is empirical and is derived from sense-experience. And consequently, it is probable. All knowledge regarding natural sciences fall under this category. As it has been pointed by Suman Gupta: “Like Locke and Berkeley, Hume also adopted a metaphysical approach in his ontology and epistemology and distorted the objective reality. In Hume’s epistemology the subject of knowledge, being ‘nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions’, is absolutely passive. In his system, thus, there is no room for changing nature or society through man’s conscious, collective activity. That is there is no place for practical activity in Hume’s doctrine.”

In this way, the train of empirical thought which starts from Locke, through Berkeley to Hume, reduces the contents of the objects of our knowledge into impressions. As Maurice Cornforth points out- Locke identified three entities of being the object of knowledge, namely, ideas, the self or mind to which these ideas belong and the material substance which they represented. Berkeley reduces these entities into two, namely, ideas and the finite spiritual substance or self (mind) to which they belong. Finally Hume reduces these two entities into only one, namely, impressions

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and ideas which represent nothing (neither material substance nor spiritual substance).\textsuperscript{51}

These issues relating to philosophies of Locke, Berkeley and Hume have direct relevance to A.J.Ayer’s phenomenalism which we will discuss in the third chapter.