ARTICLE

THE RAMIST CONTEXT OF BERKELEY'S PHILOSOPHY

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Few commentators have ever tried to explain why Berkeley would have found the views of his contemporaries so utterly wrong-headed. No doubt, there are internal problems with attempts to reconcile the claim that substances exist independently of our perceptions with the claim that our ideas represent those substances. But instead of trying to solve those problems using assumptions that generate the problems in the first place, Berkeley adopts an alternative ontology that emphasizes the semantic or semiotic character of reality.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Berkeley's doctrine of the *notions* of mind, actions, and relations. Often treated almost as an afterthought, this doctrine challenges Cartesian and Lockean principles by pointing out how mind in particular cannot be understood as if it were some object of thought, because objects of thought are ideas, not the minds that have those ideas. Furthermore, ideas cannot be said to represent or be like independently existing substances other than ideas because any such substance would still be an object of thought. For Berkeley, minds and ideas are so different from the substantialist and representationist ways they are portrayed by Descartes and Locke that to describe his philosophy in their terms would be to risk imposing on him the very mentality that his doctrines are intended to reject.

Even though Berkeley discusses the objects of mind (i.e. ideas) first, he assumes that we can do so only by virtue of their having been identified or cognized by mind. This means that, in order to appreciate his alternate 'way of ideas', we have to consider mind as the means by which we understand ideas. In contrast to Cartesian or Lockean accounts, we do not begin by assuming that we have ideas of things, one of which just happens to be mind. Rather, we have to treat mind as that in terms of which a thing is identified in relation to other things. Accordingly, to say that something has an identity or is intelligible simply means that we have a notion of it, and the having of that notion is what it means to be a mind.

Talking about mind this way will sound strange to someone immersed in the substantialist mindset of Cartesian and Lockean metaphysics. But it allows us to ask questions that are almost universally ignored in Berkeley

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scholarship, such as how finite minds are originally differentiated. It also invites us to search elsewhere for a mentality with which Berkeley and others (e.g. Jonathan Edwards) would have been familiar and in terms of which perplexing elements in their thought are clarified and integrated. That mentality, I suggest, is embodied in the principles of Stoicism as adapted by the sixteenth century logician Peter Ramus (1515–72) and his sevententh century followers.

Part of the reason why few have previously investigated the Stoic–Ramist character of Berkeley's thought lies, no doubt, in the assumption that there is nothing to investigate. After all, Berkeley is typically portrayed as someone who adopts the basic ideas of Malebranche or Locke, develops some of the more paradoxical aspects of their thought, and comes up with doctrines that try to avoid the skeptical problems implicit in representational realism. The possibility that Berkeley could have drawn on a tradition distinctly at odds with Cartesian, Malebranchean, or Lockean ideas is never considered because there seems to be little evidence to support an alternate tradition.

However, by not having a clear idea of what that tradition would have meant for Berkeley, we are hardly in a position to say that he does not presuppose its logical and ontological tenets. Since Berkeley adopts the same vocabulary and addresses the same kinds of problems fashioned by Descartes and Locke, it is easy to conclude that he shares their metaphysical commitments. But in their terms, his conclusions are more than a little strange. Indeed, as some of his early readers conclude, they are so farfetched and inconsistent with the dominant philosophical paradigm that they border on madness.

My discussion of Stoic–Ramist thought is intended to provide a different context for interpreting Berkeley's ideas, one that does not claim explicitly that Berkeley is a Ramist but that he thinks in Ramist ways.[1] I want to suggest that Ramist principles set a tone for how Berkeley thinks, and that by not knowing the rationale of Ramist thought, we misunderstand or overlook interesting features of Berkeley's philosophy. Because previous scholarly work on Berkeley has almost universally ignored Ramism, it is important to note how his doctrines about mind, the language of nature, substance, *minima sensibilia*, notions, abstract ideas, inference, and freedom appropriate Ramist ideas. But the only way to do this is to identify the pertinent aspects of Ramist thought.

DIALECTIC DISCOVERY

In general, Ramism draws on principles of Stoic thought (especially logic), the most notable of which is that propositions are the aboriginal elements

[1] Cf. Fred Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics and Ramist Logic', in *Logic and the Workings of the Mind*, ed. Patricia A. Easton (Atascadero, CA., Ridgeview, 1997), 115–28.

of thought and existence.[2] For Ramists, this means that epistemological and metaphysical issues are to be understood first and foremost in terms of a logic of sign relations (i.e. a semiotics). In such a logic, propositions identify substances and their relations not as things that underlie discourse but as functions of discourse. Apart from the semantic ontology that initially differentiates minds, ideas, and things, substances and attributes, along with logical subjects and predicates, are unintelligible.[3]

By depicting nature as a language, thinkers who draw on the doctrines of Stoic logic (e.g. Rudolph Agricola, Juan Luis Vives, Lorenzo Valla) do not suggest that reality is merely *like* a book or communication but *is* the speech or discourse that makes all things intelligible and related to one another.[4] Instead of adopting the Aristotelian assumption that there are things that are really distinct from how we think or speak about them, they treat questions of being and truth as issues of logic and semantics. For them, the signification or meaning of a word does not consist in its reference to or representation of an object or concept, nor does the truth of a proposition consist in its correspondence to a state of affairs. Rather, discursive practices ground ontological difference. Instead of allowing the metaphysical distinction of things, ideas, and words to survive unaffected in their accounts of logic or semantics, thinkers in this tradition model the distinction (like everything else) on legal and rhetorical practices.

This emphasis on the legal and rhetorical character of reality and thought is at the heart of Stoic–Ramist philosophy.[5] In its terms there is no independent fact of the matter or reality *out there* to which our concepts or words refer, for even the distinction between out there and in here is a discursive distinction. Things (*res*) are substances or are substantive only if (in judicial terms) they have 'standing' as material to the case at hand. In rhetorical terms, they are meaningful only if their particular grammatical

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[2] See Benson Mates, *Stoic Logic* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1961), 2; Andreas Graeser, 'The Stoic Theory of Meaning', in *The Stoics*, ed. John M. Rist (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978), 89; Claude Imbert, *Phénoménologie et langues formulaires* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1992), 68–9, 205. Cf. Walter J. Ong, S. J., *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958), 186.

[3] For how this way of thinking appears in the philosophy of Berkeley's contemporaries Jonathan Edwards and Giambattista Vico, see Stephen H. Daniel, *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards: A Study in Divine Semiotics* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1994), 91–7, 144–5; idem, 'Vico's Historicism and the Ontology of Arguments', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 33 (1995): 431–46. I suspect that it might characterize Leibniz's thought as well.

[4] Cf. Ong, *Ramus*, 93; Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics', 122, 127; Richard Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987), 11–13, 101–13; Craig Walton, 'Ramus and Bacon on Method', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 9 (1971): 289; Frederick S. Michael, 'Why Logic Became Epistemology: Gassendi, Port Royal and the Reformation in Logic', in Easton, ed., *Logic and the Mind*, 4.

[5] Cf. Peter Goodrich, '*Ars Bablativa*: Ramism, Rhetoric, and the Genealogy of English Jurisprudence', in *Legal Hermeneutics: History, Theory and Practice*, ed. Gregory Leyh (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992), 58–9, 67–70; Ong, *Ramus*, 66.

case (e.g. nominative, accusative) is specified in an expression. The point of 'arguing the case' is thus not to disclose some Truth (with a capital T) about what exists apart from the proceedings. Rather, it is to identify what will count as a thing in the first place.

In terms of other modern philosophies, this emphasis on discourse is often disparagingly dismissed as a substitution of rhetoric for logic, epistemology, or metaphysics. Its aim, though, is to show how the ultimate conditions for intelligibility and ontological differentiation depend not on *our* language but rather on the language or *logos* of God. That is why, according to Ramus, the divine discourse constitutes a 'natural dialectic' or logic by which God communicates 'the order found in things themselves'.[6] Because our experience of things identifies that order, we inscribe God's logic and have an innate ability to reason with certainty about the world.[7] In fact, as Pierre Gassendi and others later point out, reasoning about the world is possible only because reason itself is defined through experience in the arrangement of ideas as signs in a mental language (*sermo mentalis*).[8] In so far as we are the agents of such acts of relation, we are not subjects or substantial minds to whom God communicates but are rather the communication of connections by which subjects are inscribed as intelligible and significant.

This legal and rhetorical way of thinking of subjects contradicts the Aristotelian view by denying that things are prior to the relations in terms of which they are significant. Since the act of identifying a thing in terms of its relations is itself simply the designation of intelligibility, minds, actions, and relations must be understood as functions of differentiation rather than things. By referring to minds, actions, and relations as notions, Berkeley makes that very point, arguing that they are not things or ideas at all but are rather the means by which things are identified.[9] Indeed, for Berkeley,

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[6] Peter Ramus, *Dialecticae institutiones* [1543] (Rpt. Stuttgart, Friedrich Frommann, 1964), fol. 57; subsequent citations [*DI*] refer to folio number. Cf. Ong, *Ramus*, 177–9, 194–5.

[7] See Pierre de la Ramée, *Dialectique* [1555], ed. Michel Dassonville (Geneva, Librarie Droz, 1964), 100, 153. Cf. Ong, *Ramus*, 105; Paolo Rossi, *Francis Bacon: From Magic to Science*, trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1968), 148; Craig Walton, 'Ramus and Socrates', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 114 (1970): 122; idem, 'Ramus and the Art of Judgment', *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 3 (1970): 159.; idem, 'Ramus and Bacon', 301.

[8] Cf. Rossi, *Bacon*, 145, 159; E. Jennifer Ashworth, 'Petrus Fonseca on Objective Concepts and the Analogy of Being', in Easton, ed., *Logic and the Mind*, 50–1; Gabriel Nuchelmans, *Judgment and Proposition: From Descartes to Kant* (Amsterdam, North Holland, 1983), 123; Michael, 'Why Logic', 10–11.

[9] See George Berkeley, *Alciphron* VII.18, in *The Works of George Berkeley*, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop (9 vols.; London, Thomas Nelson, 1948–57) [henceforth *Alc*]. Other works in this edition include: *A Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge [Pr]*, Introduction to the *Principles [PrI]*, *Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous [DHP]*, and *Siris*. Citations of Berkeley's *Philosophical Commentaries [PC]*, *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision [NTV]*, and *Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained [TVV]* refer to his *Philosophical Works*, ed. M. R. Ayers (Rutland, VT, Charles E. Tuttle, 1992).

mind unifies the manifold of discrete things because it is the activity that identifies individuals in the first place in virtue of their semiotic, pragmatic, and affective relations.[10] In this way he portrays mind as central to philosophy not because reality is a predicate of a mental substance – as is typical in versions of idealism – but because mentality is the rationale or *logos* of the universe. Instead of thinking of that *Logos* or Word as a determinate identifiable substance, he (like the Ramists) portrays it as the discourse in which differentiation is identified. In short, mind is essentially linguistic and rhetorical.

Of course, the doctrine that the *Logos* of the universe is Mind is hardly at odds with Platonic, Aristotelian, or Neoplatonic notions. What is distinctive about the Ramist interpretation is its focus on the semantic ontology it implies. For Ramus, the divine *Logos* is the matrix of differential expressions in terms of which all things are intelligible. As he puts it, it is that in terms of which 'the natures of all things are connected' and in which – citing a verse from St. Paul that is Berkeley's favorite scriptural passage (Acts 17:28) – 'we live, move, and have our being' (*Dialectique* 62, 100).[11] Things have meaning in virtue of their functions or places (*topoi*) in this discourse because the discourse constitutes the rationale or *logic* of all thought and existence. Because the arrangement or ordering of thought in a disputation identifies things as functions in the discourse, to reason about those things is to think of them in the context of a disputation or dialogic exchange. For Ramus, this means that *dialectic* is logic:

> Dialectic is the art of reasoning [disputing] well, and thus is also called logic, for the two words derive from *logos*, that is, reason, and *dialogestha* like *logizestha* means precisely to argue or reason. . . . In general, we will say that dialectic is the art of disputing or reasoning about anything.
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> (*Dialectique* 61)[12]

Apart from disputational discourse, there is no intelligibility. To dispute (*disputer*) and to reason (*raisonner*) mean the same thing because it is only through arguing for something's having a place in discursive exchange that the thing has a meaning. When a thing is cognized in dialectical discourse, it becomes an object for reason.

According to the influential seventeenth century Ramist Alexander Richardson (1565–1621), this means that the meaning or *logismos* of each thing is defined by its function in a structure of relations that constitutes logic. 'There must be reason in every thing', he says, 'because I am to see

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[10] Cf. Jean-Michel Vienne, 'La substance, de Descartes à Berkeley', in *Berkeley et le cartésianisme*, ed. Geneviève Brykman (Nanterre, Université Paris X, 1997), 161–3.

[11] Cf. Walton, 'Ramus and Socrates', 125; idem, 'Ramus and Judgment', 153.

[12] The 1576 edition of the *Dialectique* substitutes *raisonner* for *disputer*. See Rossi, *Francis Bacon*, 145, 178; Ong, *Ramus*, 160; Gabriel Nuchelmans, *Late-Scholastic and Humanist Theories of the Proposition* (Amsterdam, North Holland, 1980), 182.

every thing by my logic, which is the rule of reason; so all things must be liable to it; therefore it must apprehend the *logismos* in every thing.'[13] The rationality of each thing is what gives it identity and intelligibility. However, since a thing is intelligible only as a function of reason, it cannot be conceived apart from that function (or 'argument' as Ramus calls it). Its particular existence *as that thing* consists in the expression or argument it inscribes.

To put this in Berkeleyan terms: the smallest or most fundamental components of being or thought, the *minima sensibilia*, are not atoms abstracted from experience but rather the simplest things we experience (*PC* #88, 314, 321, 343–7; *NTV* § 54, 81–6; *Principles*, § 132). Since we never experience things in isolation from other things, we cannot think of them as intelligible apart from how they actually make sense (and are sensible) to us. The simplest idea must always already be understood in terms that literally make sense. And the only things that make sense are those that are intelligible in some articulated system of sensible signs (i.e. a language).

That is why the first part of Ramist dialectics, discovery or invention (*inventio*), does not discern or identify a *thing* but rather the *argument*, 'simple reason', or logical function of the thing in a discourse. As with the judicial pre-trial procedure called 'discovery', dialectic begins by determining the significance or meaning of a thing as it informs the case. To be able to think of a thing as intelligible, Richardson says, we must think of it as the argument or *logismos* that it expresses, the thing 'in so far as there is *logismos* in it'. That is, 'Invention takes not the thing immediately, but by *argumentum*. . . . for the thing doth not belong to logic' (*LSM* 50). Invention (i.e. discovery) does not *find* a thing; rather, it discloses the argument or '*logismos* in the thing' by which the thing is identified as a thing. As such:

> logic is never severed from the thing, nor the thing from logic, for we cannot see the thing but by reason; therefore because these are inseparably together, for that reason the subject of invention is *argumentum*. . . . we cannot sever the logical notion from the thing, because it is never *in re*.[14]
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> (*LSM* 52)

No thing is intelligible simply *in re*. There are no assumed ontological, epistemological, or logical distinctions between substances and predicates or predicables, for anything (even substances) can be predicated of other things, as in the claim that human beings are animals (*LSM* 54–6, 138). That

[13] Alexander Richardson, *The Logician's School-master* (London, J. Bellamie, 1629), 9; henceforth *LSM*. Cf. John C. Adams, 'Alexander Richardson's Puritan Theory of Discourse', *Rhetorica*, 4 (1986): 264–5; idem, 'Alexander Richardson's Philosophy of Art and the Sources of Puritan Social Ethics', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 50 (1989): 236–7.

[14] Cf. Adams, 'Richardson's Puritan Theory', 264–5; Wilbur S. Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1971), 19.

is what it means to say that the meaning or *notion* of each thing consists in its logical or proper function in a discourse. Its *logismos* identifies it by indicating the appropriate strategies for invoking the thing in argumentative exchange.

The Ramists William Ames (1576–1633) and John Milton (1608–74) explain this by noting that an *argumentum* is neither a word nor a thing but rather the 'affection' (or affect) of a thing that defines its *ratio*.[15] The *ratio* of each thing, Milton argues, constitutes an argument because a thing is intelligible in so far as it points to or signifies other things. The identity of a thing therefore consists in its intentionality, and its intentionality is its 'aptitude' for, supposition of, or disposition toward other things.

On this point Richardson is even more explicit. He notes that invention identifies a thing as a natural *artifice*, a 'concrescence' of intrinsic affections that define a thing in terms of its intentional relations. Its logico-rhetorical placement in relation to the things it 'argues and declares' is what *founds* the nature of the thing, making it a proper object for *inventio*. Through invention dialectic specifies the particular ways in which arguments become concrete (i.e. realized) objects. In Richardson's words:

> An *argumentum* in logic is a concrete, as the Schools call it, signifying the thing along with the affection that is in it to argue another thing . . . so that invention intends immediately the affection and mediately the thing. . . . This affection is in the thing, and it is *ex se*, drawn out of the thing as it were: so that this hook whereby it lays hold of another thing, is natural to it.
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> (*LSM* 66–7)

Invention focuses principally on a thing's natural affections and derivatively on the thing itself because the thing *is* what it is only in terms of its difference (or 'dissent') from other things. Were it not for the discursive differentiation of things by means of the relations by which they are identified in argumentation, 'all things should be one' (*LSM* 69–70; cf. Ramus, *Dialectique* 64). The 'consent' of a thing to being – what Edwards calls the 'consent of being to being, being's consent to entity' – is existence itself, which is the same for all things.[16] But things are differentiated as products (*prattomena*) in practical activity (*praxis*) and are individually intelligible

[15] See John Milton, *A Fuller Course in the Art of Logic Conformed to the Method of Peter Ramus* [1672], ed. and trans. Walter J. Ong, S. J. and Charles J. Ermatinger, in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 8 (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1982), 220; William Ames, *Demonstratio Logicae Verae*, in *Philosophemata* (Cambridge, Roger Daniel, 1646), 4. Cf. Nuchelmans, *Late-Scholastic Theories*, 184; Ong, *Ramus*, 64; Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947), 344–5.

[16] See Jonathan Edwards, 'The Mind', in *Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, ed. Wallace E. Anderson (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1980), 336, 381. Cf. Daniel, *Edwards*, 101, 180–7.

as arguments embedded in an *affective semantics* of intrinsic relations (*LSM* 21–3).[17]

The ontology on which this reasoning relies contrasts markedly with Platonic–Aristotelian principles. According to those principles, the identity (or sameness) of things or ideas is logically prior to their relational differences. For Ramus, though, the Aristotelian distinction of subject and accident (or as he prefers, subject and adjoint) cannot itself be intelligible except as a relation (*Dialectique* 64, 74).[18] That means that a thing cannot be conceived apart from its functions in a discursive matrix, nor can it be different from its attributes. Instead, the substance of a thing must be understood as the comprehension of the affections (for Berkeley: qualities, modes, accidents, adjuncts) that identify it as that thing (cf. *Pr* § 49; *DHP* 249; *Alc* VII.11). To think, therefore, that we can have an idea of a substance by itself is (for Ramus and his followers) to think of a thing prior to the relations by which it is characterized without recognizing how that already entails having a 'notion' of it as differentiated.

That is why Ames prefers to refer to *notions* rather than *ideas*. To speak about ideas of things might imply that things are intelligible apart from their affective or semiotic standing in a discourse. By emphasizing notions, he draws attention to the argumentative and rhetorical foundation of logic and ontology. Furthermore, Ames says, 'it is more appropriate to call notions arguments rather than terms, concepts, categories or anything else', because an argument is the *ratio rerum et vocum*, that which makes things and words intelligible in terms of one another.[19] The distinction of things, ideas, and words is not metaphysical, conceptual, or linguistic, because even those characterizations are meaningful only as functions of a discourse of arguments.

This is not to say that metaphysical, conceptual, or linguistic differentiations are functions of *human* arguments, for as Richardson notes, 'to argue is accidental to argument' (*LSM* 60). For Ramists, human beings do not engage in arguments; rather, they are engaged by arguments: 'man is made of many arguments' (*LSM* 237).[20] To say that human beings and the things by which they are identified (e.g. hands, passions, causes, form, body, spirit, size, being a king) are metaphysical, conceptual, logical, or linguistic subjects

[17] See Nuchelmans, *Humanist Theories*, 202; Waswo, *Language and Meaning*, 239–45. Cf. Berkeley, PC #713, 833, 841 and *Principles* § 99; Kenneth P. Winkler, 'Unperceived Objects and Berkeley's Denial of Blind Agency', in *George Berkeley: Essays and Replies*, ed. David Berman (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 1985), 85–6; Geneviève Brykman, 'Pleasure and Pain versus Ideas in Berkeley', ibid., 134; and Peter Walmsley, *The Rhetoric of Berkeley's Philosophy* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990), 182–3.

[18] Cf. Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics', 120–2, 127–8.

[19] See William Ames, *Theses Logicae*, in *Philosophemata*, 22–3. Cf. Lee W. Gibbs, ed., *Technometry* by William Ames (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979), 172; Ong, *Ramus*, 183–4.

[20] Cf. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1939), 124, 148–9.

means that they function as the basic topics of thought in a discursive environment (*Dialectique* 63).[21] They are, simply, the things that have been 'found' (and founded) through argument to be appropriate to the topic (ibid., 115).[22]

So when Walter Ong notes that in Ramism, persons are eclipsed by surfaces, he is correct: the language or speech of nature defines subjects in the constitution of meaning. Ong criticizes this view, arguing that since only persons speak, there must be a speaker prior to the speech. And because (he says) 'the economy of the human mind bears inexorably towards substances and substance-like conceptualizations', we have to conclude that substances exist prior to and independent of arguments.[23]

Ramus rejects this way of thinking because it simply assumes a metaphysics of substances without noting how disputation identifies speakers first as functions of discourse. To be a *subject* or topic (*topos*) is to be *subject to* the syntactic and semantic conditions of a discourse. So there is no human (or for that matter, non-human) subject prior to arguments and no speaker *behind* the language of nature to which it could be contrasted.[24] Indeed, there is nothing that is really other to this discourse since even the notion of an other is intelligible only in its terms. It is, in short, the aboriginal space in which all things are arbitrarily differentiated and juxtaposed in relations that define rationality. Reason expresses the distinctions and sequences that are invented or *founded* in it and provides a practical guide for living. But as with the combinations of sounds and marks that constitute a conventional language, there is nothing that ultimately justifies or accounts for arguments. They are literally created out of nothing.

Of course, no ontological, rhetorical, or legal *finding* can occur without there being a *hearing* in which a thing is cognized. Apart from the discourse, the 'thing' is a mere noise, an 'exterior word which is the sign and note of the reason and argument' but not something that itself has a *logismos* (*Dialectique* 63).[25] It is what Richardson calls an *eponymia*, the designation of a thing or argument that is unintelligible apart from its function as a designator of a place in the discourse (*LSM* 11–13).[26] That we can even conceive of such a thing as an *eponymia* is a mark of the fallen (sinful) condition

[21] Cf. Daniel, *Philosophy of Edwards*, 73–80; William S. Morris, *The Young Jonathan Edwards* (Brooklyn, Carlson, 1991), 67–8, 463, 537, 545.

[22] See Ramus, *Arguments in Rhetoric Against Quintillian*, ed. James J. Murphy, trans. Carole Newlands (DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), 121; henceforth *Arguments*. Cf. Wilbur S. Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500–1700* (New York, Russell and Russell, 1961), 157; Walton, 'Ramus and Judgment', 156.

[23] See Ong, *Ramus*, 9, 69, 278, 287. Cf. Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics', 132–3.

[24] Cf. Michael Hooker, 'Berkeley's Argument from Design', in *Berkeley: Critical and Interpretive Essays*, ed. Colin M. Turbayne (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 264, 269; David Berman, *George Berkeley: Idealism and the Man* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994), 55.

[25] Cf. Walton, 'Ramus and Socrates', 124.

[26] Cf. Adams, 'Richardson's Puritan Theory', 266.

in which rhetoric is often conceived apart from logic and ontology (i.e. dialectic) and things are not recognized as natural *signs* of other things.

However, because our experiences are part of the syntax of the world, our minds are not irrevocably isolated from it. Indeed, it is because of our own dialectical status that we can know things about the world. By characterizing reality as intrinsically semantic, then, Ramist invention attempts to retrieve the prelapsarian *logos* of the universe.[27]

In similar fashion, Berkeley attempts to overcome the alienation thematized by Cartesian and Lockean doctrines by treating experience as a language and the world as a 'rational discourse' or system of signs (see *NTV* §140, *Pr* §109, *TVV* § 38, 40, *Siris* § 254).[28] But like the Ramists, he does not subordinate the language of nature to human language. He believes that real things in the world exist and are intelligible apart from what *we* call them. In this sense, Berkeley is not a nominalist.[29] But he (along with the Ramists) can be called a semantic realist. That is, he argues that to call something real means that it is a function of the differential or relational syntax that comprises the world. That in turn *means* that the world must be understood as inherently semantic.[30]

DIALECTIC DISPOSITION

The effort to identify things as linguistic, semiotic functions or *arguments* constitutes only the first part of Ramist dialectic, *inventio*. It is comparable to the activity of a legal 'discovery' or a 'finding' of a jury in which the facts of the case are determined and a verdict is rendered. But since a finding or 'ver-dict' (literally: a true saying, a *verum dictum*) is not the same as the judgment or pronouncement of sentence that 'disposes' of the case, there must be a second part of dialectic, namely, *dispositio*. Where *inventio* determines what truly can be said in discussing a thing, *dispositio* recognizes those things that are *truly said* (i.e. arguments) as *truth* by judging (i.e. 'pronouncing sentence') on them.

Following the example of Cicero, Quintillian, and Agricola, Ramus describes disposition as that part of dialectic in which arguments are related to one another in a judgment (*judicium*) (see *Dialectique* 115, *LSM* 237–9).[31]

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[27] See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, Random House, 1970), 18–34; Daniel, *Philosophy of Edwards*, 19–22, 32–40. Cf. Waswo, *Language and Meaning*, 106–10.

[28] Cf. William McGowan, 'Berkeley's Doctrine of Signs', in *Berkeley: Critical and Interpretive Essays*, ed. Colin M. Turbayne (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 240; Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics', 116–17; Kenneth P. Winkler, *Berkeley: An Interpretation* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989), 1, 231.

[29] Cf. Robert G. Muehlmann, *Berkeley's Ontology* (Indianapolis, Hackett, 1992), 67, 240; Robert G. Muehlmann, ed., *Berkeley's Metaphysics: Structural, Interpretive, and Critical Essays* (University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 7–10; Ong, *Ramus*, 208.

[30] See Jonathan Dancy, *Berkeley* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1987), 111–22.

[31] Cf. Nuchelmans, *Humanist Theories*, 152, 183; Ong, *Ramus*, 114, 183–7, 289; Michael, 'Why Logic', 6–7; Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric*, 158; Rossi, *Bacon*, 145, 158.

In the first form of judgment, the enunciated juxtaposition of arguments is affirmed as either true or false. When it is affirmed as a true or false sentence, an intelligible proposition becomes an axiom. In legal terms, pronouncing sentence on a proposition affirms the heretofore arbitrary link between the terms (i.e. arguments) of the proposition. The arguments thus become validated as the antecedent and consequent components of a complete expression, and the judgment that the expression is complete is what makes the proposition into what Ramus (like the Stoics) calls an axiom (*axioma*).

In the second form of judgment, arguments are related to one another through axioms. Since axioms can affirm only the propriety of what terms mean, a second form of judgment is needed to determine the propriety of axiomatic pronouncements themselves. That is the task of what Ramus and his followers call syllogism. But the syllogistic disposition of axioms can determine only how things in general or *essentially* are related. So Ramists invoke a third kind of judgment (called *method*) to show how axiomatic pronouncements about existential particulars condition, and are conditioned by, syllogistic deductions. Method provides a 'universal judgment' of arguments by revealing how their union is fulfilled in terms of practical (affective) relations to everything else (and ultimately, God) (*Dialectique* 144).[32] Through method all things are seen as expressions of a divine discourse.

Invention thus allows us to discern or 'pose' things in the world, and disposition allows us to think of those things as ordered in relation to one another. We 'dis-pose' something by affirming it in a context that specifies exactly what it is. But because our decision to arrange the issues that define a context is not itself a judgment as much as it is the practical basis for judgments, Ramus identifies method as a form of prudential disposition rather than judgment as such (*Dialectique*, 63, 115).[33] So, according to Richardson, the major headings of the Ramist project can be organized according to the following schema (*LSM* 239).
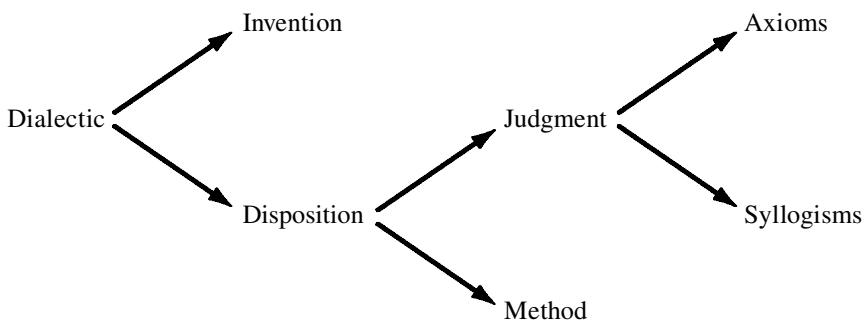
[32] Cf. Walton, 'Ramus and Bacon', 291–3, 301; idem, 'Ramus and Socrates', 126; idem, 'Ramus and Judgment', 157.
[33] Cf. Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric*, 155–8.

We might be tempted to think that there is an element of arrangement or judgment in the invention of every argument because the very discernment of things includes a cognition of difference.[34] Prior to a thing's differential identification as a discursive function, however, there is nothing that can be judged or arranged. In judicial terms: prior to a *writ* of *habeas corpus*, there is no body that can be arraigned. Only after things in the world are understood in a semantic-syntactic way can they be objects on which we can pronounce sentence. By saying that we 'pass sentence' on them, we acknowledge their rhetorical origins.

Admittedly, some judgments (i.e. axioms) are simple affirmations that place one thing in relation to another, making both things arguments. For example, the syntactic juxtaposition of 'fire' and 'burns' in the judgment 'fire burns' creates an axiom, Ramus claims, because it associates the two arguments as cause and effect (*Dialectique* 63).[35] Apart from such judgments there is no such thing as fire *simpliciter* or *in re* because fire is semantically intelligible only when it is identified in virtue of its syntactic function (e.g. as a subject in a sentence with a specific case ending). The same applies to *burns*: in virtue of its specific voice, mood, and tense, it is discernible as a predicate with a determinate identity and *logismos*. By themselves 'fire' and 'burns' have no function in speech, thought, or reality and are mere abstractions as noun and verb.

This doctrine that all things are intelligible only as actual functions (and not abstractions) of discourse is at the heart of the Ramist subordination of grammar to semantics and syntax and at the heart of Berkeley's critique of abstract general ideas. Berkeley argues, for example, that when we try to imagine an abstract idea of a triangle – which is 'neither oblique nor rectangle, equilateral, equicrural nor scalenon, but all and none of these at once' – or an abstract idea of motion 'distinct from the body moving, and which is neither swift nor slow, curvilinear nor rectilinear', we discover such ideas to be unintelligible (*PrI* § 13).[36] Our sense of a triangle or motion is determined by the syntax of associations that we recognize as specifying what it means for something to be a triangle or a motion. When we abstract it from that semiotic environment by trying to give it 'one only precise and settled signification' in abstract general ideas, we impoverish our experience (*PrI* § 18, *Pr* § 108–9).

This focus on the discursive character of nature appears in different ways in several of Berkeley's works, but it is in his *Theory of Vision Vindicated* (1733) that he draws most explicitly on the doctrines of invention and disposition. There he notes that the links among signs in the language of nature can hardly be reduced to acts of judgment alone. He points out that objects of perception are intelligible not because they are *understood* through

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[34] See ibid., 162–3; Rossi, *Bacon*, 158, 191.

[35] Cf. Ong, *Ramus*, 252; Nuchelmans, *Humanist Theories*, 42.

[36] Cf. John Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1975), IV.7.9.

judgments and inference but because (like Ramist *arguments*) they 'suggest' one another in a divinely instituted discourse:

> To perceive is one thing; to judge is another. So likewise, to be suggested is one thing, and to be inferred another. Things are suggested and perceived by sense. We make judgments and inferences by the understanding. . . . We infer causes from effects, effects from causes, and properties one from another, where the connection is necessary. But, how comes it to pass that we apprehend by the ideas of sight certain other ideas, which neither resemble them, nor cause them? . . . How comes it to pass that a set of ideas, altogether different from tangible ideas, should nevertheless suggest them to us, there being no necessary connexion between them? To which the proper answer is, that this is done in virtue of an arbitrary connexion, instituted by the Author of Nature.
>
> (*TVV* § 42–3)

According to Berkeley, if ideas of sight and touch were independently intelligible, we would not be able to infer one from the other. The fact that the two are linked in our experience can only be attributed to a divine disposition of them. But simply saying that God connects heterogeneous ideas does not explain the connection. For that we need a *method*, and Berkeley (like the Ramists) locates that method in the identification of the world we experience as a language.

To see how such a view operates in Berkeley's concept of inference, therefore, it is useful to appeal again to Ramus. For Ramus, arguments are not merely propositional terms that can be isolated from the discursive matrix of their axiomatic associations. Rather, they are antecedents and consequents of conditional propositions (*Dialectique* 115).[37] The propositions are conditionals because, instead of claiming to represent the truth about independently existing things, they indicate how speaking truly about something means cognizing it as essentially related to something else. So rather than thinking of arguments in an axiom in categorical terms (e.g. x is y – as if x is intelligible apart from its juxtaposition to y), we should think of arguments in an axiom in terms of conditionals (e.g. x⊃y). *Fire* and *burns* are unintelligible apart from their appearance in an enunciation (*enunciatio*) that identifies their association as that which has been enunciated (*enunciatum*), that is, as an axiom or 'common notion' in terms of which claims of truth are arranged and assessed (*LSM* 244–7).[38]

That is why the truth of an axiom cannot be questioned, because an axiom is the enunciation of the proposition that defines its meaning in virtue of its expression. Nothing can justify a judgment or produce conviction more than our *disposing* of a proposition's arguments by enunciating them in a sentence. So Richardson claims that a word together with the thing signified by

[37] See Roland MacIlmaine, *The Logike of the Most Excellent Philosopher P. Ramus Martyr* [1574] (New York, De Capo Press, 1969), 72. Cf. Nuchelmans, *Humanist Theories*, 190; Ong, *Ramus*, 203; Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric*, 158.

[38] Cf. Nuchelmans, *Humanist Theories*, 148–51, 185–6; Rossi, *Bacon*, 263.

the word makes an axiom, just as the association of the sound of a word with the word constitutes an axiom (*LSM* 326). The enunciation is inherently linked to the thing to which it refers because the word identifies the thing. Since no word is intelligible apart from its function in an axiom, no claim about the truth of things is justified apart from enunciation.

Ong worries that the 'curious implication' of this is that 'everything one utters is a self-evident truth!'[39] But the point of the Ramists is that the truth of a proposition does not depend on mere utterance but on whether the enunciation is admitted as evidence by being associated as an argument with an axiom. This is the association that Ramus calls a 'syllogism'. A syllogism is a judgment that links an argument (a *simple* enunciation) with an axiom or an axiom (a *complex* enunciation) with another axiom in order to establish the propriety of thinking of a thing in the context of a certain issue or question (*Dialectique*, 64, 115).[40] Such a judgment is always conditional because all axioms originally have the form of a conditional (i.e. $x \supset y$). In fact, since no argument is intelligible apart from its function in an axiom, even the reasoning described by *modus ponens* (p, p$\supset$q, $\therefore$q) is merely an analytic abstraction of what is already contained in the understanding of p and q as arguments. By emphasizing how propositions are more fundamental than the terms they identify, Ramus claims that (1) syllogistic reasoning depends on a semantics of things and (2) that semantics is itself based ultimately on the syntax of prudential associations taught to us by experience.

In other words, a syllogism is the association of an argument with an axiom by means of the pronouncement (*pronunciatio*) or teaching (*doctrina*) of a proposition (*propositio*). The proposition itself is not an argument, axiom, or syllogism but rather the arrangement of arguments and axioms in a way that 'disposes' them by identifying their determinate places in a syllogism (*Arguments* 123, *LSM* 291). This act of relating argument and axiom designates the axiom as a question or issue in terms of which an argument can be understood. The judicial resolution or judgment is thus:

> the *doctrina* in which an argument is associated firmly and fixedly with an issue [*questio*] so that the issue itself is thereby recognized as true or false. This disposition or collocation is called a syllogism, which (defined as disposition) is an argument that is associated necessarily and determinately with the question, by means of which the issue is concluded and appraised.[41]

> (DI 20)

An axiom becomes an issue when things are related to it, and an issue becomes part of a syllogism when it is recognized as having some bearing on the arguments at hand. Like a law of nature that explains a particular

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[39] See Ong, *Ramus*, 64–6; also 252.
[40] Cf. Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics', 128–9.
[41] Cf. Ong, *Ramus*, 103, 185; Rossi, *Bacon*, 175–6.

phenomenon by situating it in a pattern of relations, an issue or question is proper or *true* when it identifies a thing as a determinate argument. This identification of issues that are relevant to thinking about a thing is the syllogistic disposition by which propositions about the thing are judged to be true.

As indicated above, however, the *method* of how to arrange judgments in determining truth is not an axiomatic or syllogistic judgment. Instead, it is our actual experience (*praxis*) of things, the 'natural dialectic' in terms of which we situate ourselves in relation to everything else (*DI* 35–6, 57).[42] Even though we are defined in virtue of our decisions, there is no ultimate reason why we make those decisions: they are simply what we decide. Our decisions may seem arbitrary, but the fact that we make those specific decisions indicates God's providential involvement in his creation of individual souls as determinate (and determined) expressions of the World Soul (*DI* 38, cf. *Siris* § 278–9, 362). We accustom ourselves to the discourse of nature by practising over and over (i.e. memorizing) its syntax. Through practice, seemingly tentative and conditional associations of arguments become doctrines by which we 'firmly and fixedly' identify ourselves and things in the world. Memory – after invention and disposition – might thus be considered a third part of the art of dialectic, in so far as it is 'a sort of shadow of disposition' that imitates God's logic and develops 'man's divinity' (*DI* 19, *Dialectique* 101, 153, *LSM* 240).[43]

Richardson acknowledges that, seen from the standpoint of *inventio* (where arguments are completely free of axiomatic or syllogistic certainty), the determination or necessity of a thing or person might imply violence, force, or coercion. But the necessity or certainty of an axiom is what makes nature determinate and can hardly be contrary to it because it defines what nature is. So even though arguments are related to one another contingently, they agree absolutely and constitute the necessary axioms that define all things (including human beings) as expressions of God's decrees or, in Stoic terms, fate (*LSM* 257–8).[44]

In his appropriation of this idea, Berkeley acknowledges that fate is merely another way to refer to Providence (*Siris*, § 271–3). We become determinate individuals in virtue of certain experiences, and our having those experiences necessarily defines who we are. If we think of certainty and necessity in 'distinct abstract' terms, then it seems that providential determination undermines human freedom (*Alc* VII.18). By adopting the Ramist view, however, Berkeley avoids that conclusion.

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[42] Cf. Ong, *Ramus*, 189, 194–5.
[43] Cf. Walton, 'Ramus and Judgment', 156–60; Rossi, *Bacon*, 209.
[44] Cf. Walton, 'Ramus and Judgment', 153–4.

RAMISM AT BERKELEY'S TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

Even if Ramist principles help in understanding Berkeley, that is no guaran-
tee that Ramist thought influenced him. To show that, we would have to
know more about the shadowy presence of Ramism at Trinity College
Dublin (TCD) during Berkeley's time there and even Berkeley's earlier
training at Kilkenny College. It is to this topic that I now turn.

The high point of Ramist influence at Trinity College Dublin occurred
some years prior to Berkeley's arrival there in 1700. By that date students
were hearing about the doctrines of not only Ramus, his commentators,
and those influenced by him (including the Dutch Calvinist Franco Burg-
ersdijk and the Polish Jesuit Martin Smiglecki) but also Aristotle,
Descartes, Epicurus, Gassendi, Malebranche, and Locke.[45] To what extent
ideas from these latter thinkers actually influenced the development of
Berkeley's thought is, of course, debatable. But despite a wealth of cir-
cumstantial evidence to the contrary, discussions of Berkeley almost uni-
versally ignore the possibility that Ramist doctrines could have played a
role in his thought.

This blindness to elements of Ramist thought in his philosophy is note-
worthy, considering how Ramism permeates the intellectual setting of Cam-
bridge and its Irish offshoot (TCD) from 1580 to the end of the following
century. Known for its nonconformity and anti-royalist sentiment, Cam-
bridge provided TCD with its first five provosts, all of whom were Puri-
tans.[46] Committed to religious and political autonomy, the founders of TCD
created an environment in which the linkage of Ramist philosophy with
Puritan theology was seen as essential for establishing the kind of cultural
and linguistic identity Berkeley later captured in his references to 'we Irish-
men' (*PC* #392–4, 398). It was a tradition that Berkeley and others at TCD
appreciated in a way that the English (particularly Oxonian) mentality of
Locke never approximates.

The fact that Ramism would still have been a presence at TCD in 1700
should not be surprising, especially in light of how the spread of Ramist
ideas was closely linked to the College's history in the previous century.
Long before William Temple ('the greatest of the sixteenth-century Ramists
at Cambridge') was selected as the fourth TCD provost (from 1609 to 1627),
he had published a commentary of Ramus's *Dialecticae Libri Duo* (1584)

[45] See A. A. Luce, *The Life of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne* [1949], with a new intro-
duction by David Berman (London, Routledge/Thoemmes, 1992), 39; E. J. Furlong, 'The
Study of Logic in Trinity College, Dublin', *Hermathena*, 60 (1942): 40, 42; R. B. McDowell
and D. A. Webb, 'Courses and Teaching in Trinity College, Dublin, During the First 200
Years', *Hermathena*, 69 (1947): 18.
[46] See Gibbs, ed., *Technometry*, 25–6; McDowell and Webb, 'Courses and Teaching', 13; Con-
stantia Maxwell, *A History of Trinity College Dublin 1591–1892* (Dublin, University Press
of Trinity College, 1946), 24.

which subsequently became a popular textbook at TCD.[47] Another Cambridge graduate, William Chappell (TCD provost 1634–41), had taught at Christ's College, where he provided Milton with the Calvinist principles that he later developed in his own 1672 exposition of Ramus' *Dialecticae*.[48]

Pressured, however, by Archbishop Laud to bring Puritan TCD in line with royalist High Church Anglican ideals, Chappell reluctantly discontinued the practice of providing instruction in the Irish language and (in an associated move) substituted Aristotelian logic for Ramist logic in the first-year course of study. His half-hearted efforts to displace the Ramist mentality at TCD had little long-term effect. For when Laud's power began to erode at the end of the 1630s, Chappell distanced himself from the royalists, reasserting his life-long commitment to Puritanism.[49] The next generation of TCD scholars were free then to retrieve Ramism, because (as a more recent account puts it) 'during the Commonwealth the rulers of Trinity College were Scripture-loving Puritans, who cared little for Aristotle and less for Laud'.[50] In the 1650s new editions of works by Ramus, Richardson, and Ames replaced the Aristotelian logics of Smeglecki and Burgersdijk as the preferred texts at TCD, and Ramist ideas continued to have a significant influence there and elsewhere for decades.[51]

After the Restoration, though, the decline in Ramist influence in many quarters of Great Britain paralleled the decline of Puritanism. But where the Puritan insistence on practical action continued to guide philosophic reflection – especially in New England at Harvard and Yale – the appeal of Ramism remained strong well into the eighteenth century. Indeed, in his *Technologia sive Technometria* (1714), the American Samuel Johnson (1696–1772) championed avowedly Ramist themes in developing a philosophy that he later modified and dedicated to his friend George Berkeley.[52]

Regardless, however, of whether the underlying rationale for Berkeley's philosophy is Ramistic or explains Johnson's endorsement of it, it is highly unlikely that Berkeley would have been uninformed about Ramist principles. Robert Fage's 1632 English translation of Ramus's *Dialecticae Libri Duo* had been republished numerous times and was still in demand late in the century (as evidenced by the appearance of editions in 1685 and 1699). Commentaries or glosses on Ramist thought – such as Richardson's *Logician's School-master* (1629, 1657) and Ames's *Demonstratio Logicae Verae*

[47] See Gibbs, ed., *Technometry*, 26–7; R. B. McDowell and D. A. Webb, *Trinity College Dublin 1592–1952: An Academic History* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1982), 7; Furlong, 'Study of Logic', 39.

[48] See John W. Stubbs, *The History of the University of Dublin* (Dublin, Hodges, Figgis, and Co., 1889), 75, 76n; Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric*, 214; Ong, ed., *Fuller Course*, 167.

[49] See Stubbs, *University of Dublin*, 82. Cf. Nuchelmans, *Humanist Theories*, 145.

[50] See McDowell and Webb, 'Courses and Teaching', 15–16; Rick Kennedy, ed., *Aristotelian and Cartesian Logic at Harvard: Charles Morton's* A Logick System *and William Brattle's* Compendium of Logick (Boston, Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1995), 29.

[51] See Furlong, 'Study of Logic', 39; Kennedy, ed., *Aristotelian and Cartesian Logic*, 20, 29.

[52] See Gibbs, ed., *Technometry*, 45–50, 82.

(1669, 1672) – were not only reprinted but also were hand-copied by students during the time of Locke, Malebranche, Boyle, and Newton.[53] In fact, Ramist ways of thinking at Puritan strongholds such as TCD and Cambridge would have been so common that most students would not have thought of them as representing a distinct philosophic perspective at all. They would have treated them simply as descriptions of how people ordinarily think.

However, the connection between anti-royalist Puritan sentiment and Ramist thought, at least as it affects Berkeley specifically, is not traced to Cambridge or even TCD other than by indirect means. Instead, such a link is more evident in Berkeley's early grammar school training at Kilkenny College (where Jonathan Swift and William Congreve also were taught). During those four impressionable years prior to going up to Dublin, Berkeley studied under Dr. Edward Hinton, a staunch anti-royalist and Puritan who was headmaster at Kilkenny from 1684 to 1702.[54] It was Hinton who recommended Berkeley for admission into TCD. And it was Hinton who probably provided Berkeley with his first thorough exposure to Ramist ways of thinking.

Following in his father's footsteps, Hinton had entered Merton College Oxford in 1659. In contrast to other Oxford colleges, Merton (followed by Exeter and Lincoln) set itself up as a Puritan stronghold where Ramism flourished. The mostly symbolic appointment by Charles II of two anti-Cromwell wardens at Merton (Edward Reynolds 1660–1 and Thomas Clayton 1661–73) prompted Hinton to move to St. Alban's Hall, where he received his BA in 1663 and his MA in 1665.[55] He remained in Oxford as master of the free school at Witney until he was asked by TCD Provost Narcissus Marsh to become headmaster of Kilkenny College.

As had been the practice since the founding of Kilkenny College, Hinton received his formal appointment as headmaster from James Butler (Lord Chancellor of England and first duke of Ormand) on the recommendation of the fellows and scholars of TCD.[56] Marsh (whose tenure as provost at TCD officially ended in 1683) had been a fellow at Exeter from 1658 to 1673 and, at the time of his own appointment by Ormand to be TCD provost in

[53] See ibid., 28, 73–4; Kennedy, ed., *Aristotelian and Cartesian Logic*, 18–20; Wilson, 'Berkeley's Metaphysics', 125; Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric*, 237–8; Furlong, 'Study of Logic', 39; Adams, 'Richardson's Puritan Theory', 258; *Catalogus Librorum in Bibliotheca Collegii sanctae et individuae Trinitatis Reginae Elizabethae juxta Dublin* (Dublin, J. Hyde, 1715), 142.

[54] See W. E. Dobbs, *Notes on the History of Kilkenny College, 1538–1938* (Kilkenny, Ireland, Kilkenny People Ltd., 1938), 16; Luce, *Life of Berkeley*, 29.

[55] See Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis … 1500–1714* (8 vols.; Oxford, Parker & Co., 1892), 2: 718; Bernard W. Henderson, *Merton College* (London, F. E. Robinson, 1899), 139.

[56] See W. G. Neely, *Kilkenny: An Urban History, 1391–1843* (Belfast, Institute of Irish Studies, 1989), 109.

1678, was principal of St. Alban's Hall.[57] In recommending Hinton to Ormand for the Kilkenny post, Marsh and the TCD fellows would certainly have known of Hinton's Puritan background.[58] That they approved of it is evidenced by their granting him the Doctor of Divinity degree less than a year after he assumed the Kilkenny position and only months before he and other Protestants returned to England briefly to escape persecution by Tyrconnel (Charles II's viceroy).[59]

Exactly what Berkeley learned from Hinton about Ramism is, of course, anyone's guess. But it would be serendipitous to discover a document that would show convincingly that Berkeley as an adolescent knew a substantial amount about Ramist ways of reasoning. I have not found that smoking gun (yet), but I have found something along those lines that is intriguing. In the TCD library there is a manuscript copy of Richardson's *Logician's Schoolmaster*.[60] The leather covers of the volume date from very late in the seventeenth century. The handwriting is not Berkeley's, but all over the covers the initials 'G.B.' (George Berkeley?) are stamped in a painstaking (and tantalizing) way – much in the way that a teenager might identify some special gift or possession as his own.

Even if we were able to determine that the book was Berkeley's, though, that would not prove anything about whether his philosophy exhibits Ramist characteristics. It would simply invite us to reconsider the relation between Berkeley's philosophy and Ramism and to take more seriously those aspects of his thought that ground ontological differentiation in communicative or discursive exchanges. That, in turn, would force us to examine how Ramism complements and extends Stoic thought in a way that locates Berkeley's philosophy in a rich logical and rhetorical tradition that is largely ignored in Cartesian and Lockean philosophy.

<div align="right">Texas A & M University</div>

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[57] See George T. Stokes, *Some Worthies of the Irish Church* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1900), 66; Stubbs, *University of Dublin*, 113.

[58] See Harold Lawson Murphy, *A History of Trinity College Dublin: From Its Foundation to 1702* (Dublin, Hodges, Figgis and Co., 1951), 141; Furlong, 'Study of Logic', 40.

[59] See the Trinity College Dublin General Registry for 1640–1740, 11 July 1685, fol. 245, Manuscript Department, Trinity College Dublin Library; John Browne, 'Kilkenny College', *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, Series One, 1 (1850): 226.

[60] Trinity College Dublin MS # 711, listed as Alexander Richardson, *Encyclopedia (Precepts on the Dialectic Art)* [Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία *(praecipae de Arte Dialectica)*]; bound with a manuscript copy of Ramus' *Dialecticae Libri Duo*.