

Scepticism and Metaphysics: An Inquiry into Santayana's Philosophical System

by

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Abstract

George Santayana is a philosopher who can accurately be described as a critical realist who utilizes a sceptical methodology. I attempt to show how Santayana's scepticism is flawed and therefore must be revised. This revision, however, brings about a tension between this revised scepticism and Santayana's own epiphenomenal metaphysics. This tension, I contend, is a real problem which requires a resolution. I argue that the proper resolution of this tension is to reject Santayana's epiphenomenal metaphysics and replace it with a metaphysics which I describe as 'pan-psyche interactionism.'

Introduction

The rise of a new philosophical doctrine, or an old philosophical doctrine being revisited, is often due to the need for a response to a currently held doctrine which is not, for whatever reason, satisfactory. In this manner Berkeley brought his formidable idealism to bear on realism and, in turn, R.W. Sellars brought his critical realism to counter idealism. Critical realism, as a whole, could be said to be a humble philosophical doctrine since it is realism which has been tempered by the lessons taught by idealists such as Berkeley, and F.H. Bradley. Critical realism recognizes the shortcomings in ordinary direct realism, a lesson well taught, as has been said, by the idealists, but also recognizes the mistakes that idealists have made in their drive to push all objects inside the mind. Critical realism is a realist doctrine because it maintains that physical objects exist independently of being perceived. Physical objects, for the critical realist, exist *in their own right*. Hence, critical realism is, obviously enough, realist with respect to physical objects. Critical realism is described as 'critical' because it maintains that physical objects are not directly presented to us via perception. We have no direct knowledge of physical objects; that is, the contents of consciousness are not the objects of consciousness. Hence, critical realism holds that knowledge of physical objects is non-direct (mediated) in some way. To be sure, philosophers who can be correctly described as critical realists, like all philosophers, have stumbled and claimed some fairly untenable positions. An excellent example of this being Wilfred Sellars' attempt to reduce thought to language. Still, critical realism is an exciting metaphysical doctrine that seems, in some manifestations at least, to be a very coherent doctrine.

One of the most successful of the critical realists, in my opinion, is George Santayana. Santayana took great heed of the lessons taught by the idealists and from these lessons, while avoiding the pitfalls the idealists themselves encountered, has created one of the most coherent philosophical systems to date. He masterfully crafts his system, which he maintains is merely common sense with an eloquent tongue, by beginning with scepticism. Santayana is much like Descartes in this respect: he begins his philosophical journey by doubting all that he can doubt and when his scepticism at last alights upon that which cannot be doubted he examines what remains and determines what can be built out

of those remains. Unlike Descartes, however, Santayana avoids the all too common mistake of doubting only what is convenient for his system. Thus he avoids what he calls the wayward scepticism of many philosophers, including, of course, Descartes.

Santayana will not be satisfied stopping his scepticism at the arbitrary point of merely doubting the physical world and the existence of other minds. Instead, he presses on to ultimate scepticism, doubting his own memory and therefore his entire history, doubting his future and even his own rational processes. After such rampant and honest scepticism, solipsism of the present moment is all that remains; and these remains, this solipsism of the present moment, is the only sceptical position which is defensible.

From solipsism of the present moment, Santayana makes a discovery of essence – a discovery which is the basis of his entire epistemological system. An essence can be understood, for now, as a universal or, when it is illuminated by some consciousness, an appearance. This essence is the only certainty and is the only thing given. The ultimate sceptic cannot be mistaken about this essence that is the sole object of his intuition, or consciousness, and nothing other than this essence can be given since the essence can make no reference to anything beyond itself. This is the basis of Santayana's epistemology and the primary starting point for the construction of his philosophical system. The ultimate sceptic sees nothing but illusion in matter, deceit in his own history, foolishness in his hope of a future, and yet he is not pushed to such an extreme that he knows absolutely nothing, for he has before him a given essence. This scepticism, Santayana makes perfectly clear, is not merely a philosophical exercise to teach us valuable lessons about the fragility of our knowledge, but, rather, it is the wise man's shadow; it is always there, lurking in the background, to remind him that nothing other than an essence revealed in intuition is truly known.

Santayana does, however, carry his scepticism a bit too far. He makes it perfectly clear that the only thing which is certain is the given essence – not even the momentary consciousness, or, to use Santayana's terminology, the momentary spirit, which is intuiting the essence, is certain. In other words, the essence is given but the intuition of it is not given. This, I think, is an error in Santayana's reasoning. His scepticism goes beyond that of Bertrand Russell who holds that the only things known are the given essence and a momentary spirit which grasps that essence. Of course Russell uses

different terms, but, regardless of the language, the idea is the same - Santayana's scepticism is too rampant: in doubting away the momentary spirit, he has doubted too much.

If Santayana's scepticism is amended to that of Russell's, which I will argue is the only tenable scepticism, Santayana will then have an epistemology which gives spirit, or consciousness, primacy. Certainty will be granted only to a momentary spirit and the essence given to it in that moment. Substance, or matter, is not given and therefore not certain and so is secondary to spirit, epistemologically speaking. If we liken Santayana's building of his epistemology to that of a house, which is a convenient metaphor, then clearly spirit and essence are the concrete foundation of the house while substance would have to be considered a plywood attic. Substance is not known, strictly speaking, but is only believed and actually has different, more relaxed, criteria for being known. In this way knowledge of substance is not at all like knowledge of given essence and momentary spirit: it obviously does not have the foothold on certainty that given essence and momentary spirit do.

The primacy of spirit that is found in my revision of Santayana's epistemology is not found in his metaphysics. Indeed, Santayana opts for an epiphenomenalist philosophy of mind. The spirit arises from substance, which is matter, and has no causal powers in the realm of matter. Furthermore, spirit is entirely dependent on matter for its existence. To carry the house metaphor over from epistemology into metaphysics, we find that the house has been reversed. Now matter is the concrete foundation while spirit is the plywood attic. Spirit is entirely dependent on matter for its existence.

The two houses, the metaphysical and the epistemological, stand side by side and are curiously the inversion of each other. One is built from matter up while the other is built from spirit up. Perhaps we can begin to feel a tension in Santayana's philosophical system if we remember that metaphysics and epistemology are both branches of the same tree and are not as independent as modernity, with its penchant for specialization, would have us believe. This tension, I intend to show, is problematic for Santayana since it calls into question the consistency, and therefore coherence, of his system.

What follows will be an elucidation and examination of this inherent tension in Santayana's philosophical system. It will not do, however, to merely dive into the finer

points of his epistemology and metaphysics without first giving a tour, even if it is a vastly incomplete tour, of his philosophical system as a whole. I will therefore begin with this tour and from there, hopefully with an adequate understanding of Santayana's overall system, move on to discussing his epistemology, metaphysics - particularly his philosophy of mind - and the tension between the two in great detail. Finally, I will conclude with a discussion on how this tension can potentially be resolved and what affects this resolution has on Santayana's system as a whole.

Santayana's Critical Realism

Santayana's philosophical system begins with a discovery of essence via scepticism. This essence, once discovered, is indubitable and given directly to experience. This essence, which is a solitary essence that refers to nothing beyond itself, is given directly and cannot be doubted. This essence can be discovered in three ways¹: scepticism, contemplation, and through dialectic. Santayana goes to some length to explain that each approach is equally valid and equally important. It may well be that each is equally valid but it does seem that the approach through scepticism is, if not more important, at least more prominent and ubiquitous. This is certainly not to say that the other approaches to essence are not important – indeed, the approach to essence through contemplation may well be the basis for Santayana's ethical system – but for the purposes of this paper scepticism is certainly more important; furthermore, scepticism certainly seems to be more omnipresent in Santayana's system.

The sceptical approach to essence is not merely an exercise that one engages in to find an essence and then see what can be made of this essence. Scepticism is a way of thinking such that the sceptic is not fooled by sophistical philosophies and doctrines. Santayana is always a sceptic, always aware that any fact of the world is presented to him through his senses and therefore he can never be certain of these facts. In this way scepticism can be said to be ubiquitous throughout Santayana's system – every posit of animal faith, every thought that goes beyond solipsism of the present moment, is merely *believed* or *posited*, never *known literally*, precisely because scepticism is always in the background, perhaps not mentioned explicitly but certainly implicitly.

Scepticism is more prominent than the other approaches to essence for the very fact that an entire introduction to the Realms of Being, Scepticism and Animal Faith, was written by Santayana to explain the sceptical approach. Santayana freely admits that scepticism is an extremely sophisticated approach and one even gets the feeling that the

¹ Though I say three ways of discovering a given essence here, it is entirely possible to understand Santayana as actually having four ways: scepticism, contemplation, dialectic, and *spiritual discipline*. I, however, take spiritual discipline to be merely a variation of contemplation. The matter is not entirely important to this paper, however, as I am only interested in showing that *no matter what other method* is taken scepticism must always be implicitly, if not explicitly, in operation, due to its ubiquity in Santayana's system.

additions of the aesthetic and dialectic approaches to essence were added to appease those readers that could not comprehend the extreme scepticism. This can be noted in the following passage from the *Introduction* to the Realms of Being:

An elaborate one [introduction] had previously appeared under the title *Scepticism and Animal Faith*; yet although expressly written to introduce *Realms of Being*, this earlier book was essentially more sophisticated and less friendly to the fundamental convictions of mankind. [. . .] The reconstruction of common sense on that radically sceptical foundation found the reader confused, and not inclined to recognize and recover his natural reason under the name animal faith (p. xxv).

For these reasons I will only be discussing the sceptical approach to essence. It will, however, become necessary during my more detailed look at Santayana's epistemology to revisit the relative importance of the sceptical approach to essence compared to the other approaches.

In order to find an indubitable essence one must doubt everything that can be doubted and the remainder, the indubitable, is the essence. Santayana easily doubts the existence of other minds and physical objects. This puts his scepticism thus far on par with the scepticism of Descartes. Descartes, in his Meditations on First Philosophy, imagines an evil genius who is all powerful and bent on deceiving him. Thus Descartes writes, "I will regard the heavens, the air, the earth, colors, shapes, sounds, and all external things as nothing but the bedeviling hoaxes of my dreams, with which he [the evil genius] lays snares for my credulity" (p. 62). Everything external to Descartes is doubted, including his own body, and this left him with his thinking self as the only thing that was indubitable. After all, Descartes could doubt the external world but he could not doubt the fact that he, Descartes, was doubting. So long as Descartes was a thinking being he could never doubt the existence of his own mind. Thus, Descartes arrived at the famous, or perhaps infamous, statement, 'I think, therefore I am.' This was the bottom of Descartes' scepticism, he had reached the one thing that was certain – his own thinking being.

Certainly Santayana goes that far down the sceptical road with Descartes, but Santayana realizes the mistake made by Descartes in claiming that his own thinking self is certain. This leads Santayana to brand Cartesian scepticism 'wayward scepticism.' Bertrand Russell also recognized Cartesian scepticism as not exactly reaching the

sceptical terminus. In The Problems of Philosophy, Russell writes, “‘I think, therefore I am’ says rather more than is strictly certain. [. . .] the real Self is as hard to arrive at as the real table, and does not seem to have that absolute, convincing certainty that belongs to particular experiences” (p. 19). It is quite possible that what we remember happening to us in our childhood, or what happened to us yesterday, or even moments ago, is all so much fiction and we are, in fact, not continuous beings with histories, but rather, momentary beings with false memories of nonexistent pasts and no possibility of a future. The ‘I’ in ‘I think, therefore I am,’ can only be an ‘I’ who is not only a solipsist but must also be existing only in the present moment. This is solipsism of the present moment which Santayana and Russell contend is the only defensible scepticism (though, as we briefly saw, they have different ideas of exactly what solipsism of the present moment is). Indeed, Santayana believes that “any solipsism which is not a solipsism of the present moment is logically contemptible” (Scepticism and Animal Faith, p. 14. Henceforth referred to as S.A.F.). This is because any solipsism which is not solipsism of the present moment is a solipsism which has not yet touched the bottom of scepticism as it still retains such a gratuitous dogma as personal identity.

Santayana is now in a position of ultimate scepticism – solipsism of the present moment. It must be remembered that this ultimate scepticism is ubiquitous throughout his philosophy and must never be forgotten, no matter what else we come to believe about the world. The ubiquity of ultimate scepticism is made clear in the following passage from Scepticism and Animal Faith:

[T]he scepticism I am defending is not meant to be merely provisional; its just conclusions will remain fixed, to remind me perpetually that all alleged knowledge of matters of fact is faith only, and that an existing world, whatever form it may choose to wear, is intrinsically a questionable and arbitrary thing (p. 49).

From this position of ultimate scepticism, Santayana makes a discovery. This is a discovery of essence. The ultimate sceptic, as we have seen, well understands the illusory nature of the world and once this illusion is accepted and entertained without, as Santayana puts it, ‘succumbing to it,’ the sceptic will have before him an illusion which no longer deceives. This “non-deceptive illusion will then be a truth, and a truth the being of which requires no explanation, since it is utterly impossible that it should have been otherwise” (S.A.F. p. 73). The terminus of scepticism has been reached since the

non-deceptive illusion is indubitable to the ultimate sceptic. Furthermore, this non-deceptive illusion will refer to nothing beyond itself as it will, as Santayana describes, “appear dwelling in its own world, and shining by its own light, however brief may be my glimpse of it: for no date will be written on it, no frame of full or empty time will shut it in” (S.A.F. pp. 73-4). The non-deceptive illusion is momentary, it suggests nothing of history or future; the non-deceptive illusion is solitary, it suggests nothing other than its appearance; the non-deceptive illusion is an essence. Thus, the terminus of scepticism is the discovery of an essence.

The best way, I think, to come to an understanding of essences is to determine what characteristics an individual essence has and what characteristics the realm of essence as a whole has. As we have seen, an individual essence, while it is being intuited, has the characteristic of being indubitable. The certitude of the intuited essence is clear since it cannot be doubted by the ultimate sceptic. An essence is also inalienable and, in the realm of essence as a whole, there are an infinite number of essences. There are an infinite number of essences in the realm of essence because there are the essences which are intuited by spirits and there are those essences which *could* be intuited. The realm of essence contains all those essences that are, and are never, intuited by any spirit as well as those essences that are, and are never, embodied in matter. The essences which are never intuited by any spirit or embodied in any matter are surely infinite since there are, to put the matter another way, an infinity of thoughts that a conscious being *could* have or an infinity of forms matter *could* assume.

Perhaps the clearest description of the realm of essence is given by Santayana in Scepticism and Animal Faith where he describes it as, “simply the unwritten catalogue, prosaic and infinite, of all the characters possessed by such things as happen to exist, together with the characters which all different things would possess if they existed” (p. 77). This quotation gives excellent insight into the realm of essence, for it implies a demarcation of essences into three modes: those essences which are embodied in matter, those essences which are revealed in intuition, and those essences which are neither revealed in intuition nor embodied in matter. An important demarcation point for the division of essences into these three modes seems to be existence. Therefore, before we

can adequately understand the three modes of essences we need to be clear on what it means for something to exist.

Santayana grants things existence when they are in causal chains, are changeable, and interact with other existents. Santayana describes existence, and indeed it is only a description as he realizes he can give no definition, as “such being as is in flux, determined by external relations, and jostled by irrelevant events” (S.A.F. p. 42). This description implies that both material objects and the intuiting of essences, but, and we must be clear here, not the essence intuited, have existence. In other words, spirit and material objects are existent. In other passages, however, one gets the strong impression that the only things which qualify for existence are things which are material – things which have substance. “[E]xistence is not simply a series of essences solidified, nor a juxtaposition of phenomena; it is the career of a hereditary substance, it is the Life of Matter” (*Realms of Being*, p. 286. Henceforth referred to as R.O.B.). Given this description we can see that perhaps existence is caught up in, heavily intertwined with, even wholly the *same as* substance. I think this latter interpretation of existence is a bit too strong. Certainly Santayana wants the intuition to be existent, and it does seem to be existent since it exists in time and is determined by external relations. It seems that the best interpretation of existence is one that doesn’t equate it with matter or substance but rather leaves enough room for spirit. Indeed, this interpretation fits well with Santayana if we take the sensible view that spirit is, since it is an epiphenomena of matter, part of the Life of Matter. Existence, therefore, is used to describe both acts of intuition and material objects. Perhaps we are now ready to move onto discussing the three modes of essence.

Essences which are neither revealed in intuition nor embodied in matter are essences which are *real*, for they are part of the realm of essence, but they do not exist since they have no causal efficacy – they are not involved in the Life of Matter. These are the essences which are not the object of any spirit’s intuition nor are anywhere in the universe a material object. Needless to say these essences are infinite and unmentionable. For, if one were to mention one of these essences, it would have to be the object of one’s intuition and would then cease to be an essence neither revealed in intuition nor embodied in matter. Furthermore, these essences, the denizens of the realm

of essence, are eternal, in the sense that they exist outside of time. This is relatively straightforward since, as has been said, they are not involved in any causal chain whatever and therefore do not exist. The realm of essence is timeless and unchangeable (it is not a realm of becoming) as essences do not exist

The second mode of essence is essence embodied in matter. These essences are real and existent. They have substance since they have been, for lack of a better phrase, chosen by matter to be temporarily embodied. Indeed, the embodiment of essences in matter is transient and no reason can be given for why *this* essence rather than *that* essence is embodied in matter. Essences which are embodied in matter are the only essences which can be said to be existent – even if it is an extremely transient existence. Santayana explains, “matter is the invisible wind which, sweeping for no reason over the field of essences, raises some of them into a cloud of dust: and that whirlwind we call existence” (R.O.B. p. 286). These essences are involved in the flux of existence; they are embodied in matter for some period of time and then discarded by matter for a different essence.

An essence which is embodied in matter is, in a manner of speaking, *estranged* from essence; it is an essence which is impure since it is now the form of some substance, which is quite foreign to it. As Santayana writes:

Manifestation is an event, and although that which is manifested there can be only an essence, the occasion and the setting transpose it into a new plane of being, the plane of phenomena or of descriptions, and render it, as the Platonists said, other than itself. It is intrinsically and inalienably eternal, yet here are temporal instances of it; it is a universal, but it appears in particulars, lending them such positive characters as they may have; it is perfectly unambiguous, and nevertheless it is merged and confused with other essences in the flux of things and of language. Realisation of essence, by ironical fate, is accordingly a sort of alienation from essence. We call it “realisation”, when from being perfectly real in its own fashion, it becomes an illusion in some mind, or the momentary form of some treacherous matter. (R.O.B. p. 120).

An essence, it should be becoming clear now, is a universal and as such can be exemplified in various places at various times or at the same time. The essence which is embodied in such and such chunk of matter may well be embodied in another chunk of matter at the same time. An essence can have multiple instances embodied in matter; an essence may be described as an abstract individual.

Though an embodied essence has become the form of some substance it is important to note that this embodiment has not altered the essence and that any instance of an essence perfectly exemplifies that essence. This is important because it serves to separate Santayana's essences from Plato's Forms as there is no sense in which the essence which is exemplified is only 'partially participating' in the perfect essence. Any exemplified essence, for Santayana, is the perfect exemplification of that essence. This, it seems, is because there are infinite essences in the realm of essence so that any form which substance chooses at any particular time will be "some precise essence eternally self-defined; for however fast the world may change or however confused chaos may become, events can never overtake or cover the infinite advance which pure Being has had on existence from all eternity" (R.O.B. p. 122).

The third mode of essence is those essences which are revealed in intuition alone. Like the great winged horse Pegasus, these are the essences which are imagined only and do not correspond to any substantial *thing*. These essences are real and non-existent. This is the case because, according to Santayana, nothing which exists can be an object of intuition. Santayana makes this fairly clear in the following passage:

Universals [essences] are individual, not general: terms can be general only in use, never intrinsically; but the individual is an essence, not an existing particular. The latter is not a possible object of intuition and has no place in logic: it is some fragment of the flux of nature, posited in action, and by virtue of that status for ever external to thought. (R.O.B. p. 92).

So existing particulars are not, and cannot, be terms of thought. Therefore, anything which is a term of thought, which essences clearly are, must be a universal – real, but non-existent. Essences, it must be understood, are not rendered existent by merely being the objects of intuition. The intuition, which exists, does not sweep up essences and render them existent. Essences, therefore, are given in intuition but do not exist. They do not exist because we saw clearly in ultimate scepticism that anything which exists can, and must, be doubted. Hence, the given, that which is indubitable, must not exist. This gives rise to one of Santayana's big slogans: 'Nothing given exists.'² The only thing which is given in intuition is an essence and this essence does not exist. Essences

² This slogan is very interesting and will be revisited in much greater detail when we closely examine Santayana's epistemology.

revealed to intuition do not exist in the sense that they are not substantial. An essence which exists must be raised in a whirlwind by an invisible wind which we call matter - clearly this is not happening when an essence is revealed to intuition. This may seem trivially true since it is obviously the case that an essence which is revealed to the intuition alone and not also embodied in matter is not a substantial, or material, instance of the essence; after all, the intuition is not a substance.

There is, however, a sense in which this may seem utterly confusing and not at all trivial. The intuition exists, since it is part of the Life of Matter, and yet those essences which it surveys do not exist. It may well be wondered why the case of spirit is different than the case of matter. Since both exist and both 'choose' an essence to exemplify, why then is only the essence exemplified by matter considered existent?

The answer to this question is found in the fact that in any instance of spirit, in any reflection of spirit upon some essence, there are two essences exemplified. One is the essence which is revealed to the intuition which, as has been said, does not exist, while the other is the essence of the actual *act* of the spirit revealing some essence. The essence of the act, or event, of the spirit is an embodied essence which exists.

There are accordingly two disparate essences exemplified in every instance of spirit; one is the essence of spirit, exemplified *formally* and embodied in the event or fact that at such a moment such an animal has such a feeling; the other is the essence then revealed to that animal and realised *objectively* or imaginatively to his intuition (R.O.B. p. 130).

Furthermore, the essence which is revealed to intuition cannot possibly be attributed existence since the mere fact that I have an idea does not bring that idea into the realm of matter nor into the flux of matter. As Santayana remarks, "my idea of God is not God, and does not bring God into existence on its precise model; nor does my idea of matter perform a corresponding miracle" (R.O.B. p. 130). Clearly, then, essences which are revealed to the intuition do not exist.

That being said it is not the case that the essence which is revealed to intuition is unmolested by this revelation; after all, an essence revealed to intuition is still an *instance* of an essence. Just as when an essence is embodied in matter, an essence which is revealed to intuition is an event, the occasion and the setting of which transpose the essence into a new plane of being; just as the embodiment of an essence in matter is an

alienation of essence, so too a revelation of essence to intuition is an alienation of essence. As Santayana writes, “in existence, in sense, and in thought it [an essence] has become impure; its essential character now figures in a substance, a medium, or a context which are alien to it” (R.O.B. p. 122). An essence which is revealed to intuition alone, though not an existing essence, is still the exemplification of an essence.

There are of course essences which are a conjunction of essences revealed to the intuition and essences embodied in matter. This, I believe, cannot be properly viewed as a separate mode of essence. These are the essences which are embodied in matter (as the table before me is) while at the same time perceived by some perceiver (as the table is perceived by me). The perceiver has the table’s essence revealed to their intuition while at the same time the matter which makes up the table is embodying the essence of the table. This, as I said, is not properly called a separate mode of essence since the intuited essence and the embodied essence must remain separate. There are several reasons for the necessary separation between the essence intuited and the essence embodied in matter.

Recall that essences embodied in matter are, and must be, perfect exemplifications of that essence. There is, however, a sense in which imperfect realization of an essence is meaningful. This sense comes from an animal’s perspective of the essence exemplified and its *expectations* of it. If an animal expects and wants a particular essence embodied in a certain chunk of matter and instead receives a different essence embodied in matter it will seem to the animal that the essence has been imperfectly realized and will accordingly be disappointed with the embodiment of the essence in matter. If a hungry animal “asks for bread and receives a stone, [. . .] to point out that the stone was a perfect stone would seem sheer mockery” (R.O.B. p. 124). So, an essence may be described as an imperfect realization of an expected essence by an animal.

Essences, then, may be said to be manifested imperfectly, when they are not the essences of things, but are prescribed for them by the senses and passions of some egotistical animal whose mind is like a stomach limited in its powers of digestion and obliged to treat all foreign substances as approximations – how questionable and half-baked! – to its ideal victuals” (R.O.B. p. 124).

This means that the essence revealed in intuition must not be the same essence which is embodied in matter. The essences which are revealed in intuition are involved in the multifaceted expectation, passion, and judgment of an animal spirit.

If, then, it is possible to assign anything to an essence which is not an essence, this possibility arises because the essence first and normally manifested in feeling and thought are not the essences that have been embodied multitudinously and successively in things since the beginning of the world, and that now define their dynamic nature" (R.O.B. pp. 124-5).

Furthermore, the essence of the table which is revealed to my intuition, strictly speaking, does not refer to anything beyond itself. Ultimate scepticism once again rears its head. Therefore, the mere fact that I have the essence of a table before me says nothing about the embodiment of the table's essence in matter. The question which has been lurking in the background for some time now is ready to be asked: How does one move from ultimate scepticism to a world with essences embodied in matter? Answering this question will bring us to one of the central and most critical concepts in Santayana's philosophy.

Recalling our ultimate scepticism, we will remember that the only thing that is known for certain, or is given, is solipsism of the present moment. There is some given essence. Clearly Santayana wants a more robust philosophy than that – he is after all a materialist so somewhere in there he needs material objects that can claim existence in their own right. If all we can *be certain of* is solipsism of the present moment then our belief in a material world independent of ourselves, which is surely what common sense would have us believe, despite Berkeley's protests, has to be a posit of faith. This faith in an external world is what Santayana calls animal faith. If ever we regard something as existing in its own right as a material object, or ourselves as a continuously existing being, or that there are other minds independent of our own, we are operating in animal faith. Any belief in anything that goes beyond solipsism of the present moment is just that – a belief. Animal faith is at work.

"If I hypostatise an essence into a fact, instinctively placing it in relations which are not given within it, I am putting my trust in animal faith, not in any evidence or implication of my actual experience" (S.A.F. pp. 99-100). This quotation clearly

explains animal faith as a concept that covers any belief which goes beyond solipsism of the present moment. An understanding of animal faith is essential to an understanding of Santayana's philosophy for it is the underpinnings of everything that is not solipsism of the present moment.

There are several interesting observations that follow from the doctrine of animal faith, two of which are of special interest to this overview of Santayana's system. Firstly, despite Santayana's adherence to materialism he is, fundamentally, agnostic about the existence of matter. Agnosticism, in the sense that I am using it here, refers to the doctrine that some specific claim or another cannot be proved nor disproved. Hence, an agnostic about the existence of God claims that the existence of God cannot be proved but nor can it be disproved. This is exactly the position Santayana holds regarding the existence of matter. Matter cannot be proven to exist nor can it be proven to not exist. There is no certainty in matter's existence since it can easily be doubted – even the wayward sceptic and idealist realize this much – and therefore it cannot be *proven* to exist. Neither can matter be proven not to exist since, as we will see later, all idealist attempts at constructing the world without matter fail. This is an important point and will become increasingly important when I come to examine the tension between metaphysics and epistemology in Santayana's system. Secondly, animal faith does more than merely give us a belief that there is, for example, a real table. Animal faith propels us into a belief that there is a real table which exists independently of any mind; that is, that the table has substance which does not require consciousness to grant it existence and this substance is called matter. This is to say that animal faith does not pick us up from solipsism of the present moment and drop us off at idealism but rather carries us much further until we come to realism. The details of how and why animal faith necessarily bypasses idealism are not important for this overview of Santayana's system. Any explanation, even a 'bare bones' explanation, requires a substantial amount of detail which would perhaps drag us from our present purpose. This detail will be studied, however, when my proposal for resolving the tension between Santayana's metaphysics and his (revised) epistemology is looked at closely. It is enough to understand, at the present time, that animal faith cannot be faith in idealism.

Animal faith thus grants us an external, self-existing world. We believe that there are essences which are embodied in matter because we have animal faith. This faith necessarily posits matter embodying some particular essence. Animal faith demands that we be realists about the external world. It is clear that strictly speaking we cannot have knowledge of the external world since the only thing that is known for certain is a given essence. We can, however, have a sort of relaxed knowledge which does not have such strict requirements as 'givenness' or certainty. This knowledge is symbolic only and is judged pragmatically. Strict knowledge, Santayana maintains, has no place in the world beyond the given essence. This is clear because anything that goes beyond ultimate scepticism is a posit of faith. This, however, should not entirely discourage us from thinking we cannot have knowledge in a more relaxed sense, which is all the knowledge of existents we should expect or want. As Santayana writes:

Our worst difficulties arise from the assumption that knowledge of existences ought to be literal, whereas knowledge of existences has no need, no propensity, and no fitness to be literal. It is symbolic initially, when a sound, a smell, an indescribable feeling are signals to the animal of his dangers or chances; and it fulfils its function perfectly – I mean its moral function of enlightening us about our natural good – if it remains symbolic to the end (S.A.F. pp. 101-2).

This passage makes it clear that our knowledge of existing things does not need to be, nor should ever be expected to be, the same type of knowledge that the ultimate sceptic has of the given essence which has no claim on existence. Knowledge of essences embodied in matter, those essences which have existence, is symbolic only and judged pragmatically. Or, to use an important Santayana slogan, knowledge is faith mediated by symbols. I can be said to have knowledge of the existing, material, table. My knowledge is, fundamentally, faith only since it is only by an act of faith that I believe the table is composed of matter. Furthermore, my knowledge of the table is mediated by my symbol of the table. This symbol is my visual perception of the table since I am looking at it. This visual perception is presenting the essence of the table (its 'tablehood') to my intuition. So the essence which is revealed to my intuition is the symbol I have of the material table. I believe it is a material table because it seems external to me: if it were hurled at me I would be fearful of it, I cannot pass my hand through it . . . generally, because it brings about in me "belief in substance (as alertness)

before it brings intuition of essences; it is appetite *before* it is description” (S.A.F. p. 188). Perhaps an example of a menacing tiger would have been better than a table but the idea is the same.

From the previous quotation from Santayana it should also be noted that knowledge of existents, and hence truth, is very pragmatic. This is because our symbols give no guarantee that they give accurate representations of the matter they represent. To continue with our example, my visual symbol of the table is not necessarily an accurate representation of the material table. Furthermore, there is *no way to know* if a symbol is an accurate representation of a material object. There is no “pictorial identity between the essence in intuition and the constitution of the object. Discourse is a language, not a mirror” (S.A.F. p.179). Truth, then, is not given from the essences in our intuition; rather, it is judged pragmatically. If the symbolizations of objects that we use allow us to make accurate predictions which in turn allow us to survive, then we can be said to have true symbolizations. An obvious consequence of this view is that two competing symbols of reality that have equal survival value can both be said to be true. Santayana writes, “alternative systems of religion or science, if not taken literally, may equally well express the actual operation of things measured by different organs or from different centers” (S.A.F. p. 98).

All knowledge of existing things is symbolic and pragmatic in this manner. It is quite apparent that this is a very different sort of knowledge than the ultimate sceptic has of a given essence. Knowledge of a given essence is direct knowledge, hence the term ‘given essence,’ while knowledge of existing things is indirect, or critical knowledge. Perhaps we can at last see why Santayana is a critical realist. He is a realist because existing things have existence which is not dependent on any perception (they exist in their own right), and he is critical because the knowledge we have of existing things is not direct but rather is mediated by our symbols of them. This is, as Santayana himself would probably say, a look at his philosophy from a great distance and in poor light, but it is, nevertheless, *a look* at his system and does give us a basic understanding of his philosophy from which to build.

Epistemology

Santayana lays the groundwork for his epistemology in Scepticism and Animal Faith. He uses the sceptical method to discover what is indubitable, or to put it more positively, what is certain. When Santayana arrives at what is certain he will then have a foundation for his epistemology. This foundation will be the starting point for Santayana to rebuild the world – to insert such things as substance, change, personal identity – via animal faith. What exactly this foundation is, what the sceptic has direct knowledge of, will accordingly be of the utmost importance to Santayana's philosophy since it will determine the manner in which his world is rebuilt. Suppose, for example, that Santayana's scepticism halted at the realm of matter. This would mean that the existence of matter is known directly and therefore matter would necessarily be included in Santayana's rebuilt world – in his metaphysics. One cannot, after all, decide something is certain epistemically and then conclude that it has absolutely no metaphysical status. Santayana obviously does not halt his scepticism at the realm of matter and so the question becomes, 'where does his scepticism stop?' The same question can alternatively be put, 'what is given?' The focal point of this discussion, therefore, is to discover Santayana's answer to this question and to examine his answer critically. When I have done this I will then need to quickly examine whether or not the sceptical method has tyrannical rule over what is to count as given.

First, a distinction needs to be made between what I would like to call two different orders of knowledge in Santayana's epistemology. First order knowledge is knowledge in which the object is known certainly, or literally. This type of knowledge is equivalent to the knowledge of objects which direct realists maintain that we have – though we will see it is dramatically less prevalent for Santayana. There is nothing mediating the consciousness's knowledge of the object and so this knowledge is extremely 'high-grade,' since it has to be the case that what is known is known thoroughly and literally. Santayana himself never refers to this extremely high-grade knowledge as knowledge; rather, he consistently refers to it as 'the given' or 'what is certain.' It seems clear, however, that the term 'knowledge' is perfectly appropriate for such awareness of an object, even more appropriate than the term 'knowledge' is for

awareness of objects which is not literal but symbolic only. To maintain consistency with Santayana, however, I will appropriate his use of language and henceforth refer to this high-grade knowledge not as knowledge but as 'the given' or 'what is certain.'

The second order of knowledge is 'lower-grade' knowledge. It is knowledge which is not literal and could never be literal since it is knowledge of facts or events. These facts or events are not given directly and are objects which are known indirectly; that is, they are mediated. This is the impetus for one of Santayana's major slogans: Knowledge is faith mediated by symbols. Those objects which are not given are truly objects of faith, since they are not given, and our knowledge of them is mediated by our symbols for them. It is immediately apparent that scepticism is the method by which we are to decide what is given and what is not given. At the terminus of scepticism we will be confronted with the given while everything else, everything which is a postulate beyond scepticism, is not given.

Scepticism, done honestly and truly, will demarcate the given and the not-given for the most part along the lines of existence. Everything which exists can be doubted by the sceptic since, to put it too simply, existences are contingent; the sceptic who is not wayward, will doubt all that can be doubted. The honest, and only reputable, sceptic will therefore doubt everything that exists. It is obvious, then, that a fairly clear, working definition of existence will be needed in order to see what can be doubted by the sceptic and is therefore not given and what cannot be doubted by the sceptic and is therefore given. When we discover what is given we will have answered our original question and have discovered the foundation of Santayana's epistemology.

Existence, for Santayana, seems to be defined, or more precisely *described*, in various, and not altogether compatible, ways. The description of existence that seems to be the most useful for Santayana is³, "facts or events believed to occur in nature" (S.A.F.

³ There certainly are other passages in which Santayana has a different, or perhaps more full, description of existence where he seems to equate existence with matter. This, however, will not be a description of existence that will be useful to him in discussions of scepticism since existence does not then apply to spirit or acts of spirit at all. See *Realms of Being* p. 286 for an example of such a description. Though, as I have said previously, the 'Life of Matter,' and the 'invisible wind' can easily be seen to include spirit since spirit, according to Santayana, is an epiphenomenon of matter. Regardless, it would perhaps be best to avoid any description of existence which equates it with matter since this will give rise to tendencies to leave spirit out of discussions of existence when it is clear that spirit does exist.

p. 47.) that are “in flux, determined by external relations, and jostled by irrelevant events” (S.A.F. p. 42).

Under this working description of existence we can then use our sceptical method and doubt anything which is, in the strictest sense, belief only. Our scepticism is relatively easy, we need only follow the reasoning of Descartes, until we come to a position of solipsism. We have come as far as, ‘I think, therefore I am.’ Now the game becomes significantly more difficult. Santayana argues, correctly I believe, that much remains to be doubted once we reach a state of solipsism. Santayana writes:

The postulates on which empirical knowledge and inductive science are based – namely, that there has been a past, that it was such as it is now thought to be, that there will be a future and that it must, for some inconceivable reason, resemble the past and obey the same laws – these are all gratuitous dogmas (S.A.F. p. 14).

Certainly Santayana is correct in his criticism of any who do not take their scepticism beyond mere solipsism. Descartes undoubtedly did not as he, at the terminus of his scepticism, still had the dogma of personal identity operational. That is wayward scepticism since there is still much to doubt.

Bertrand Russell agrees with Santayana and also argues that the position of solipsism is not as far as scepticism can be taken. According to Russell, the ‘I’ in Descartes’ ‘I think, therefore I am’ still contains much that can be doubted. He writes:

When I look at my table and see a certain brown colour, what is quite certain at once is not ‘I am seeing a brown colour’, but rather, ‘a brown colour is being seen’. This of course involves something (or somebody) which (or who) sees the brown colour; but it does not involve that more or less permanent person whom we call ‘I’. So far as immediate certainty goes, it might be that the something which sees the brown colour is quite momentary, and not the same as the something which has some different experience the next moment (Problems of Philosophy, p. 19).

The wayward sceptic (exemplified by Descartes) who believes ultimate scepticism to be merely solipsism, maintains that he himself, who is a being with a history, is having a brown appearance appear to him. If, for example, the solipsist then had a red appearance appear to him, he would maintain that the consciousness to which the red appearance appears to would be the same consciousness as the brown appearance appeared to. The solipsist of the present moment, however, recognizes such a belief in a personal identity

as nothing more than a gratuitous dogma. After all, memories are as open to doubt as material objects are.

Russell and Santayana, then, are sceptics-in-arms up to this point. They both maintain that both the past and hope for a future must be discarded by the honest sceptic; they are both solipsists of the present moment. At this point Russell, at least in The Problems of Philosophy, is content with his scepticism and believes he can doubt nothing further. So the terminus of Russell's scepticism is that a momentary perceiver is having an appearance appear to it; or, to use Santayana's terminology, both the intuition of the essence and the essence are given.

Santayana, on the other hand, does not stop at this point. He certainly agrees with Russell that essence, or appearance, is given. Indeed, the essence is the terminus of his scepticism. As he writes:

My scepticism has at last touched bottom, and my doubt has found honourable rest in the absolutely indubitable. Whatever essence I find and note, that essence and no other is established before me. I cannot be mistaken about it, since I now have no object of intent other than the object of intuition (S.A.F. p. 74).

So far, then, Santayana agrees with Russell, for the essence which is established before Santayana's sceptic is the appearance of brown which is established before Russell's sceptic. Our attention must now turn to the intuition of the essence itself – it must be decided if it is given. Russell certainly answers affirmatively but Santayana does not. Santayana's scepticism marches impossibly forward and arrives at what could be pejoratively called 'exaggerated scepticism.' He writes:

I shall deny the existence of everything, and abolish that category of thought altogether. If I could not do this, I should be a tyro in scepticism. Belief in the existence of anything, including myself, is something radically incapable of proof, and resting, like all belief, on some irrational persuasion or prompting of life (S.A.F. p.35).

Here Santayana is attempting to deny that the momentary intuition of an essence is given. The crux of this denial is, as to be expected, existence. Recall our working description of existence: facts or events that are believed to occur in nature and are in flux, determined by external relations, and jostled by irrelevant events. This means that the sceptic's intuition of an essence, his momentary spirit, is a fact or event which is in flux, determined by external relations, and jostled by irrelevant events. What needs to be

determined is whether the momentary intuition of an essence satisfies these criteria of existence.

Intense reflection on solipsism of the present moment may well lead one to believe that the intuition of the essence does not exist because at that critical point, at the moment of ultimate scepticism, the intuition of the essence simply becomes one and the same as the essence which is being intuited. There would therefore be no flux, since it is a single moment, and no external relations since there would be no things at all. The intuition of the essence is, as it were, oblivious to its own intuition as it is completely absorbed in the essence.

Santayana is certainly sympathetic to this position. He holds those that have had the clarity of mind to completely absorb their intuition into their object in high regard. "Philosophers capable of intense contemplation – Aristotle, for instance, at those points where his thought becomes, as it were, internal to spirit – have generally asserted that in the end essence and the contemplation of essence are identical" (S.A.F. p. 126). This absorption, though noteworthy, should not, according to Santayana, lead to the rather substantial mistake of identifying intuition of essence with the essence intuited. This is a mistake which is easily made because subjectively, that is, from the point of view of the solipsist of the present moment: thought is sublimated into an essence. "Thought as it sinks into its object rises in its deliverance out of the sphere of contingency and change, and loses itself in that object, sublimated into an essence. This sublimation is no loss; it is merely absence of distraction" (S.A.F. p.127). It is important to note here that if this sublimation of thought into essence were to *actually* occur, that is, occur objectively rather than merely subjectively, then one could rightly say that both the intuition of essence and the essence are given since the intuition of essence would have risen 'out of the sphere of contingency and change' – it would no longer *exist*.

It is, however, not actually the case that the intuition of the essence is sublimated into an essence. When looked at objectively, Santayana argues that "essence and intuition of essence can never be identical" (S.A.F. p. 128). His argument, which makes up the bulk of Chapter XIV in Scepticism and Animal Faith, is that essence and intuition of essence properly belong to two separate realms of being; one is existent while the other is non-existent. Santayana is asking us to consider the solipsist of the present

moment from the third person perspective or from the perspective of the sceptic reflecting on his scepticism. I will explicitly consider the case of the third person perspective though the reflection case is for all intents and purposes exactly the same; that is, it requires a perspective of the solipsist of the present moment which is itself outside of solipsism of the present moment.

There is the sceptic, some distance from us, doubting all that can be doubted until he arrives at the given essence. To the sceptic it is going to seem, as we have discussed, that his intuition of the essence and the essence intuited are one and the same. But to us it is perfectly obvious that the essence and the intuition of the essence are not the same. This is because we can see that the sceptic is not considering the whole of the realm of essence but rather he is merely considering one seemingly random part of it. From this essence, which is a mere portion of the realm of essence, he moves his attention, whether consciously or not, to another portion of the realm of essence. This essence will hold his attention for a time and then he will move on. All this proves to us that the sceptic's intuition has a direction, it is not coolly stationary, meditating on all things, and, as Santayana writes, "the fact that intuition has a direction is added proof of its existential character, and of its complete diversity in nature from the essences it lights up" (S.A.F. p. 132). The sceptic's intuition runs "up against this or that, for no logical reason. This arbitrary assault of intuition upon essence is evidence that something not essence, which I call intuition, has come into play" (S.A.F. p. 132). The obvious movement of intuition across the realm of essence is proof that the intuition of essence and the essence intuited belong to two different realms of being. Furthermore, the realm of being which the intuition belongs to is an existent realm of being. The intuition is in flux and therefore exists in time. "So the intuition will be an utterly different thing from the essence intuited: it will be something existent and probably momentary; it will glow and fade" (S.A.F. p. 130).

Thus, our sceptic's intuition of an essence at a moment of solipsism of the present moment is an existent and is therefore dubitable. We are progressing toward an answer to our question – it seems that only an essence is given.

We may here wonder if Santayana has made a mistake. Surely there can be no given essence without some intuition of that given essence. After all, what would the

given essence be given to? In other words, there can be no appearance without something for the appearance to appear to. This seems to be the reason that Russell stops his scepticism at the given essence and the momentary intuition of the given essence.

Santayana is very much aware of the strong intuitive pull of this line of reasoning. Indeed, he believes that the very first existence that the ultimate sceptic will be aware of and will be most strongly compelled to grant certainty is the existence of his own intuition. It must be remembered, however, that no matter how compelling it may seem that the sceptic's intuition is certain the intuition is still an existent and therefore a fact open to doubt. We must be strong of mind and steadfastly consistent in our scepticism – we must doubt every existent, every fact, no matter how compelling the evidence for their certainty. As Santayana writes:

The first existence, then, of which a sceptic may find himself in the presence of random essences may gather reasonable proof, is the existence of the intuition to which those essences are manifest (S.A.F. p.133).

And elsewhere he writes:

Certainly, as a matter of fact, when I deny existence I exist; but doubtless many of the other facts I have been denying, because I found no evidence for them, were true also. To bring me evidence of their existence is no duty imposed on facts, nor a habit of theirs: I must employ private detectives. The point is, in this task of criticism, to discard every belief that is belief merely; and the belief in existence, in the nature of the case, can be a belief only (S.A.F. p.35).

Santayana certainly does have a compelling case for a fundamental difference between intuition of essence and the essence intuited as well as for the existence and therefore uncertainty of the intuition of essences. I do think, however, that in order to prove that intuition of essences exists he has cheated at his own game of scepticism. Santayana's entire argument, if you recall, is founded on the idea of looking at the sceptic from the third-person perspective or, equivalently, reflecting back on our own scepticism. In our attempt to discover what is given, this third-person perspective is entirely irrelevant. The only relevant perspective when one is engaging in scepticism is the subjective or first-person perspective. Indeed, this is part of what it means to engage in scepticism. The sceptic, even at the point of mere Cartesian solipsism, has already disavowed the existence of any other possible perspective. Scepticism, to put it simply,

is a subjective method of discovering the given. Scepticism, by its very nature, immediately pushes us inside our own minds, inside our own perspectives, and denies us access to any other perspective. To rely on any other perspective is to patently fail at scepticism – it is to believe in something radically dubitable.

Recall that for the solipsist of the present moment the intuition of the essence is absorbed into the essence intuited. This absorption resulted in the intuition of the essence rising out of the flux of existence into that special sort of being which is real but non-existent. This means that for the solipsist of the present moment the intuition of the essence is nothing beyond the essence intuited and so it is given in exactly the same manner that the essence is given. Perhaps putting the argument a little more formally will help to clarify:

- 1) The essence which is intuited by the solipsist of the present moment is given.
- 2) The momentary intuition of the essence *is* the essence intuited.
- 3) Therefore, the momentary intuition of the essence is given.

This is a simple enough argument which is valid. Santayana, as we have seen, wants to deny premise 2). His denial, however, relies on viewing the sceptic from an external position which is not available to the sceptic. It certainly is obvious from an external position that the sceptic is not intuiting the entire realm of essence and is moving from essence to essence but it is entirely unobvious and, furthermore, impossible for the sceptic to realize this; the sceptic is confronted with an essence that is his entire reality. The case, then, seems to be that the argument is objectively, or what Santayana calls *actually*, unsound because premise 2) is false. But it is *subjectively* sound since the solipsist of the present moment is not in a position to realize that premise 2) is false. Certainly upon reflection on his scepticism the solipsist of the present moment will realize that his intuition of the essence was not, in fact, the essence intuited but this perspective is not open to him when he is in the throws of scepticism. Indeed, Santayana, when confronting the idea that there is massive external evidence to think that the solipsist of the present moment is given, remarks, “I must employ private detectives” (S.A.F. p. 35). He is exactly right: *scepticism must be done subjectively*. We cannot look to outside sources to prove or disprove things when we are honestly engaged in scepticism – we *must* use private detectives. These private detectives clearly tell us, as

Santayana admits, that “thought as it sinks into its object rises in its deliverance out of the sphere of contingency and change, and loses itself in that object, sublimated into an essence” (S.A.F. p. 127) and that “at the vanishing-point of scepticism, which is also the acme of life, intuition is absorbed in its object” (S.A.F. p. 126).

Santayana recognizes this objection and even seems to apologize for his use of an external point of view: “The external and naturalistic point of view from which all this appears is one I have not yet justified critically: I have anticipated it for the sake of rendering the conception of essence perfectly unambiguous” (S.A.F. p. 131).

Unfortunately, rendering the conception of essence unambiguous has lead Santayana to the false conclusion that intuition of the essence should be doubted on the grounds of its existential nature when this nature was determined by a radical misuse of the sceptical method.

There is another, very much related, reason for rejecting Santayana’s denial of premise 2). Santayana believes that as we reflect on our solipsism of the present moment we will see that our “discourse takes something up first, and then, even if it is purely dialectical, passes to some implication or compliment of that idea; and it never exhausts its themes” (S.A.F. pp. 131-2). This is the same argument as was just discussed – that intuition moves from essence to essence and this is proof of its existential character – but we have the option of attacking it on another front if someone should find my previous argument wanting. Beyond the fact that Santayana is relying on a perspective not open to the sceptic he is also relying on time, which is what this other perspective is based on, to prove that intuition is existent and dubitable. This is, once again, a radical mistake in scepticism. A rather surprising mistake considering that Santayana, since he arrived at solipsism *of the present moment*, well understands that time, belief in a past and hope for a future, is a gratuitous dogma. To put the matter another way, this reinsertion of time is coming very close to being a reinsertion of the dogma of personal identity – it is becoming wayward scepticism! Certainly the solipsist of the present moment’s intuition moves from essence to essence but this movement will go completely unnoticed by him since he will immediately doubt that the essence which has just passed was ever before him. This is precisely what makes the sceptic a solipsist of the present moment. Only the essence which is currently being contemplated by the solipsist of the present moment

is eligible for consideration by the sceptic and this will make up his total reality, or, in other words, his intuition of the essence will be absorbed into the essence intuited.

Perhaps it will help to put the matter in another way. The question that I am, concerned with in this discussion is, 'what is given?' The method that is used to discover what is given is the sceptical method because honest scepticism allows us to see through all that is, or may be, or could be, false; in other words, it allows the sceptic to see what is given. When the sceptic is finished her scepticism, when she has touched bottom as it were, she is in a position of solipsism of the present moment. When the sceptic is in the throws of solipsism of the present moment, she is wholly engaging some essence; that is, her intuition of the essence has been, as Santayana admits, sublimated into the essence intuited. For the sceptic, then, both the intuition of the essence and the essence intuited are given since they are one and the same thing. It must be remembered that the essence intuited and the intuition of the essence are the same thing, as Santayana points out, from the subjective point of view only. This is scepticism completed. The terminus of scepticism is the given essence and the intuition of essence which are one and the same thing.

Let the sceptic now *leap* out of scepticism, for that is surely the only way to get out of it, and into animal faith. One of the first things the sceptic realizes when she is in a state of animal faith is that the intuition of the essence and the essence intuited are, as has been said, not the same thing at all. The sceptic can clearly see, upon reflection of her scepticism, that her intuition is an existing thing – it exists in time and ranges over the realm of essence with a direction. It is, almost without a doubt, wholly different from the essence it intuits. This fact, which becomes apparent only in a reflective state or from a third person perspective, cannot, however, lead the sceptic to say that, as it does Santayana, the intuition of essence is not given. That is, simply because from the sceptic's position of animal faith she can clearly see that intuition of essence is an existent, she cannot use this as a reason to claim it is not given. For, this claim is obviously a claim about whether or not something, in this case her intuition of an essence, is given. But in order to make such a claim one would need to use a method which is proper for deciding what is given. In other words, to discover if the intuition of the essence is given the sceptic would need to re-engage in scepticism. This will lead

her, if she does her scepticism honestly as she did before, into a position of intuition of essence sublimated into essence. This sublimation will result, as we have seen, into the essence and the intuition of the essence being given since they will be, from the position of scepticism, one and the same thing. Santayana's denial that the intuition of essence is given, since it wholly depends on a point of view which is outside ultimate scepticism, inevitably leads the sceptic right back into scepticism and the sublimation of intuition of essence into the essence intuited. The import of all of this is that only the sceptical point of view is to 'count' in a discussion of what is given. Even if it is discovered upon reflection that what is given in scepticism is an existent there are no grounds to change our verdict and claim that what was given is now not given. This is because, as we have seen, scepticism is the only method which is allowed to deliver such verdicts.

There is an interesting and very noteworthy effect that regarding the intuition of the essence as given has on Santayana's slogan 'Nothing given exists.' Santayana clearly meant by this slogan that scepticism proves that anything which is given directly to the intuition cannot possibly be an existent. Essences, which is what Santayana maintains are the only thing given, are therefore non-existent; they are, as we saw in our brief summary of Santayana's philosophy, *real* but non-existent. Santayana makes this fairly clear in the following passage:

Universals [essences] are individual, not general: terms can be general only in use, never intrinsically; but the individual is an essence, not an existing particular. The latter is not a possible object of intuition and has no place in logic: it is some fragment of the flux of nature, posited in action, and by virtue of that status for ever external to thought (R.O.B. p. 93).

So existing particulars are not, and cannot, be objects of intuition. Therefore, anything which is an object of intuition, which essences clearly are, must be a universal – real, but non-existent. Essences are given in intuition but clearly do not exist. Hence, 'Nothing given exists.'

It may well be asked if this slogan is now true or false if my argument against Santayana's scepticism is accepted. The answer to this question will, I believe, further clarify my argument against Santayana's scepticism. 'Nothing given exists,' is true from one point of view and false from another point of view. It depends on whether or not the question is considered after animal faith has been accepted or considered while in

scepticism. From the point of view of the sceptic, the slogan is true. The intuition of the essence has been sublimated into the essence and neither of them, since they are the same thing, is an existent. From the reflective or third-person point of view, the slogan is false. Upon reflection, after the sceptic has leapt out of scepticism and is in the domain of animal faith, it is clear that the intuition of the essence is an existent. Yet, as proven by scepticism, the intuition of the essence is given and therefore there is an existent which is given. So, it turns out, from the reflective point of view, that something given *does* exist; namely, intuition of essence.

The import of all this is that both the essence intuited and the intuition of the essence are given. Santayana, in his desire to doubt away the intuition of the essence, arrived at the conclusion that only the essence intuited is given. This, I believe I have shown, is a case of exaggerated scepticism. The doubting of the intuition relies on a perspective that cannot be trusted by the solipsist because all other perspectives other than the subjective perspective have already been doubted. Santayana's exaggerated scepticism also relies on time which is clearly a concept which the honest sceptic cannot rely upon. There seems to be no choice but to amend Santayana's epistemology to that of Russell's (though admittedly a much less naïve version since the prospect of doubting the intuition has been considered) and to admit the intuition of the essence, or momentary spirit, into the sphere of the given.

It now seems that the momentary spirit must be given and, along with the given essence, must be included in the foundation of Santayana's epistemology. To revisit my analogy between epistemology and a house, it seems that the house's foundation is momentary spirit and given essence. These are the things which are constructed in concrete and are immutable. The rest of the house, all of our other beliefs, all of our animal faith, certainly our belief in matter, is made of plywood and in danger of collapse during harsh weather.

The primacy of the momentary spirit that I have shown in Santayana's epistemology is, it might well be said, entirely dependent on the use of ultimate scepticism to achieve certainty. For, when the sceptic employs ultimate scepticism she arrives at solipsism of the present moment which, as we have seen, requires both the given essence and the momentary spirit. But, it should be remembered, Santayana has

other methods of discovering the given essence which may not require the momentary spirit at all. These are the methods of dialectic and of aesthetic contemplation. Though it may be hard to understand either of these without the spirit – surely it must be the spirit that goes through the mental acrobatics of dialectic and the meditation of aesthetic contemplation – we may well grant for the sake of argument that both of these methods arrive at pure essence without mention of spirit. Does this then make spirit unnecessary in Santayana's epistemology? The given essence, after all, can be found by way of dialectic or aesthetic appreciation.

Here we need to recall the ubiquity of scepticism in Santayana's philosophy. Even if it could be shown that neither dialectic nor aesthetic appreciation require the spirit to be given, which I wholeheartedly doubt, it does not mean that scepticism is not still implicitly in operation. No matter which way we arrive at essence, whether by aesthetic contemplation or by dialectic, the sceptical approach is always lurking in the background. When we do in fact take the dialectic approach or the aesthetic approach we must recognize that we are already in a state of animal faith. Scepticism is not properly viewed as a task with the purpose of finding a given essence. Rather, as Santayana puts it, "its just conclusions shall remain fixed" (S.A.F. p. 49). This is to say that scepticism is a way of life rather than an exercise one partakes in to find interesting results. Scepticism is always there; no matter what is believed it is always the case that existence and personal identity are open to doubt and the only certainties are the given essence and momentary spirit. It matters not at all if we take paths other than the sceptical path to the given essence for the sceptical path underlies all other paths and therefore momentary spirit and the given essence are the foundations of Santayana's epistemology.

There are also, it should be noted here, tremendous gains made for morality when we realize that the intuition of the essence is given. This is because there is no sense in which the momentary spirit, which is given, can be said to be 'mine' or 'yours;' that is, the momentary spirit does not, and cannot be said to, belong to anyone. At the nadir of scepticism there is no self. The self is a concept which requires existence over time, but for the ultimate sceptic there is no time and no continuity of the spirit. Time, and hence the continuity of spirit is a product of animal faith since these have no place in ultimate scepticism. And everything, it must be remembered, which goes beyond ultimate

scepticism is due to the operation of animal faith. The self, therefore, is also a product of animal faith since the concept of the self requires time and continuity. The sceptic is wholly absorbed in the appearance and, should this appearance change, the sceptic is then wholly absorbed in the new appearance while the previous appearance is completely forgotten as it has passed into the dubitable. The given spirit is not any particular person or consciousness – it is pure emancipated spirit free of any artificial constraints.

This is morally significant because when it is properly understood that the self is merely a postulate of animal faith it will *necessitate* a view of others' suffering and well-being as at least as important as our own since the whole idea of 'others' and 'our own' will be broken down so that at root, at the level of certainty, there is only one spirit which is no one person's 'self.' When we discover that the self is a product of animal faith we come extremely close, if not exactly, to the Buddhist notion of the empty self. At root our selves are empty; that is, there is no *thing* which we can point to as our self and be certain that this is what our 'self' is, for when we arrive at an appropriate point to discover what our self is, we find that it has evaporated and was a mere construct of animal faith. If this can be fully understood, we can reduce the fixation of being a separate self and become free to be concerned for all things rather than just those that, in some sense, fall into the category of being 'mine.' As Zen author Stephen Batchelor writes about the awakening of the Buddhist, Shantideva:

When the impact of this insight [the self is empty] strikes home, Shantideva recognizes that he can no longer live and behave as though the needs of "I" were intrinsically more important than those of "you." For he now understands the equality of self and others to be more than just a worthy moral assumption. It has become an inescapable existential fact (pp. 33-4).

The understanding of the self as a postulate of animal faith allows us move, as Batchelor puts it, a worthy moral assumption from being a mere assumption to an inescapable existential fact which, as I have tried to show, is dictated by proper epistemology.

Epiphenomenalism

Metaphysically the struggle between spirit and matter is settled with a very different result than it was when the battle was waged in the epistemological arena. If one can be certain about anything when reading Santayana, it is that he is an epiphenomenalist. This means that the victor in the battle for metaphysical primacy between matter and spirit is clearly matter. Epiphenomenalism makes spirit, appropriately enough, merely epiphenomena of matter and as such it is dependent on matter for virtually everything, but most importantly for its existence. Without matter there is no spirit in an epiphenomenalist system. Perhaps it would be helpful to see exactly why Santayana holds an epiphenomenalist theory of spirit, as this will facilitate our understanding of why matter is primary in Santayana's metaphysics.

A certain caveat should be made at this point to ease the mind of judicious readers. When speaking of the primacy of matter in Santayana's metaphysics it must be clear that I am making this statement relative to spirit; that is, metaphysically matter is primary to spirit. The reader may well wonder what has happened to essences since they, along with momentary spirit, as has been seen, are clearly given. Furthermore, Santayana goes to great lengths in many places to point out that neither the realm of matter nor the realm of essence is more important than the other, or that neither of them is primary to the other. The realm of matter and the realm of essence are carefully balanced for Santayana and he is very careful to never disparage one while discussing the other. Therefore I make no claim that matter is absolutely primary in Santayana's metaphysics, as it may well be said that the realm of matter and the realm of essence are equals; rather I only make the claim that matter is metaphysically primary to *spirit*.

Santayana's reasons for holding an epiphenomenalist theory of the mind are many and varied. They can be grouped into categories of arguments, or perhaps more precisely, *reasons*, for holding epiphenomenalism. These categories are: why spirit has no causal efficacy; why spirit cannot be material; why spirit is dependent on matter; and how spirit rises, so to speak, up out of matter. Indeed, these are questions that any epiphenomenalist must answer, so discovering Santayana's answer to these questions will go a long way to an understanding of his epiphenomenalism. The reader may find that

this reads like a quick list of important quotes from Santayana's *Realm of Spirit* with small amounts of explanatory discussion and virtually *no* critical discussion – this, I think, should not trouble us since we are here merely noticing that Santayana is, in fact, an epiphenomenalist and understanding that he does have reasons for his epiphenomenalism. I am *not*, at this point at any rate, interested in *contesting* his epiphenomenalism and so critical discussion would be quite out of place. Furthermore, the trouble, as I see it, with Santayana's epiphenomenalism is *not* with some inherent problem with epiphenomenalism – how can matter cause something immaterial or some such problem – but, rather, with a conflict between his epistemology and his epiphenomenalism. Therefore, there is no need to contest his epiphenomenalism *qua* epiphenomenalism since, if my critique and revision of his epistemology is correct, his epiphenomenalism gives such little metaphysical weight to spirit that it will not be a plausible theory of the mind. That being said, I should like to deal with the categories of problems for holding an epiphenomenalist theory of mind in the order of the difficulty (beginning with the least troubling) they present for Santayana.

First: How spirit 'rises' out of matter; or, how matter can cause something which is wholly different than itself. The supposed problem is easy enough to understand. Santayana puts it thusly, "substance, by hypothesis, is the source of appearances: but how, remaining substance, can it ever produce them?" (S.A.F. p. 210). It is important for an epiphenomenalist to have a response to this potential problem. After all, if it cannot be said with any conviction that matter may cause something immaterial then the epiphenomenalist is clearly in the unfortunate position of not being able to get his theory off the ground.

Santayana clearly thinks this is a false problem; indeed, the "objection arises out of false demands" (S.A.F. p. 210). It is a false problem for the simple fact that the existence of substance does not rule out the possibility of the existence of anything else. "[S]ubstance is condemned on the ground that causation should be dialectical and that reality should be uniform, so that if substance exists nothing should exist except substance. Whence these absurd postulates?" (S.A.F. p. 210). It seems that appearance, or intuited essence, is a fact that cannot be denied simply because the intuition of essence

is of a different reality than substance. There is, it seems to me, absolutely no good reason for denying that substance can cause appearance.

Second: Why spirit cannot be material. In order to be an epiphenomenalist one must assert that matter and spirit are essentially two different things. Certainly Santayana does this as matter and spirit for him belong to two separate realms of being. The question here, then, is: what makes matter and spirit two separate things? Or, what reasons are there for placing them in two separate realms of being? The potential problem for the epiphenomenalist is that if he can find no compelling reasons for this separation then he would seem to be in no position to deny materialism; that is, he might as well drop all pretence and admit that spirit is nothing more than matter.

Santayana certainly has compelling reasons for why spirit and matter properly belong in two different realms of being. Spirit is that which surveys and judges matter morally, perceives, and contemplates.

[T]he imprisoned spirit escapes from its cage as no physical fact can escape. Without quitting its accidental station it can look about; it can *imagine* all sorts of things unlike itself; it can take long views over the times and spaces surrounding its temporary home, it can even view itself quizzically from the outside, as in a mirror, and laugh at the odd figure that it cuts. (R.O.B. p. 556).

In other words, spirit has a *perspective* that matter simply does not have - spirit is intellectual. Spirit, to reiterate a concept that I believe helps to clarify the main difference between spirit and matter, has a perspective. "Spirit is the *witness* of the cosmic dance; in respect to that agitation it is transcendental and epiphenomenal" (R.O.B. p. 562). Also, spirit is a "moral focus of recollection, discrimination and judgment" (R.O.B. p.563). These are all descriptions that could never apply to matter since matter, as conceived by Santayana, is, to put it simply, "the field of action" (R.O.B. p. 189). Or, more specifically, Santayana lists the properties of matter in Chapter II of the *Realm of Matter* as, external to the thought which posits it, has parts and constitutes a physical space, in flux and constitutes a physical time, is unequally distributed, and composes a relative cosmos. There is nothing about matter, as conceived by Santayana at any rate, which involves a perspective, moral reflection, or imagination. There does seem to be good reason, therefore, for Santayana to separate spirit and matter into different realms of being.

Third: Why spirit is dependent on matter; or, why spirit cannot exist without matter. *Prima facie* this may not seem to be a requirement of an epiphenomenalist, but, I think, in order to claim that spirit is emergent from matter one also must claim that if the matter which is the cause of the emergent spirit is destroyed or suitably changed so that it no longer causes such a spirit then it follows that spirit must also be destroyed. This, at any rate, is certainly the view Santayana has – spirit cannot exist without matter.

Santayana actually holds a fairly simple, but rather convincing, view of why spirit cannot exist without matter. He reasons that without matter, without the ‘field of action,’ there would be no way that spirit could come upon particular essences. Spirit would either be occupied with nothing or with everything. This is easy enough to understand. Since no action can occur without matter it is impossible that without matter spirit could be confronted with this essence and then that essence – the very notion of change in a spirit’s attention presupposes matter!⁴ Thus, spirit divorced of matter would be either occupied with nothing or with everything. Neither of which is very promising as Santayana makes clear in the following passage:

If occupied with nothing, it [spirit] would not be a conscious being; and if occupied with everything possible, that is, with the whole realm of essence at once, it would not be the consciousness of a living soul, having a particular moral destiny, but only a hypostasis of intelligence, abstracted from all particular occasions. [. . .] Indeed spirit, once abstracted from animal life and independent of all facts, would have forfeited that intensity, trepidation, and movement, that capacity for inquiry and description, which make spirit a focus of knowledge (R.O.B. p. 565).

Spirit without matter is thus not actually possible since spirit occupied with nothing is obviously not a conscious being while spirit occupied with everything gives up its life of searching, both morally and intellectually, and ceases to be a conscious being in any typical sense. In fact, “it would have evaporated into identity with the realm of essence” (R.O.B. p. 565). This is perhaps the most important point for the purposes of this paper. The fact that spirit cannot exist without matter in Santayana’s epiphenomenal system is

⁴ Idealists may well cringe here but Santayana certainly does understand and take idealism into consideration during discussions of whether change or animal faith presupposes matter and thus rules out idealism. We will not, however, discuss his reasons for rejecting idealism until the section on my own proposal for resolving the tension between Santayana’s metaphysics and his (revised) epistemology. It is enough, for the time being, to simply understand Santayana’s position without subjecting it to critical examination.

the main reason why metaphysically matter has primacy over spirit. Spirit is, metaphysically, completely dependent on matter.

Fourth: Why spirit has no causal efficacy. This is obviously a requirement of epiphenomenalism. The epiphenomenal spirit is caused by matter but causes *nothing*; it does not cause effects in matter nor does it cause effects in the realm of spirit. This is a rather counter-intuitive notion however, since it certainly does seem that our consciousness causes our material bodies to *do* things as well as causing other thoughts in our consciousness. Thus, the epiphenomenalist will need some very compelling arguments to upset the common sense notion of spirit having causal powers. I will need to examine both spirit causing 'movement' in spirit and spirit causing movement in matter in turn.

The movement of spirit, that is, the changing of one's thoughts, is not, according to Santayana, due to the nature of spirit. The reason for this seems to be nothing more than the fact that matter is sort of thing that is in flux while spirit is a contemplative sort of thing.

Yet the issue [spirit causing the movements of spirit] has been complete confusion; because the nature of spirit is not, like that of matter, to be a principle of existence and movement, but on the contrary a principle of enjoyment, contemplation, description, and belief; so that while spirit manifests its own nature no less freely than matter does, it does so by freely regarding and commenting on something else, either matter or essence: its primary nature is to be secondary – to be observant and intelligent. (R.O.B. p. 355).

Here Santayana is appealing to the fundamental difference between matter and spirit – a difference that was seen clearly when we discussed why spirit cannot be material. So it seems that since spirit is not material it is impossible that it should be the cause of anything as that would then give it a material quality.

This may not seem very compelling. While the spirit is in a contemplative state it would seem that this very contemplation leads to the contemplation of other essences. For example, if I am thinking about an ice cream sundae I may well be led, from that contemplation only, to thinking about peanuts since peanuts are commonly put on top of ice cream sundaes. Therefore it seems that contemplation of one essence causes the contemplation of another essence.

At this point Santayana would object that what is causing the change from the contemplation of one essence to the contemplation of another essence is the *psyche* which is purely material. The spirit does, in fact, only contemplate, or enjoy, or understand the essence – it does not cause the contemplation of a new essence. This is the role of the psyche which is the form of matter, or the habit of matter. Santayana explains:

This psyche is the specific form of physical life, present and potential, asserting itself in any plant or animal; it will bend to circumstances, but if bent too much it will suddenly snap. The animal or plant will die, and the matter hitherto controlled by that psyche will be scattered. Such a moving equilibrium is at once vital and material, these qualities not being opposed but coincident. Some parcels of matter, called seeds, are predetermined to grow into organisms of a specific habit, producing similar seeds in their turn. Such a habit in matter is a psyche” (R.O.B. p. 331).

So it is not the spirit which causes the grasping of this essence and then that essence, but rather it is the psyche which brings these essences before the illuminating spirit for contemplation.

So we may agree that spirit is not the cause of the movements of spirit. We need not press this issue too hard since, as I have said, the reason epiphenomenalism will ultimately not be a viable theory of mind for Santayana is due to its conflict with his revised epistemology.

What of spirit causing movements in the realm of matter? This is ruled out because matter is “the principle of existence and movement” (R.O.B. p. 355). Anything which causes action is by definition material and this is “*a deliberate refusal to admit the possibility of any mental machinery*” (R.O.B. p. 332). This is the same reasoning that Santayana uses to scuttle idealism – idealism is latent materialism because anything which can cause movement is not spirit but is *matter*. Thus, idealism can never get off the ground, or, more precisely, out of solipsism of the present moment, since if all were merely spirit there could be no action and each moment would be the extent of the spirit’s being. Therefore, all idealists are actually latent materialists since they necessarily posit something which behaves exactly as matter though they merely name it God, or the absolute, or whatever. That is, what they posit has the properties of being external to the thought which posits it, has parts and constitutes a physical space, in flux and constitutes a physical time, is unequally distributed, and composes a relative cosmos. And these, if we remember, are nothing more than the indispensable properties of matter! This latent

materialism of idealists is a complex issue and will be dealt with, as has been mentioned before, in much more detail when I come to examine alternative theories of the mind in order to resolve the conflict between Santayana's own epiphenomenalism and his revised epistemology. It is enough, for now, to understand that for Santayana spirit can never cause movement in matter and that this is essential to any epiphenomenalist theory of the mind.

By separating Santayana's reasons for holding an epiphenomenalist theory of the mind into the preceding four categories we can perhaps clearly see why Santayana is an epiphenomenalist and have an understanding, limited as it may be, of his particular brand of epiphenomenalism. It is very important for Santayana's epiphenomenalism to keep the distinction between spirit and matter well in mind since many philosophical errors have occurred from attributing material powers to spirit or spiritual powers to matter. The former leads to idealism while the latter leads to materialism and the vanishing of spirit. The most important lesson, however, that can be gleaned from Santayana's epiphenomenalism, for the purposes of this paper, is quite simply that he *is* an epiphenomenalist, and that epiphenomenalism requires spirit to be completely dependent on matter for its existence. If these lessons are learned well, it will be obvious that metaphysically Santayana has made matter fundamental to spirit.

Tension

The tension that has been building between Santayana's epistemology and his metaphysics may now be seen quite clearly. His epistemology makes spirit foundational to matter, since it is spirit that is known literally and matter which is merely posited, while his metaphysics places matter foundational to spirit, since he maintains an epiphenomenal view of the mind. This tension is very real and problematic for Santayana who is clearly trying to establish an entire philosophical system. Perhaps the most important thing for any philosopher attempting such a feat to strive for is . . . not *Truth*, as certainly that would be far too strict a criterion, but rather *consistency*. There does seem to be a lack of consistency in Santayana's philosophy when his epistemology is compared to his metaphysics. There is something odd about arguing compellingly for a sceptical approach to epistemology, constantly reminding the reader that this is not a mere exercise but must always guide wise thought, then arriving finally at the indubitable essence and, if my argument revising his epistemology was correct, the momentary spirit and then, but a few pages later, steadfastly holding that spirit is dependent on matter for its reality. There is a curious inversion taking place.

Perhaps an example of an ultimate sceptic at work will draw this tension out suitably. The potential sceptic, at this point not a sceptic at all, may be sitting in front of a fire one day wondering about the nature of his fireplace. He remembers times in his rebellious past where he has seen something only to find later or upon reflection that what he had seen did not actually correspond to anything in the 'real' world; that is, it did not *exist*. Dreamily, he transposes his past experience into the present and wonders if the same thing may be happening now as he is sitting in front of the fire. Perhaps he is mistaken that there is a fire, perhaps it is nothing more than an illusion. Prudently he decides to disbelieve that the fire exists since he would have saved himself much embarrassment in the past if he had disbelieved what he thought he had seen. Satisfied that the fire does not exist he surveys the rest of the room. It occurs to him that the very principles that led him to doubt the existence of the fire also compel him to disbelieve the existence of the walls of the room, the carpet beneath his feet, and even the feet themselves. He realizes that everything around him is known to him only through his

senses and since his senses can be wrong, *have* been wrong before, how can he be sure they are not wrong now? He cannot be sure. The entire external world vanishes from his belief system and he is left a single consciousness with the appearance of what looks to be a wall before him. The appearance of the wall is just that, an *appearance*, and makes no reference to anything other than its appearance. It does not exist independent of the sceptic; it is not material in any sense.

The sceptic, now fully pushed inside his own mind finds he has little to do but reflect upon his past. He recalls how for his eighth birthday he received a bicycle from his parents. He corrects himself - it was a gift from his aunt and not his parents. The idea comes to him quickly: perhaps every memory he has of his past is wrong, or, more profoundly, never happened. The realization that his memory is equally susceptible to error as his senses immediately destroys his entire belief in his mental history. The destruction of his past is momentarily and quite naturally followed by the destruction of his hope for the future. He is now a momentary consciousness, which requires him to give up on reflecting on his own thoughts on the appearance of the wall for that would require him to believe in two moments – the moment of the appearance appearing and the moment of his recognizing and acknowledging that the appearance is appearing. His own momentary consciousness, his intuition of the essence, therefore, becomes completely unknown to him and he is unaware of its operation. He is wholly confronted with the image of the wall; it makes up his entire being. He cannot be wrong about the appearance since he now has “no object of intent other than the object of intuition” (S.A.F. p. 74). His momentary consciousness has been sublimated into the essence. The sceptic is now an ultimate sceptic believing nothing; there is merely the appearance of the wall, since it is there before him and will not disappear with his belief of it as an external being. It is the non-deceiving illusion; it is given. Furthermore, the momentary consciousness, since it was sublimated into the appearance, that is, since the sceptic *became* the appearance, is also given. He can doubt nothing further and so these, the appearance and the momentary spirit, are certain to him.

This is certainly a very difficult position to maintain and so, as quickly as he achieved ultimate scepticism, the sceptic finds himself almost necessarily postulating his own intuition and continued identity. It is, in one sense, inescapable. He (now aware of

himself as an enduring self) stares at the appearance of the wall and wonders what to make of it. In order to survive in the world he decides the most prudent course of action is now to believe in the wall and the fire and his own body. Embarrassment from the odd mistake is preferable to complete inaction. He thus believes that everything he senses is independent of himself and, therefore, composed of matter.

So, it seems our sceptic has gone from naïve believer to the depths of scepticism and back to a more critical or wise believer. He is wiser because he realizes that everything other than the appearance, or given essence, and the momentary spirit, is merely believed. He will not, in the future, foolishly claim *knowledge* (certainty) of external objects the way he did in the past. So far, then, the sceptic is in the same position as Santayana after his sceptical exploration. Imagine now if our sceptic, after everything he has been through, tried to convince us that spirit is epiphenomenal and completely dependent on matter. Would we not be justified to tell him that he has very quickly forgotten the one thing that he learned from his scepticism?

Curiously, this is exactly what Santayana does. All that scepticism was supposed to teach and prove is thrown out when he elucidates his philosophy of mind. Surely he has made, if his scepticism is correct, a tremendous error. Santayana worked hard to show that matter is merely a posit of belief, or, more precisely, of animal faith and now he wants to turn what he knows on its head – his spirit, that which believes and posits, is now completely dependent on matter, which is something that his spirit posited. Santayana, in his haste and forgetfulness, has made the believer dependent on the believed. Surely he has gotten things backwards; surely what is the foundation of our epistemology must also be the foundation of our metaphysics.

To allow his metaphysics such a long leash so that it need not be bound by his epistemology, Santayana has made his metaphysics arbitrary and true only dogmatically. To base a metaphysics on something which he cannot be certain exists is to base that metaphysics on an arbitrary thing. For Santayana to conclude that anything other than spirit is fundamental to metaphysics is to make an arbitrary conclusion since that thing will be radically uncertain and only a postulate of animal faith. It will only be a candidate for the foundation of his metaphysics *because* it is posited by spirit. If spirit had no inclination to posit matter and it ignored any shock – the thunder crashing or the

menacing tiger – and remained completely inactive and coolly contemplative, then matter would have no place in such a spirit's metaphysics since matter would not be posited at all. Simply because we do have the inclination to posit matter and we find that this helps us survive, indeed, renders action possible, does not mean that matter is certain and if matter is not certain there can be fundamentally no reason to base our metaphysics on that which is uncertain; particularly when there is the option to base our metaphysics on that which is certain.

Now it may be said that spirit has no choice but to posit matter. This may be true. Santayana describes a thunderclap that shakes the spirit and makes it aware of things external to itself before the spirit reflects on them. Indeed, Santayana writes, "Experience, at its very inception, is a revelation of *things*; and these things, before they are otherwise distinguished, are distinguishable into a here and a there, a now and a then, nature and myself in the midst of nature" (S.A.F. p. 189). He also writes, "experience brings belief in substance *before* it brings intuition of essences; it is appetite *before* it is description" (S.A.F. p. 188). In this manner the reader could easily be lead to the false conclusion that matter necessarily, or certainly, exists because experience makes us aware that nature, the conglomeration of all substance external to us, is *out there* frightening us with thunderclaps or stunning us with sunsets despite what the sceptic may think during fits of sceptical philosophy. Matter, therefore, should be considered a good candidate for the foundation of metaphysics since it certainly exists as testified by nature in her brilliance and dreadfulness.

This, I believe, is clearly incorrect and a misreading of Santayana. It is true that experience often brings about in us the belief in external things but this in no way vouches for the *certainty* of those external things. This experience of nature is nothing more than the reason we decide (whether this is a conscious decision or not) it is prudent to operate in animal faith and to posit that the things around us exist independently of us. Certainty is still, and always will be, fit only for the given essence and the momentary spirit since, as we saw in the criticism against Santayana's epistemology, the only judge who has any authority over certainty is scepticism.

The tension which is here being fleshed out may seem trivial to many since these are certainly two distinct areas of philosophy – on the one hand we have epistemology

and on the other hand we have metaphysics. Surely epistemology should not greatly influence our metaphysics or we may end up in the ridiculous position of Descartes and actually believe that simply because we can imagine that something is the case that it must *be* the case. In other words, what we *know*, or can possibly know, can have no bearing on what *is*. To believe otherwise, would surely be a grossly egotistical position.

This argument, I think, is sound. It is the case that what we know, or possibly can know, has absolutely no bearing on what is. This, however, does not mean that our metaphysics can have a different foundation than our epistemology if we want a consistent philosophical system. What we can know about the world says nothing about the way the world is, but it does say something about the way we can *think* about the world. If our scepticism has been done correctly then we have seen that the only things which are given are an essence and the intuition of the essence. Everything else is a mere posit of animal faith. If it is not possible for us to have everything given to us then surely our thoughts about the way things *really* are, if we are to be consistent at any rate, must be affected and, in a certain sense, controlled by what *is* given. If we allow our thinking about the world, our metaphysics, such a long leash that it need not ever come back to our epistemology or what is certain then our thinking is not at all bound to certainty and is consequently arbitrary and dogmatic. While by chance the dogma might be true, we can have no reason to think it so. To conceive of the universe as being materially based is to make a dogmatic assumption that cannot possibly be grounded in certainty since matter itself is tremendously *uncertain*. When pressed about the basis of his universe the materialist will be forced either to stupidly hold on to his materialism as a brute truth for which no reason can be given, or to claim that his materialism is based only on his fancy since matter, at its root, is only a product of the spirit.

An interesting, and very noteworthy, consequence of this argument is that metaphysics as it is sometimes thought of is impossible; that is, metaphysics is sometimes described as being the study of reality as it exists in itself and divorced of what we think of it, but, under this argument, it turns out that we can only consistently assert things about reality that are based on what we can be certain of – momentary intuition of essence and essence. This, however, is a perfectly acceptable consequence as it seems difficult to consistently maintain a position which is unconnected to certainty. Again, if it

is not possible for us to be certain that matter is existent, then it is arbitrary to assign it primacy over spirit – particularly if we *can* be certain that spirit is real.

By holding an epistemological position that renders momentary spirit and essence as foundational relative to matter (if I have been successful in showing that the momentary spirit is given) while at the same time holding a metaphysical position that renders matter foundational relative to spirit, Santayana has introduced a rather disturbing tension in his philosophical system. Matter, which is the basis of his metaphysics given his epiphenomenalism, is a mere posit of his spirit since matter can never be given to the intuition; it can never be known *literally*. He has therefore based his metaphysics on something which is merely posited by animal faith and thus rendered the positing entity (the spirit) completely dependent on the posited entity (matter) for its existence. This is problematic because if we allow metaphysics to be based on things which are merely posits of spirit then our metaphysics is arbitrarily constructed and dogmatic since it has no connection to certainty. While the dogma may in fact be true there is no reason to think it so.

Reconciliation

The tension between Santayana's epistemology and his metaphysics is a real problem that requires a solution in order for his system to be consistent. The epistemological side of the equation is set; that is, we cannot alter the fact that what is given is the momentary intuition of essence and the essence intuited. Scepticism tells us that this, and only this, is *certain*. So, since our epistemology has the quality of being certain the onus is on our metaphysics to harmonize with our epistemology. Clearly, as was said in the previous section, any metaphysics which places matter as primary to spirit will not be a feasible metaphysics for our interpretation of Santayana. This is because any metaphysics with matter as foundational will conflict with our epistemology.

I am then in the fortunate position of being able to narrow my choices of viable metaphysics dramatically. To reiterate, any metaphysics which places matter as primary is not a viable option due to the conflict such metaphysics will have with the established epistemology. Therefore, Santayana's own epiphenomenalism is ruled out, as is any materialist system. We must remember that we are using the term 'materialist system' very loosely so that it will include any system that has either matter as the only existing thing, or spirit entirely reducible to matter, or spirit dependent on matter for its existence. There seem to be few options left to explore. The most natural metaphysical course which has been marked by epistemology is that of idealism. Scepticism finds an essence and the intuition of the essence as given – everything else is a postulate of this intuition, of this spirit. Everything, then, would initially seem to be a reflection of spirit and epistemology guides metaphysics toward idealism.

Idealist metaphysics, however, will not do. Firstly, idealism would require too radical an alteration of Santayana's system. Secondly, and far more importantly, idealism is subject to Santayana's biting criticism that all idealist systems are merely latent materialist systems.

If we recall, one of my goals in the reconstruction of Santayana's metaphysics was to keep as much of Santayana's philosophy intact and to, for lack of a better phrase, 'keep the spirit' of his philosophy during our exploration and renovation. Clearly then idealism will not suffice as an alternative to Santayana's own epiphenomenalism as there are numerous passages where one can almost feel Santayana's loathing toward idealism.

Of course there are other reasons for rejecting idealism other than a desire to remain as Santayanian as possible. Foremost among these – and the only reasons I will be considering – is Santayana’s own arguments against idealism, the main thrust of which is that idealism is merely latent materialism. Santayana’s attack on idealism seems to be almost like a hunt or chase: First, he takes on naïve idealists who hold that when a thing is no longer the object of someone’s perception it ceases to exist. These idealists make no attempt to give any permanence whatever to things. Santayana quickly chases the idealist out of this position for it is a very contentious thesis and extremely difficult, if not impossible, to coherently defend. The next logical place for the idealist to find refuge is in the sort of idealism that is found in philosophers such as Berkeley. The idealist now tries to establish some permanence to things by postulating some other permanent perceiver. In this way things can remain mind dependent while achieving the permanence which naïve idealism lacked. Unfortunately for the idealist, the permanence that they attempt to give things results in the unconscious admission of substance. Furthermore, the reasons idealists typically want to deny matter (such as, matter is a mere duplication of appearance about which nothing productive can be said) result from confusing essence, intuition and substance. So, the idealist is chased from any idealism such as Berkeley’s since any such system is really as dependent on substance as any materialist system. The last place of refuge for the idealist is to deny that things are public. Indeed, this saves the idealist from the unconscious admission of substance since there is nothing which is said to be appearing to multiple perceivers. Appearances no longer need to refer to anything and so substance has been successfully eliminated from the idealist metaphysics. This is done, however, a terrible price. Once public appearances are given up so too are belief and truth given up and the idealist finds himself trapped in solipsism of the present moment. Idealism, when pushed to its only defensible position, becomes a solipsistic metaphysics which is, as a resting point of philosophy, repugnant to good sense.

Recall that Santayana describes the realm of matter, or substance⁵, as facts or events that are “in flux, determined by external relations, and jostled by irrelevant events” (S.A.F. p. 42). Matter is “the field of action” (R.O.B. p.189); it is the “invisible wind

⁵ For one example of where Santayana equates matter with substance see page 51 of Realms of Being.

which, sweeping for no reason over the field of essences, raises some of them into a cloud of dust" (R.O.B. p. 286). He calls substance "objects of belief posited in action" (S.A.F. p. 202). So matter is a thing which is posited because we find ourselves in a dynamic world – assaulted by this experience and touched by that experience. Matter, Santayana makes it quite clear, is dynamic while spirit is reflective and intellectual – a surveyor of the realm of essence and, indirectly, the realm of matter.

Let us begin our hunting of idealism. The trail leads first to those rather naïve idealists who maintain that a thing only 'exists' when it is an object of perception. This leads to the doctrine that if I happen to be the only one perceiving a table then the table exists. If I were to stop perceiving the table then the table would blink out of existence while it was not perceived by me. There are major problems with such an idealist doctrine. Santayana diffuses this idealism in the following passage:

Hence the discovery, big with scientific consequences, that an existing thing may endure unchanged, although my experience of it be intermittent. The object of these recurrent observations is conceived, as a sophisticated psychology would have it, by feigning that the observations are not discrete. Every one knows, when he shuts and opens his eyes, that his vision has been interrupted; the interruption is the point of the game. The notion that the thing persists was there from the beginning; until I blinked, I had found it persisting, and I find it persisting still after I open my eyes again. In considering the fortunes of the object posited, I simply discard the interruption, as voluntary and due to a change in myself which I can repeat at will. In spontaneous thought I never confuse the changes which the thing may undergo in its own being with the variations in my attention nor (when I have little experience) with shifts in my perspectives. I therefore recognise it to be permanent in relation to my intermittent glimpses of it; and this without in the least confusing or fusing my different views, or supposing them to be other than discrete and perhaps instantaneous. (S.A.F. p. 197).

This naïve idealism cannot be an accurate description of the world because when our perception of a thing is interrupted it is not due to change in the being of the *thing*, rather, it is due to a change in the perceiver. In fact, the interruption does not show that the thing is dependent on our perception, but it does make a strong case for the exact opposite conclusion – the thing is still there, still persisting, after the interruption of the perception of it. It must, therefore, be independent of the perception of it and to assert otherwise is to indulge in the radical error of confusing changes in perception with changes which the thing may undergo in its own being.

The wise idealist is thus pushed away from naïve idealism and toward idealism in a more sophisticated form. These more sophisticated forms of idealism are found in, for example, Berkeley⁶. He realised that things need to have permanence independent of any individual's perception but still wanted to maintain, like naïve idealism, that all things are dependent on mind for their existence. Thus Berkeley brings in God as the sort of 'permanent perceiver' of all things. The permanence of things is now due to them being continuously perceived in God's mind – everything is an idea in God's mind. When I close my eyes, the table does not go out of existence because God constantly perceives the table and since the table is still being perceived it continues to exist.

A common argument used by empiricist idealists like Berkeley is that the postulation of matter as a thing independent of mind is a mere duplication of appearance – one which, because it is a duplication and beyond perception, nothing productive can be said – and, because of its redundancy, matter should be denied. For, consider what Locke, that great champion of substance, was forced to say about substance:

So that if any one will examine himself concerning his *Notion of pure Substance in general*, he will find he has no other *Idea* of it at all, but only a Supposition of he knows not what [. . .] And if he were demanded, what is it, that that Solidity and Extension inhere in, he would not be in a much better case, than the *Indian* before mentioned; who, saying that the world was supported by a great Elephant, was asked, what the Elephant rested on; to which his answer was, a great Tortoise: But being again pressed to know what gave support to the broad-back'd Tortoise, replied, something, he knew not what (II, XXIII, 2).

There is no need, nor any good reason, Berkeley would argue, to take this substance seriously since it is a mere duplication of appearance about which nothing productive can be said other than it is the bearer of qualities. This conception of substance as the bearer of qualities is, however, nonsensical since to be a bearer *requires* qualities (extension) which should be perceptible. So, if there is a substance independent of appearance, which is mind dependent, it should be perceptible, that is, it should be an appearance and

⁶ Certainly there are more options available to the idealist than to retreat to idealism as it is presented by Berkeley. One could, for example, follow J.S. Mill and hold a doctrine of phenomenalism where objects are the 'permanent possibilities of sensation.' For an excellent critique of this sort of idealism see Wilfred Sellars' *Metaphysics of Epistemology* pp. 69 ff. There are, of course, numerous forms of idealism – it has been said that the history of philosophy is the history of idealism – but I chose Berkeley as representative as he is a rather significant pillar in the history of idealism and because he is an idealist with whom I am at least somewhat familiar. It should be noted, however, that Santayana certainly takes his arguments against idealism as valid no matter which form of idealism one holds.

therefore mind dependent also.⁷ Santayana, of course, is well aware of this objection to substance and puts this idealist argument as follows:

But let us grant, the empiricist [idealist] will go on, that your substance is possible, since everything is possible where ignorance is complete. In what terms can you conceive it, save in terms of appearance? Or if you say it exists unconceived, or is unconceivable, it will simply encumber your philosophy with a metaphysical world, in addition to the given one, and with the hopeless problem of relating the two (S.A.F. p. 199).

Santayana's response to such arguments is to simply maintain that substance does not duplicate appearances, or essences, but rather renders them significant. Santayana uses the following eloquent analogy: "Substance is the speaker and substance is the theme; intuition is only the act of speaking or hearing, and the given essence is the audible word" (S.A.F. p. 204). He argues that there is no duplication of appearance when substance is admitted into metaphysics because they properly belong to two separate realms of being and it is impossible to have a metaphysical system without substance while retaining such notions as belief and truth. He argues that idealist systems, such as Berkeley's, all unconsciously admit substance and are therefore latently materialist.

Idealists do not realise that they are admitting substance into their metaphysics, Santayana argues, because they have confused essence, intuition, and substance.

The empiricist [idealist] forgets that he is asserting the existence of outlying facts, because he half identifies them with the living fact of his present belief in them: and, further, because he identifies this living fact, his belief now, with the essence which it is attributing to those remote existences (S.A.F. p. 201).

We must remember that substance is not a possible object of intuition, as scepticism showed us well, and that essence, which is the object of intuition, belongs to a different realm of being than intuition since intuition is an existent. If we can keep these concepts separate and in their proper realms it will become clear that idealism, because it admits ideas arranged in time and recalled in memory, admits substance.

The remembering of an idea which occurred at some previous time is, if we are consistent in the use of our terms, a case of idealism admitting substance independent of intuition. The remembrance of an idea is, to put it plainly, an intuition of an essence

⁷ See page 240-4 of Berkeley's *Three Dialogues*, The Empiricists: Locke, Berkeley, Hume. Dolphin Books, Garden City, New York.

which refers to a substance. The substance is the idea when it occurred (which is substantial relative to the remembrance of it); the essence is the appearance of the idea in the intuition; the intuition is the act of remembering the idea. To eliminate the substance, as idealists who wish to be true idealists must, one must contend that the remembrance is the direct accessing of the idea in the past. This is, essentially, to confuse the essence with the substance and to force the intuition to intuit something (a particular) which it is entirely unable to intuit as we clearly see when we engage in proper scepticism.

Santayana uses the example of learning David Hume's philosophy to get this point across:

Let us suppose that David Hume, in spite of his corpulence, was nothing but a train of ideas. Some of these composed his philosophy, and I, when I endeavoured to learn what it was, create in my own mind a fresh train of ideas which refer to those in the mind of Hume: and for me his opinions are a substance of which my apprehension is an appearance. My apprehension, in this case, is conceived to be an apprehension of a matter of fact, namely, the substance of Hume at some date; and in studying his philosophy I am learning nothing but history. This is an implication of empiricism, but is not true to the facts. For when I try to conceive the philosophy of Hume I am not considering any particular ideas which may have constituted Hume at one moment in his career; I am considering an *essence*, his total system, as it would appear when the *essences* present in his various reflected moments are collated; and, therefore, I am really studying and learning a system of philosophy, not the presumable condition of a dead man's mind at various historical moments (S.A.F. p. 200-1).

The case is exactly the same when we consider something in our immediate environment. The table is a substance sitting there before us, but our intuition is of the essence of the table, which is the appearance of the substance before us. To remove the substance is to catapult the essence into the realm of matter (to give it existence) and to try to force the intuition to intuit an existing particular.

There is still, however, the lingering idealist concern of how substance and appearance could ever be related to one another. Santayana maintains that substance is not an object of intuition, but that leaves open the question of how we could ever coherently relate something which is not possible to intuit with the intuited essence which animal faith tells us is the appearance of that substance. The problem, simply put, is how can substance ever produce appearances? For substance belongs to the realm of matter while appearance belongs to the realm of essence – they are two radically different things!

To this Santayana responds by maintaining that it is a brute fact that appearance rises from substance. There is no, and can be no, explanation since dialectic is “perfectly impotent to express, much less to explain, any change or any existence. [. . .] Existence, change, life, appearance, must be understood to be unintelligible: on any other assumption the philosopher might as well tear his hair out and go mad at once” (S.A.F. p. 211). Furthermore, to base a rejection of substance on the difficulty of how appearance could be produced by substance is to denounce substance because of some childish attraction to a uniform reality. To this, Santayana responds simply and powerfully, “Whence these absurd postulates?” (S.A.F. p. 210).

This ‘brute fact’ approach that Santayana takes on this matter may at first seem rather unpalatable and unconvincing. When we recall, however, that the idealist move of eliminating substance is not possible then the ‘brute fact’ strategy seems much more palatable and indeed fits perfectly with Santayana’s epistemology. Since this is an important point I should quickly review, and perhaps clarify, why idealists⁸ cannot eliminate substance. The removal of substance requires that the appearances of objects take on the quality of existence which formerly belonged only to substance. This is because idealists such as Berkeley need objects to be public; that is, perceptible to many different perceivers. Different idealists have different ways of making this possible. Berkeley, as was said previously, uses the notion of God as a permanent perceiver and all objects exist in God’s mind. The tree, for instance, continues to exist when my friends and I close our eyes because God is still there and the tree exists as God’s perception. When my friends and I gaze upon the tree we all see the ‘same’ tree because we are all partially participating in God’s perceptions. It is, however, impossible that appearances should be existing, particular things. This is because our scepticism proved to us that particulars are not objects of intuition but only given essences, or universals, are objects of intuition⁹. Since particulars cannot be objects of intuition we must reinsert substance

⁸ It should be noted that here we are still talking only of those idealists who, like Berkeley, wish to remove substance but still have existing, or public, objects. We are not here talking of those ‘masters of idealism,’ as Santayana calls them, who avoid this entire difficulty but at a very terrible price as we will see shortly.

⁹ Though, contrary to what Santayana thought, we did find that there was indeed a particular (from the point of view of animal faith) that was given to intuition; namely, the momentary spirit, though this is the only particular which is a possible object of intuition. And, as we saw, this momentary spirit is a very unique particular in that from the point of view of the sceptic it is an essence while only from the point of view of animal faith it is a particular.

in order that our intuition be directed toward the essence which is the appearance of the substance.

Berkeley may here want to reply that he could just as easily keep the appearance of the tree a universal and make the existing particular God's mind. The tree, then, would be the appearance of a portion of God's mind. This way there is only the appearance as an object of our intuition while the particular, God's mind, is not an object of our intuition. This, happily enough, satisfies our sceptical requirement that only essences be objects of intuition. Santayana, I think, would agree with this metaphysics in principle. He would only quibble with the semantics due to its treacherous nature. For in this formulation of idealism the idealist has, in fact, lost all claim to idealism, as substance, that which stands external to perception, is still there – it has merely been grandly renamed to 'God's mind.' Change 'God's mind' to 'matter' and you have Santayana's own position.

If instead of matter we posit a deity or a moral force or a special dialectic to be the first principle of existence, the case is not essentially altered. Such a deity or dialectic or moral force would then be the primal accident, the groundless fact, the one form of being which existence happened to wear in neglect of all other forms; and that which distinguishes matter from essence – its exclusive potentialities – would distinguish that supposed metaphysical agency just as truly, and just as arbitrarily; so that in respect to essence, and to the clearness and eventual emancipation of spirit, it would be as material a fact as matter could ever be. The question, in cosmology, is not between matter and Ideas but between one sort of matter and another; and it is for experiment and science, not for logic, to discover what sort of matter matter is (R.O.B. p. 388).

Perhaps it can now be seen why idealism is actually latent materialism. Substance cannot be removed while retaining public objects – it can only be renamed. There are still, however, those masters of idealism who, as Santayana writes, "despise such a crude philosophy and insist that descriptions are the only knowable facts and descriptive only of their own essence" (R.O.B. p. 392). The idealist, I think, has now been hunted to his last hiding place and it is, I think, a rather uncomfortable resting point. For if the idealist adopts this position he resigns himself to be condemned to a solipsistic world without truth or belief. These idealists are trapped in solipsism because they have given up public appearances. What appears before me appears before me alone. Certainly appearances are essences, after all, these idealists escape where Berkeley was trapped, but they are

essences which refer to nothing beyond themselves and are private; for that is the only way to properly eliminate substance. Not only can these idealists not confer with any community whatever about their appearances since they are essentially private, but they cannot ascribe themselves any history either. Memory, as we saw, relies just as much on a relative substance (relative to the time when the reflection is made) as does immediate public perception. Our intuition of a past idea is an intuition of an essence, which is an appearance of the idea itself, which is a substance. Suddenly, then, these idealists find themselves in a world of purely private experiences with no ability to believe in past experience since to assert otherwise is to assert substance in some form or another. The idealist has left any claim to belief, truth, history, or community well behind. This, I think, is not a palatable position and is too extreme a tactic to avoid substance. Idealism in any form, it would seem, is not a suitable replacement for Santayana's epiphenomenalism in our rebuilding of Santayana's metaphysics.

Since idealism will not do I am still in the position of needing a metaphysics which does not make matter foundational to spirit in any way. The best solution to this problem, I believe, is a form of interactionist dualism where spirit is an independent thing; that is, a thing which exists in its own right and independent of matter or anything else. This is not to say that spirit is not influenced by matter but only that should matter suddenly not exist it would not follow that spirit would correspondingly cease to exist.

Keeping this dualism in a Santayanian framework requires us to view what Santayana calls the psyche and maintains is purely material, as absorbed by the realm of spirit and rendered immaterial. This, I think, does not require too dramatic a shift in Santayana's overall system. Furthermore, a conception of psyche as part of spirit is more coherent and closer to common sense than a view of it as material. So, the strategy of transforming Santayana's metaphysics into interactionist dualism requires first the transformation of the psyche into spirit. Once this has been done I will need to clarify how spirit can be said to have some of the properties of matter (the property of being causally efficacious) yet remain distinct from matter while at the same time not stripping matter too much of its special role in the universe, for then the consequence may be an eradication of the very substance which we have seen is necessary to avoid solipsism. In short, spirit will need to share some of matter's role by appropriating the psyche without,

and this is the tricky part, replacing it. I need to begin, then, with a quick overview of what the psyche is as Santayana conceives it before it can be transformed into the immaterial agent which is required by proper epistemology.

Santayana's notion of the psyche is that of an organising force which, since it is a force capable of causally affecting things, is purely material. It is, however, not to be identified with any substance; rather, psyche is a mode of substance or a habit in matter which forms matter into this sort of thing or that sort of thing. In humans, the psyche forms matter to be an agent who has, at its pinnacle, spiritual moments. The psyche is that which causes spiritual moments – when the flux of matter falls under a psyche it gives rise to the realm of spirit. Furthermore, it is the psyche and not the spirit which humans, knowingly or not, equate with the self. “The psyche is the self which a man is proud or ashamed, or probably both at once” (R.O.B. p. 338).

There is this building picture of the psyche as a habit, or propensity, or even a force, in matter which, from the bottom-end, that is, from the material end, organizes matter in such a way that it gives rise, in certain beings, to feelings, to intuitions – to spiritual moments. There is a sense in which Santayana conceives of his psyche as material because, given the way he has set up causation, there can be nothing which is causally efficacious which is not material. Indeed, matter is needed to be the so-called ‘butt of action’ because it is the very action of matter that propels animal life and gives the reflective spirit reason for leaping from solipsism of the present moment back into animal faith, back into the world of action. So, it is necessary that matter be a source of movement and flux but it is hard to see why it need be the *only* source of movement.

Why, other than a superfluous definition of matter as the principle of *all* action, must we take the psyche to be material? We need, it seems, only re-examine this definition of matter in order to have a different view of the nature of psyche open to us. Certainly, as has been said, matter must remain a field of action for that is the very reason that it is posited and the reflective spirit is saved from solipsism of the present moment. But, it need not be the only source of action if we can ascribe action to spirit while still being able to distinguish matter from spirit. If spirit, so granted these powers of action, can no longer be distinguished from matter so that all matter is enveloped in the realm of spirit or all spirit is dragged down into the realm of matter, the case will be no different

than what is held by the masters of idealism and the eliminative materialists, respectively. These, needless to say, are not happy positions. Yet the effort to bring spirit into the realm of action by appropriating the psyche must be made since it is incompatible with proper scepticism that spirit should remain the metaphysical slave of matter.

First, the barrier which exists, generally speaking, for top-down (that is, from immaterial spirit to matter) causation must be broken down. Matter is said to be the principle of all action and, based on this principle, the psyche is said to arrange matter in such a way that, "at certain junctures animal life, properly a habit in matter, burst as with a peal of bells into a new realm of being, into the realm of spirit" (R.O.B. p. 348). But there is nothing, save the definition of matter as the principle of all action, which requires us to think of matter as arranging itself into increasingly complex arrangements, namely, an increasingly developed brain, until it suddenly gives rise to spirit. It is at least as plausible to consider the converse situation; that is, the will of the spirit resulted in a certain arrangement of matter. Now, it must be made clear, this particular arrangement in matter which gives rise to spirit, which is typically thought of as the brain, is not the psyche; rather, the psyche is that habit in matter which brought matter into a 'brain-type' arrangement. And that habit, as has been said, must be material since it caused matter to be arranged in that brain-type way. If we rid ourselves of the strict definition of matter as the principle of all action, however, the possibility will arise that the psyche, conceived as an act of will of the spirit, caused the certain arrangement in matter which we call the brain.

There are now two competing theories of the psyche. The first views the psyche as a material movement in matter which causes certain arrangements in matter which, in turn, give rise to moments of spirit. The second views the psyche as wilful spirit which causes matter to be arranged in a certain way so that the matter gives rise to the certain spiritual moments which the psyche willed. The former view renders desire inert and forces the intensity, or intelligence, of spirit to be predetermined and unchangeable by spirit. This is partially because the conception of psyche is that of a predetermined habit in matter¹⁰ and partially because desire is rendered inert. The latter view gives us a rich

¹⁰ See *Realms of Being* p. 331 for Santayana's comment that some seeds of matter are "predetermined to grow into organism of a specific habit."

vision of the mental life in which desires and efforts of the will can effect real change and the spirit has some control over its own destiny and intensity. Furthermore, the latter view is compatible with proper scepticism while the former is not since the former propagates the tyranny of matter over the spiritual while the latter emancipates spirit to a special degree – it is still influenced by matter yet it is not dependent on matter.

Perhaps an example of how the two views of the psyche play out over an instance of learning would help to clarify the two positions. Consider a student of philosophy who is struggling with Santayana's rejection of idealism. He is unable to understand why the elimination of substance, done properly by a master of idealism, results in the elimination of all claims to belief and knowledge, but he has an incredible desire to understand. A few moments of hard reflection pass and finally he has that 'eureka' moment which signals his sudden understanding.

Let us consider how Santayana's view of the psyche analyses the situation. First, the psyche, throughout the student's entire history, has been the force behind the arrangement of his brain that causes him to have his initial limited thoughts which cannot comprehend Santayana's rejection of idealism. Presumably some change in the student's nervous system caused his spirit to suddenly grasp the proper essence of Santayana's rejection and he understood why he should not subscribe to idealism. This change in the student's nervous system, though for some reason it corresponded with his desire for a change in his abilities to understand, had nothing to do with his desire (save the fact that his desire was the result of the movement of his psyche), since his desire is a spiritual moment and those are barred from having causal efficacy. The change came about because the psyche was still in continuous operation, arranging the student's matter into, in this case, more and more complex states until, at the point that interests us, his arrangement of matter could give rise to a spiritual moment which could comprehend Santayana's rejection of idealism.

Now let us consider how the proposed view of the psyche as an immaterial agent analyses the situation. First, there are similarities in the two conceptions of psyche. The student's spirit is not able to understand Santayana's rejection of idealism because he does not possess the adequate nervous system to produce the proper 'Santayana-understanding' spirit. So the spirit is still influenced by matter. The student's psyche,

which is a part of his spirit, desires a change in his nervous system so that he can possess an adequate arrangement of matter to give rise to a Santayana-understanding spirit. This will not be the desire as it occurs to the spirit, of course, since the psyche will only desire to understand Santayana yet it will be the implicit desire of the psyche since a change in the arrangement of its body's matter is the only way in which it could come to understand. This is because the arrangement of matter is what gives rise to spiritual moments. The psyche, in order to bring about the change it genuinely desires, exerts its will on the nervous system. This brings about a change in the student's nervous system which makes it adequate to give rise to a Santayana-understanding spirit. So, the student understands and the reason he understands is because his psyche had the genuine desire to understand.¹¹

I should reiterate here that it is actually the implicit desire of the psyche that causes the student's spirit to understand. It is an implicit desire because it does not occur to the spirit; that is, the student is *not conscious* of the desire. The student is conscious of his desire to understand Santayana in a vague manner only. He wishes he could understand and tries to will it to be so by intense reflection on the subject matter. The student's psyche, however, is involved in a very specific desire to change the student's nervous system in such a way as to give rise to a Santayana-understanding spirit and this desire, it must be recognized, is not conscious in any sense. There is no awareness of this specific desire as it occurs; it cannot be introspected. For when the student wills his understanding he has no awareness of the specific change the psyche itself must will in order for him to understand. The student is conscious of his desire in the most general sense only – he merely desires to understand with no specific awareness of how such an understanding should be brought about. That is, he does not will that such and such a brain activity take place, he only wills that he understand even though the only way he will understand is for such and such a brain activity to take place. Though, it should be noted, his conscious will does prompt his psyche to action, for it is his general desire to

¹¹ For a similar argument for top-down causation see p. 230 of C.J. Ducasse's *The Empirical Case for Personal Survival* in *Body, Mind and Death* edited by Antony Flew, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1964, pp. 221-30. Here Ducasse argues (contrary to conventional thought that the degree of an animal's intelligence is a product of the degree of development of the animal's nervous system) that it may well be that "an obscurely felt need for greater intelligence in the circumstances the animal faced was what brought about the variations which eventually resulted in a more adequate nervous organization" (p. 230).

understand which elicits his psyche to bring about the specific changes which are required for his understanding. From all of this it can be reasonably concluded, I think, that the action of the psyche in this particular case, and probably in all cases, is a spiritual moment, or mental state, which is inaccessible to consciousness.

The idea of a spiritual moment which is inaccessible to consciousness initially seems to be a contradiction – indeed it is a contradiction – if by ‘spiritual moment’ we strictly confine ourselves to what Santayana means by the term ‘spirit.’ For what Santayana means by ‘spirit’ is “only that inner light of actuality or attention which floods all life as men actually live it on earth” (R.O.B. p. 549). Clearly, there can be no such thing as ‘unconscious spiritual moments’ under this definition of spirit. By assimilating the psyche into the spirit, however, the definition of ‘spirit’ has necessarily changed so that an ‘unconscious spiritual moment’ may be possible. Spirit has become more than the light of consciousness which falls upon certain essences just as the light from a flashlight, to use a convenient metaphor, illuminates first this and then that in a dark room. Spirit is now more properly understood as both the light which illuminates and the hand which directs the light to illuminate first this object and then that object where the guiding hand is forever behind the light, residing in perpetual darkness. This hand is the wilful part of the spirit (the psyche) and directs the consciousness to essences while the will itself is never an object of consciousness. The metaphor, like all metaphors, can only be carried so far since the psyche does not grasp the conscious part of the spirit and thrust it on that essence or this essence, but rather, the psyche operates on the matter of (in the case of humans) the brain so that the conscious part of the spirit will survey this essence or that essence. The theory of unconscious spiritual moments is more influential than merely requiring a redefinition of spirit, for it helps, as we will see in a moment, to direct the metaphysics I am constructing away from a Cartesian, or, for that matter, any traditional interactionist dualism.

This view of the psyche as a part of the spirit allows us to understand desire as having a real impact on the world. Santayana’s view of the psyche, on the other hand, is rather peculiar for the fact that it demotes desire and will in the extreme and though the desire had no impact on the understanding it corresponded to it exactly as if it did. Now peculiarity of a theory is certainly no rejection of a theory, but we must remember that

the peculiarity is not intended as the rejection – the rejection is that Santayana's view is incompatible with proper epistemology. The peculiarity shows us that a view of the psyche as spiritual is actually more in tune with our every day intuitions of how desires cause real change.

The psyche, however, does not seem to be necessarily tied to a conscious spirit. That is, psyche does not exist and assert its will only through an intelligent spirit. Here, however, there is a problem with the term 'psyche' which is similar to the problem which was encountered with the term 'spirit.' The problem is that the meaning of 'psyche' will have to be slightly altered from what Santayana means by 'psyche.' The psyche, for Santayana, is a "particular instance of the universal Will"¹², found whenever the form to be maintained is organic and preserved by nutrition and reproduction" (R.O.B. p. 608) while the spirit is "merely the psyche become conscious" (R.O.B. p. 619). So, it can be said that for Santayana the spirit is a conscious instance of the universal Will. But, as we have seen, there is a need for these instances of the will, which I also call psyche, to be unconscious while still being spiritual moments. There is this need for unconscious spiritual moments because the psyche operates on matter and brings about changes in the conscious spirit by making the appropriate changes in matter; that is, the student desires that his intellect could understand while the understanding actually occurs because the psyche changes his brain in such a way as to give rise to a spirit which can understand. In other words, the conscious will of conscious beings does not will change in matter but rather wills change in spirit. The psyche, on the other hand, wills change in matter so that the appropriate change in the conscious spirit can be brought about. And this willing of change in matter, to reiterate, is not conscious but is spiritual.¹³ Furthermore, this conception of the psyche as spiritual and unconscious is more appropriately identified with what Santayana calls the universal Will. The universal Will is that which organizes matter while the psyche, as we have seen, is merely a special name given to an instance of the universal Will which organizes organic life. Why this special name for the

¹² The universal Will is the name Santayana gives to the purely material force which organizes matter into specific forms. The universal Will is called the psyche when it organizes matter into organic forms. See *Realms of Being* p. 607-20.

¹³ The idea of unconscious spirit, as we noted, is something wholly incompatible with Santayana's notion of spirit but the conception of spirit which we are now working with must necessarily incorporate unconscious spiritual moments. Again, it is necessary for the psyche to be regarded as spiritual if the metaphysics we are constructing is to harmonize with the epistemology which has been established.

universal Will in organic life? It cannot be because in organic matter the psyche gives rise to conscious spirit because there is much organic matter that does not seem to be endowed with conscious spirit. It seems to be quite an artificial segregation to maintain that the will of organic life deserves a special name because some organic life is endowed with conscious spirit or because organic life can reproduce. Better, I believe, to be consistent in our terms and name the organizer of all matter 'psyche.' For to call that which organizes matter into a rock the universal Will and that which organizes matter into a plant the psyche is to introduce a propensity for a treacherously false distinction where the plant may seem somehow more important. Both the plant and the rock, however, are organizations of matter into specific things and one, I presume, is no more conscious than the other. This distinction becomes even more treacherous when we look at the case of humans. For the brain of the human gives rise to conscious spirit and so, according to Santayana, it is organized by the psyche. But the finger of the human, while it is organic, does not give rise to conscious spirit and so why should it be supposed that, under Santayana's definitions, the finger of a human is organized by the psyche of the human. Why should we not suppose that the human is organized by two different forces – the psyche organizes the brain while the universal Will organizes the rest of the body? Well, it must be remembered that the psyche is merely an instance of the universal Will so in reality there is only one force organizing the matter of the human body and brain. To avoid confusions, this division in terminology should be resisted since we may call the organizer of each separate material thing that exists a different name but that would seem to only add complexity and take away from clarity. Therefore, I will abandon Santayana's unnecessary split in terminology and use the word 'psyche' as meaning the organizer of all matter, regardless of what it is organizing it into. This, since the psyche is now spiritual, leads directly into pan-psychism. The spiritual psyche has the responsibility of Santayana's universal Will and as such it is the organizer of all matter whether that matter is conscious, organic, or inorganic. This is a rather bold metaphysics which may be described as pan-psyche interactionist dualism. Bold as it may be, however, it is, I think, the metaphysics which is most consistent with the established epistemology. In fact, as I will argue momentarily, it fits perfectly with ultimate scepticism and is the metaphysics that such an epistemology suggests.

Before these arguments for the harmony of pan-psychic interactionism and proper epistemology can be considered, however, there must be noted another change in the psyche which must occur if the psyche is to be properly absorbed into the spiritual realm. For Santayana the spirit is merely the psyche become conscious. So the psyche, which for Santayana is purely material, gives rise to the spirit. This, obviously, can no longer be true of the spirit since the psyche is now part of the spirit. The question immediately jumps out: If the psyche is now spiritual then what gives rise to the spirit? The answer, if we make certain clarifications, is still the psyche. The clarification that needs to be made is that the psyche now gives rise to *conscious* spirit. The psyche is the unconscious part of the spirit that organizes matter in such a way so that it gives rise to the appropriate conscious spirit. This seems to only have shifted the problem. For what gives rise to the unconscious psyche? The proper response to this, I believe, is that nothing *gives rise* to the psyche. The psyche, as conceived as unconscious spirit, is an inescapable reality. It cannot be denied. This sounds, at this point, largely unconvincing. What exactly does it mean for the psyche to be an 'inescapable reality?' The answer to this question will, I believe, show us how pan-psychic interactionism harmonizes with the established epistemology and is actually the metaphysics such an epistemology suggests.

To say that something is an inescapable reality is to say that that thing cannot be denied and that it cannot be other than it is. In other words, it is to say that it is *given*. In regard to the given essence Santayana writes, "I cannot be mistaken about it, since I now have no object of intent other than the object of intuition" (S.A.F. p. 74). What is given is indubitable since it is what is left after everything that *can be* doubted *has been* doubted. Recall that at the terminus of scepticism it was discovered, if I have been convincing, that momentary spirit is given along with the given essence. This is because the momentary spirit is sublimated into the given essence so that from the point of view of ultimate scepticism, the only point of view that can possibly matter in determining what is given, the given essence and the momentary spirit are one and the same thing. So, since the essence is given so too is the momentary spirit since they are one and the same from the point of view of ultimate scepticism. Upon reflection it is discovered that they are not the same thing at all, of course, but that is beyond the present point. Recall also that at the terminus of scepticism the self is entirely eradicated – there is absolutely

no sense of self for the ultimate sceptic since a conception of selfhood requires a conception of enduring through time. This loss of selfhood and concomitant discovery of the self as a product of animal faith led to the discovery of the beginnings of a powerful moral philosophy which is built into ultimate scepticism. If we now properly assess the given spirit we find that it is momentary and unfettered – it is not any one person's spirit. Furthermore, it must be understood that the given spirit is not conscious. For if to be conscious a spirit must be self-aware it is immediately apparent that this cannot be the case since there is no self to be aware of. The given spirit, to put the matter another way, just *is* the given essence and neither of these (though this is to speak improperly since they are one and the same) can be said to be conscious since neither of them is self-aware. It would seem then that the given spirit is spirit which is not conscious. The part of the spirit which has been demonstrated to be unconscious is the psyche and so it might be reasonably concluded that the given spirit is the psyche. In this way the psyche can be said to be an inescapable reality since it is given and therefore cannot be denied.

It could be argued here that since the given spirit and the given essence are one and the same thing and that the given spirit is aware of the given essence it follows that the given spirit is actually self-aware. Since the given spirit is self-aware it makes perfect sense to claim that the given spirit is conscious and therefore the given spirit cannot possibly be the psyche. Thus, the psyche has lost its claim of being 'inescapably real.'

This argument, I believe, relies on a dubious notion of 'aware.' Certainly the given spirit is aware of the given essence since it is the given essence which makes up its entire reality – so much so that the given spirit *becomes* the given essence. But, and this is the key, the given spirit does not reflect on, nor judge, nor make any inferences, nor believes anything about, the given essence whatsoever – it is merely *there*. In this sense the given spirit is not aware of the given essence since it makes no claims about it or judges it in any way. It is hard to see how a spirit completely devoid of belief and judgment could be said to be conscious in any meaningful way. Therefore, the given spirit, it seems to me, has no claim on consciousness and can still be coherently identified with the psyche.

The conception of the psyche as being the given portion of the spirit leads directly into pan-psychism. If we recall, the given spirit does not properly 'belong' to any one

person. This idea can, and for consistencies sake, must be, expanded. Since the given spirit is unconscious and has no connection to any self, not only can it not be reasonably attributed to any one person it cannot be reasonably attributed to conscious beings only. Why should the given spirit be constrained to conscious beings when the given spirit itself is unconscious and impossible to attach to this thing or that thing? It would be an artificial constraint on given spirit, which I are now naming the psyche, to claim that it must be accompanied by consciousness since the psyche has no claim on consciousness. The case would be analogous to claiming that the given psyche must be 'mine' since I am the one who is engaged in scepticism. Such a claim would be foolish since the very scepticism I would be engaged in clearly shows that given psyche is in no sense 'mine.' Thus, our epistemology pushes us away from any view which attaches the given psyche to only certain forms of matter.

This new concept of the psyche, which I can now confidently equate with desire or will, fits well, then, with proper epistemology since the psyche, it seems, is the given spirit. Recall that I also required a metaphysics that did not have matter as foundational to spirit. This means, at the very least, that I cannot have a metaphysics that makes spirit dependent on matter for its existence. I now have, with my revised psyche, a view of how pan-psychic interactionist dualism would work under Santayana's general philosophical framework but it remains to be seen if this interactionism saves spirit from matter's metaphysical dominance.

Santayana certainly considers the possibility of spirit existing without matter and rejects the possibility. His rejection is based on the fact that without matter there would be nothing to suggest this essence or that essence to the spirit. He writes:

Perhaps it is not logically impossible that spirit should exist without a body: but in that case how should spirit come upon any particular images, interests, or categories? If occupied with nothing, it would not be a conscious being; and if occupied with everything possible, that is, with the whole realm of essence at once, it would not be the consciousness of a living soul, having a particular moral destiny, but only a hypostasis of intelligence, abstracted from all particular occasions (R.O.B. p. 565).

This passage suggests at least two great difficulties in maintaining that spirit may exist without matter. First, it seems that it is impossible for spirit to exist independent of matter since our spirit would have nothing to influence. Suppose that there is a

disembodied spirit which has some desire or another. What would this spirit influence or manipulate in order to satiate the desire?

Here, thankfully, reflection on the psyche can answer this difficult question. It is true that the psyche, the will, causes changes in matter. Suppose, however, that once there is no matter which is capable of being influenced, as is the case after death, that the psyche turns in on its own spirit and begins its operation within spirit. Once turned in on itself the psyche could survey the entire spirit and alter memories for the thinking portion of the spirit to consider. The light of consciousness could come upon this essence or that essence by the force of the will on the memories contained within the spirit. In effect, memories would take the place of matter. The psyche could bring this memory or that memory into the light of the conscious spirit by an act of the will on the spirit itself.

The psyche manipulating spirit in this manner may seem dangerously close to idealism, which, as we saw, is not a possible metaphysics to hold. It is, however, not idealist despite the fact that the spirit, *once divorced from matter*, does not require matter, in order to exist and function. The spirit becomes, as it were, self contained. The spirit becomes a surveyor of private appearances and so there is no need for substance in order to project public objects. The world of the disembodied spirit is a solipsistic world though, as we will see, not an idealist world.

Though it is not an idealist doctrine, there are rather striking similarities between the sort of idealism which was held by the so-called 'masters of idealism' and the metaphysics I am attempting to construct here. Indeed, there are great similarities: both are denying public objects and thus both are catapulted into the realm of solipsism. There are, however, some important differences between the two doctrines. First, recall that the masters of idealism become trapped not only in a solipsistic world but in a momentary solipsistic world. This is because the master of idealism is determined to completely abolish substance and so has no claim on memory since memory is dependent, as we have seen, on relative substance. The substance for any memory is the event (whether it be an idea, an action, or a feeling) when it took place. Here we have a major difference between the metaphysics of the masters of idealism and the metaphysics of disembodied spirit which I am here propounding. The world of the disembodied spirit is not a world of solipsism of the present moment. The relative substance which is required for memory

is not denied and is, in fact, embraced as that which renders the disembodied spirit possible.

Any memory is completely dependent on substance for its formation since a memory is nothing more than an essence which refers to a past event. This past event is a substance relative to the memory of it. The master of idealism has no right to claim that there are past events recalled in the memory since that would be an admission of substance, but there is no such restriction for the metaphysics that is being suggested here since substance has been welcomed by pan-psychic interactionism and is still welcomed, though only as relative substance, by the metaphysics of the disembodied spirit. In this sense, then, the metaphysics I am proposing is not idealism since relative substance is necessary in order for the disembodied spirit to retain memories. Though the disembodied spirit has abandoned the whirlwind of matter which sweeps up this essence and then that essence, shocking the alert spirit from solipsism into animal faith, it has not abandoned the relative substance (past events to which its memories refer) which allows it to retain memories from its embodied past.

This idea of relative substance should not seem that strange a notion since it is memory that I, following Santayana, first used to show why idealists are latent materialists.¹⁴ Since idealists admit ideas dispersed through time and accessible via the memory they have unconsciously admitted *substance* and this same substance could be the basis for our spiritual life after the death of our material bodies. Therefore, there is the possibility of spirit existing without matter and, regardless of whether or not it is actually the case, this is enough to say that spirit is not dependent on matter for its existence.

The spirit, it would seem so far, can coherently be said to exist without matter. It seems that if there were suddenly no matter for a spirit, or, more specifically, a psyche, to influence, as is the case in death, the spirit could still exist since it could influence memories in the same manner that it influenced and manipulated matter. This is because memories involve, if we believe Santayana's own argument that idealism is latent materialism, substances.

¹⁴ The conception of a substance as a remote fact, as I have said, is exactly the same conception of substance which Santayana uses to claim idealism is latent materialism. See Scepticism and Animal Faith p. 200.

The second great difficulty, however, remains. The difficulty is this: it seems as if matter plays a key role in causing what the psyche wills. If there were no matter it seems there would be nothing for the psyche to desire since the cause of all desire is material. Santayana notes this when he writes:

If I want water, it is because my throat is parched; if I dream of love, it is because sex is ripening within me. Nature has fixed the character, and circumstances have fixed the occasion, for this ferment of desire and conception. Conscious will is a symptom, not a cause; its roots as well as its consequences are invisible to it, material, and often incongruous and astonishing (R.O.B. p. 313).

Santayana claims that 'conscious will is a symptom' though I should note that he would most likely also conclude that the conception of the psyche as unconscious will is also merely a symptom of material consequences. Whether conscious will or unconscious will, the case seems to remain the same: without matter there can be nothing for the psyche to desire, or, more precisely, there *can be no spiritual psyche* since matter is the cause of *all* desire.

The problem of the psyche being caused by matter, and therefore being dependent on matter, can be solved in a similar manner as the problem of the psyche no longer having any matter to influence. The psyche, it seems plausible to assume, could derive its desires from the memories which are contained in the spirit. It would have the desire to alter memories and this desire would spring from the memories themselves just as the psyche's desire to alter matter spring from matter. There is nothing absurd nor impossible about this for when the psyche is still attached to a living body there are times when the desires it has comes from the same sort of relative substance as that of memories. Let us again consider the example of the student trying to understand Santayana's rejection of idealism very carefully.

The student is attempting to understand the nature of a philosophical system which was conceived, relative to the student, in the past by Santayana. The student's desire to understand Santayana is actually caused by a comparison of two essences – one known and one unknown. The essence that is known, in this case, is the incorrect understanding of Santayana's rejection of idealism. The unknown essence is the correct understanding of Santayana's rejection of idealism. The student does not know the proper essence but he does know that the current essence he is considering is not the

proper essence. This could be known to him in various ways: the current essence he is considering may not conform to something else he knows about Santayana's philosophy, or it may simply be that a specialist on Santayana has told him that he has an incorrect understanding without telling him what the correct understanding is. So, the student's psyche desires to drop the current essence and replace it with a new, proper essence. That is, he desires to arrive at an essence which refers to a substance. This substance is the various states of Santayana's mind at various times in history which gave rise to his arguments as to why idealism should be rejected. The essence which the student desires is the appearance of these collated substantial states. The known essence, which is the student's incorrect idea of why Santayana rejects idealism, does not refer to any substance since it is false; that is, there is nothing substantial which corresponds to this understanding of Santayana's rejection of idealism. So, it is, in fact, true that the psyche's desire is sort of indirectly caused by substance because the desire is first caused by a desire for truth and the true essence, in this case at any rate, is that essence which is substantial. The ultimate cause of this desire, then, really seems to be a desire for truth, but it could now be asked, what causes a desire for truth? To this I have no answer but the ultimate cause of this desire, I think, is not so important since it has been discovered that substance does in fact play a role in the causal (though perhaps at this point 'motivational' may be a better word) chain of the student's desire. And, so goes the argument against the existence of spirit without substance, if you remove the substance from the causal chain you remove the desire also. It seems, then, that it has been proven that the psyche is dependent on substance, even this special relative substance of memories, and so if there is no substance then there is no psyche. Therefore, spirit is still metaphysically dependent on substance, and this pan-psychic interactionism is not compatible with proper epistemology.

This, it seems, is valid. There can be no spiritual psyche without substance. The game, however, is far from lost. This sort of substance, because it is a relative substance, is of a special kind and cannot, once placed, be removed from the universe. This substance is a past event and is a substance relative to a memory or theory which is contained in some other moment¹⁵ – it is exactly the substance which idealists

¹⁵ See page 200 of Scepticism and Animal Faith.

unconsciously admit when they allow that ideas may be scattered in time and referred to in the memory. This sort of substance, which is a past event, or remote fact, cannot be rescinded from the universe once it has occurred. For if all matter is destroyed tomorrow, it will not change the fact that Santayana, at a certain point in history, devised a rejection of idealism. Therefore, though psyche is certainly dependent on substance it is perfectly conceivable that it be only dependent on a relative substance which can never be removed from the universe once admitted. Thus, if matter had never existed then it seems true to say that spirit could not exist, but it does not seem true to suppose that since matter does exist spirit is now bound to it so that as it goes so goes spirit. This is not, admittedly, perfect independence of spirit from matter but it is enough to claim that spirit is not, once created, necessarily dependent on matter for its existence. Furthermore, the fact that spirit does not have complete and unmitigated independence from substance allows the realm of matter to retain much of its importance and, consequently, *its* independence from the spiritual realm.

Psyche, it seems, can be coherently pulled into the realm of spirit. Does this, however, result in spirit and matter becoming one and the same thing? That is, is matter pulled into the realm of spirit or is spirit dragged down into the realm of matter? I think not. Though matter is now not the only realm of being capable of movement it still is capable of movement. Simply because the spiritual realm has been granted the powers of motion and that there is now 'mental machinery', does not mean that, as Santayana worries, "matter, as it truly exists, is incapable of spontaneous motion, organization, life, or thought" (R.O.B. p. 329). None of these need be denied simply because I allow mental machinery. Matter is still in motion, causing life and thought, though I do not think that it can any longer be thought of as 'organizing' anything. Organization was the role of the material psyche which is now part of the spiritual realm and so organization of matter is now due to the will of the spiritual psyche. This, however, is no great loss to the realm of matter for matter is still tremendously important in our metaphysics and our animal life. Nothing has changed the fact that it is still the assault of matter which shocks the reflective spirit and forces it into animal faith even if now it is the spiritual psyche which directs matter. Substance is still the instrument which drives the animal life. Also, as has been said, spirit has not been utterly divorced from its dependence on matter and

so matter still retains a sort of foundation, even if it is shared with the realm of spirit, in our metaphysics.

Spirit too, is still very different than matter and properly belongs in its own realm of being. It is still the intelligent surveyor of the realm of essence and the “principle of enjoyment, contemplation, description, and belief” (R.O.B. p. 355). Spirit still has a perspective which matter does not have. Now, however, it is also, whether a conscious spirit or not, the director of matter via the psyche. Nothing has happened, despite Santayana’s fears, to suggest that “spirit [. . .] has become but another name for matter in our philosophy and in our lives” (R.O.B. p. 356). Neither has anything happened to suppose that matter has become another name for spirit in our philosophy.

It seems then that reconciling proper epistemology and metaphysics requires pan-psyche interactionism as the metaphysics. In the case of intelligent beings, the psyche, or will, is a spiritual force acting on matter which in turns causes the light of consciousness to be cast on this or that essence. In the case of non-intelligent things the psyche, or will, is the spiritual force which moulds the matter into this thing or that thing but it does not mould the matter into the sort of thing which has conscious spiritual moments. This pan-psyche metaphysics allows us the possibility of spirit existing after the dissolution of matter and thus harmonizes with ultimate scepticism where momentary spirit and essence are given.

Conclusion

Santayana's philosophical system, as outlined in Scepticism and Animal Faith and Realms of Being, is, in my opinion, one of the most complete philosophical systems to date. Much of what Santayana writes accords with common sense and intertwines so completely that a correct understanding of his terminology and concepts provides one a complete view of virtually all areas of philosophy. Correct reflection on his system will give many powerful arguments against conflicting philosophical systems. This was seen clearly when a proper understanding and division of the realms of being enabled a proper view of idealism as either unconsciously admitting substance or being trapped in solipsism.

There is, however, a confusion in Santayana's system which leads him to a metaphysical conclusion which is virtually the only point where his philosophy diverges from common sense. Our common sense view of mind-body interaction is not, it would seem, epiphenomenal. The confusion which leads him to allow epiphenomenalism as a viable metaphysics is the claim that the momentary spirit which is sublimated into the given essence during ultimate scepticism is not given. This is an unfortunate conclusion since it propels him toward epiphenomenalism as he has no debt owed to spirit in the metaphysical realm since spirit was not found to be foundational in epistemology. He is thus led to treat spirit as an offshoot of matter, a slave tossing helplessly upon the flux of matter.

If, however, ultimate scepticism is done correctly, I think we will find that from the point of view of the sceptic, which is the only point of view that matters when determining what is given, the momentary spirit, since it becomes one and the same as the essence, is given. This is a powerful idea as it gives a clear direction in which we must head when we attempt to chart a coherent metaphysics. It should become clear that we cannot accept any metaphysics which places matter as foundational to spirit; that is, spirit must be able to exist independently of matter. Spiritual independence becomes the driving force of our metaphysics because we cannot claim on the one hand that spirit is known certainly while matter is a postulate of spirit, and, on the other hand, that matter is foundational in the universe and spirit is completely dependent upon matter for its existence. Such a claim would be absurd; it is to force that which posits and is known

certainly to exist to be dependent on at that which is posited and merely believed to exist; it is to force the believer to be dependent on the believed. To make spirit dependent on matter is to allow metaphysics such a long leash that it never returns to, and is never founded on, that which is certain.

We cannot, it may well be said, allow our epistemology to dictate what *is*. If we allow this then we allow ridiculous positions that somehow give our knowledge command over the actual universe. How could what I can and cannot know, even in the strictest sense, possibly matter to the universe? While it is true that our epistemology can say nothing about the actual nature of the universe it is still the case that our epistemology can say a great deal about the way in which we must think about the universe. To conceive of the universe as being entirely material is to make a dogmatic assumption that cannot possibly be grounded in certainty since matter itself is tremendously *uncertain*. When pressed about the basis of his universe the materialist will be forced to either stupidly hold on to his materialism as a brute fact truth for which no reason can be given or to claim that his materialism is based only on his fancy since matter, at its heart, is only a product of the spirit. To conceive of the universe as being both spiritual and material with neither really having dominance over the other, or, at the very least, giving spirit independence from matter, is to make an assertion that can be propped up by certainty. When interrogated about how he *knows* that spirit exists, the non-materialist will be able to calmly point to ultimate scepticism.

Once we have a correct understanding of ultimate scepticism and realise the implications it has for our metaphysics we can quickly conclude that metaphysics had better make spirit independent from matter. One way to do this is to abolish matter altogether and to hold an idealist doctrine. When done properly, however, the elimination of matter leaves us, as Santayana argues, in solipsism of the present moment. Without matter the idealist is condemned to a momentary solipsistic metaphysics. Certainly this is too high a price to pay in order to emancipate spirit.

Another metaphysical option is pan-psychic interactionist dualism where Santayana's notion of the psyche is pulled into the realm of spirit. This is a metaphysics which allows great headway to be made since spirit can be shown to have the potential to exist independent of matter by having the psyche turn its attention to memories which are

dependent on a relative substance. Furthermore, there does not seem to be a danger of assimilating the realm of spirit into the realm of matter, or of having the opposite problem of assimilating the realm of matter into the realm of spirit. This is because nothing has happened to change spirit from being a principle of reflection, contemplation and having a certain perspective while matter has also been largely unchanged save for the fact that it is no longer a principle of organization and the forms it wears, whether formed into a conscious being or not, are now dictated by the spiritual psyche.

Following Santayana to ultimate scepticism and back to animal faith has led to an exciting metaphysics which may well be described as pan-psychic interactionism since all of matter is directed by a spiritual psyche or will yet a resolute belief in matter has not been sacrificed. This journey has given an insight into a coherent, tightly bound, philosophical system which has its roots, far away as they may be, in certainty.

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