

**TRUISMS.** Moore begins by giving a series of propositions that I know with certainty. Here's a sample:

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- (i) There exists at present a living human body, which is *my* body.
- (ii) This body was born at a certain time in the past, and has existed continuously ever since, though undergoing changes (getting larger etc.).
- (iii) At every moment since it was born there have also existed many other things, having shape and size in three dimensions, from which it has been at various distances (in the 'familiar' sense of distance).
- (iv) There have existed some other things of this kind with which it was in contact.
- (v) Among the things which have, in this sense, formed part of its environment there have, at every moment since its birth, been large numbers of other living human bodies.
- (vi) I am a human being.
- (vii) I have, at different times since my body was born, had many different experiences of many different kinds.

That's the group (1) of truisms. The group (2) of truisms that I also know derives from (1): each of the people—referred to in (1)—knows the propositions in (1). That is, supposing that I can identify individual people, (2) contains propositions of the following form:

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(9-1) I know that Floria over there knows that she is a human being.

Furthermore, from the truisms (2) it follows that each person knows each of the truisms (1). Thus, presumably, there is nothing special about his epistemic position. But then we also may suppose that truisms (2) are similarly available to every other person. In sum, we have the condition of 'mutual knowledge' whereby I know *P*, I know that you know *P*, you know *P*, you know that I know *P* etc.

*Remark 1* (Common what?). It may be that 'common sense' is a misnomer. An indication of its normal use, as connoting 'practical judgement', we have, e.g., in Peirce (8.16). And as it is normally used, this term has connotations irrelevant or even damaging to Moore's purposes. What Moore should have said perhaps is that we have 'common knowledge' (=mutual knowledge) of certain propositions.

**AGAINST IDEALISM.** The idealist view is presented as the view A. The anonymous idealist is accused of inconsistency. He is supposed to claim:

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(9-2) There are no material objects, no human beings etc.

But this entails:

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(9-3) There were no human philosophers who lived their lives on Earth etc.

So, the negation of all, or at least of some, of the propositions (1) entails that no philosopher could have held such a view—i.e. could have negated (1). But since I am much more certain of the fact that these philosophers existed and held those idealist views, I ought to reject the negation of (1).

Secondly, the (still anonymous) idealist philosophers themselves attributed certain views to their opponents. But this means that they *implicitly* accept the existence of other philosophers, therefore, also of other human beings.

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**AGAINST SCEPTICISM.** The sceptical view is presented as the view B. The sceptic claims, presumably like Hume, that he does not *know* any of the propositions in (1). At most he may believe some or all of them. This involves him, so Moore, in what we may call 'pragmatic inconsistency', as opposed to logical inconsistency: the sceptic is not able to *assert* his claim without a contradiction. He is supposed to be saying:

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(9-4) No human being has ever known of the existence of other human beings.

This should be paraphrased as:

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(9-5) There have been many human beings (including myself), and none of them (including myself) has ever known of the existence of other human beings.

And this proposition (9-5) the sceptic is prepared to assert 'with confidence'. He believes them to be 'certainly true'. Well, he can't do that, because the *assertion* of (9-5), or at least a 'confident' assertion of it, is only possible when the speaker pretends (aspires, declares) to know what he is asserting. That is, he knows that there *are*, after all, human beings.

**DEFENCE OF REALISM.** Moore opens his defence of realism with the following pair of statements: 45

- (A) Not every physical fact is logically dependent upon some mental fact.
- (B) Not every physical fact is causally dependent upon some mental fact.

He spends quite a lot of effort on explicating 'mental facts' and 'physical facts'. It is worth noticing that 'physical facts' are not properly explicated—instead, we are given some examples of them, such as: 46-50  
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- (i) That mantelpiece is at present nearer to this body than that bookcase is.
- (ii) The earth has existed for many years past.

It is just as well, says Moore, that we have no explication of physical facts, since the examples we have given will suffice to show that there is no logical or causal dependence of physical facts over mental facts. Mental facts receive a more detailed treatment. They broadly fall into three categories: personal, indexical experiences, experiences in general (non-indexical mental events), and Hegelian Spirit-facts. Well, OK.

Having put these distinctions on the table, Moore objects to logical dependence:

There is no good reason to suppose that there is any mental fact whatever, such that the fact that that mantelpiece is at present nearer to my body than that bookcase could not have been a fact, unless the mental fact in question had also been a fact. 51

This sounds like a platitude, but it is a very attractive realist strategy. What can be more effective than to deny logical entailment between two propositions?

The case of causal dependence is even more straightforward. We think that the earth existing for a million years past is not causally dependent on the any mental fact. There is no 'good' reason to suppose otherwise. Well, maybe there is, maybe there isn't, but is there not a blatant *petitio principii* involved in this reasoning? If causality is a relation between material objects, then *of course* there is no causal dependence. But neither the idealist, nor the sceptic should be asked to give up his views before at the beginning of this argument. Hence a Humean may flatly deny that causal relations is something to be attributed to the objects themselves, while a Berkeleyan would resist the assumption that material objects should be admitted already at the outset. 52

**SENSE-DATA AND ANALYSIS.** I know with certainty, says Moore, that this is my right hand. I can deduce this, for example, from making gestures with my right hand. But curiously, I don't necessarily know how to analyse the proposition 'This is a human hand.' It must, I know, be analysed in terms of simpler propositions that are, intuitively, about my experiences. Moore suggests that it is reducible to a conjunction: 53  
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(9-6) There is a thing, and only one thing, of which it is true both that it is a human hand and that this surface is a part of its surface. 55

The object of my experience, namely, what I see when I look at the surface, is 'sense-data'. The status of sense-data is undecided. In any event, we have a curious situation where we know *P* with certainty, but we don't know, let alone with certainty, the correct logical analysis of *P*. 54  
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