

**TOWARD AN INTENTIONAL NONLOGICAL INTERPRETATION  
OF  
CARTESIAN EPISTEMOLOGY**

by

Jesús A. Díaz

B.A., Seton Hall University, 1976

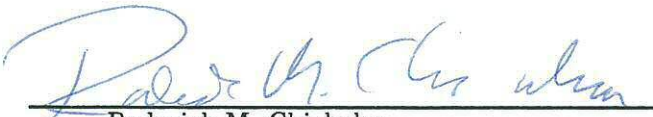
M.A., New York University, 1980

Thesis


Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of  
Philosophy at Brown University

May, 1987

This dissertation by Jesús A. Díaz  
is accepted in its present form by the Department of  
Philosophy as satisfying the  
dissertation requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Date Apr 24, 1987   
Roderick M. Chisholm

Recommended to the Graduate Council

Date   
Ernest Sosa

Date   
Eugene C. Luschei

Approved by the Graduate Council

Date   
Philip J. Stiles

Copyright

by

Jesús A. Díaz

1987

All rights reserved

# CERTIFICATE OF COPYRIGHT REGISTRATION

FORM TX  
UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT OFFICE

REGISTRATION NUMBER



This certificate, issued under the seal of the Copyright Office in accordance with the provisions of section 410(a) of title 17, United States Code, attests that copyright registration has been made for the work identified below. The information in this certificate has been made a part of the Copyright Office records.

REGISTER OF COPYRIGHTS  
United States of America

TX 2 251 686

TX  
EFFECTIVE DATE OF REGISTRATION

7 MAR 1988

Month Day Year

OFFICIAL SEAL  
87-15,484

DO NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, USE A SEPARATE CONTINUATION SHEET.

TITLE OF THIS WORK ▼ TOWARD AN INTENTIONAL NONLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF  
CARTESIAN EPISTEMOLOGY

PREVIOUS OR ALTERNATIVE TITLES ▼

PUBLICATION AS A CONTRIBUTION ▼ If this work was published as a contribution to a periodical, serial, or collection, give information about the collective work in which the contribution appeared. Title of Collective Work ▼

If published in a periodical or serial give: Volume ▼ Number ▼ Issue Date ▼ On Pages ▼

NAME OF AUTHOR ▼

JESUS ADOLFO DIAZ

DATES OF BIRTH AND DEATH  
Year Born ▼ Year Died ▼

1954

Was this contribution to the work a "work made for hire"?  
 Yes  
 No

AUTHOR'S NATIONALITY OR DOMICILE  
Name of Country  
USA

OR { Citizen of ►  
Domiciled in ►

WAS THIS AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK  
Anonymous?  Yes  No  
Pseudonymous?  Yes  No

If the answer to either of these questions is "Yes," see detailed instructions.

NATURE OF AUTHORSHIP Briefly describe nature of the material created by this author in which copyright is claimed. ▼  
ENTIRE TEXT

NAME OF AUTHOR ▼

DATES OF BIRTH AND DEATH  
Year Born ▼ Year Died ▼

Was this contribution to the work a "work made for hire"?  
 Yes  
 No

AUTHOR'S NATIONALITY OR DOMICILE  
Name of country

OR { Citizen of ►  
Domiciled in ►

WAS THIS AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK  
Anonymous?  Yes  No  
Pseudonymous?  Yes  No

If the answer to either of these questions is "Yes," see detailed instructions.

NATURE OF AUTHORSHIP Briefly describe nature of the material created by this author in which copyright is claimed. ▼

NAME OF AUTHOR ▼

DATES OF BIRTH AND DEATH  
Year Born ▼ Year Died ▼

Was this contribution to the work a "work made for hire"?  
 Yes  
 No

AUTHOR'S NATIONALITY OR DOMICILE  
Name of Country

OR { Citizen of ►  
Domiciled in ►

WAS THIS AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK  
Anonymous?  Yes  No  
Pseudonymous?  Yes  No

If the answer to either of these questions is "Yes," see detailed instructions.

NATURE OF AUTHORSHIP Briefly describe nature of the material created by this author in which copyright is claimed. ▼

YEAR IN WHICH CREATION OF THIS WORK WAS COMPLETED This information must be given in all cases.

1987

DATE AND NATION OF FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS PARTICULAR WORK Complete this information ONLY if this work has been published.

Month ► OCTOBER Day ► 12 Year ► 1987

U.S.A.

◀ Nation

COPYRIGHT CLAIMANT(S) Name and address must be given even if the claimant is the same as the author given in space 2. ▼

JESUS ADOLFO DIAZ  
PHILOSOPHY DEPT., KENT STATE UNIV.  
KENT, OH 44242-0001

APPLICATION RECEIVED

MAR 07 1988

ONE DEPOSIT RECEIVED

MAR 07 1988

TWO DEPOSITS RECEIVED

REMITTANCE NUMBER AND DATE

DO NOT WRITE HERE OFFICE USE ONLY

## NOTE

Under the law, the "author" of a "work made for hire" is generally the employer, not the em-

501665810



MORE ON BACK ►

- Complete all applicable spaces (numbers 5-11) on the reverse side of this page.
- See detailed instructions.
- Sign the form at line 10.

DO NOT WRITE HERE

"Special relief granted under 202.20 (d) of the C. O. reg."

TX 2 251 686

EXAMINED BY

CHECKED BY

FORM TX

CORRESPONDENCE Yes
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT FUNDS USED

FOR COPYRIGHT OFFICE USE ONLY

DO NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, USE A SEPARATE CONTINUATION SHEET.

PREVIOUS REGISTRATION Has registration for this work, or for an earlier version of this work, already been made in the Copyright Office?

- Yes No If your answer is "Yes," why is another registration being sought?
This is the first published edition of a work previously registered in unpublished form.
This is the first application submitted by this author as copyright claimant.
This is a changed version of the work, as shown by space 6 on this application.

If your answer is "Yes," give: Previous Registration Number Year of Registration

5

DERIVATIVE WORK OR COMPILATION Complete both space 6a & 6b for a derivative work; complete only 6b for a compilation.

a. Preexisting Material Identify any preexisting work or works that this work is based on or incorporates.

6

b. Material Added to This Work Give a brief, general statement of the material that has been added to this work and in which copyright is claimed.

See instructions before completing this space.

MANUFACTURERS AND LOCATIONS If this is a published work consisting preponderantly of nondramatic literary material in English, the law may require that the copies be manufactured in the United States or Canada for full protection.

Names of Manufacturers Places of Manufacture
UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS INC. ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48106

7

REPRODUCTION FOR USE OF BLIND OR PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS A signature on this form at space 10, and a check in one of the boxes here in space 8, constitutes a non-exclusive grant of permission to the Library of Congress to reproduce and distribute solely for the blind and physically handicapped...

- Copies and Phonorecords
Copies Only
Phonorecords Only

See instructions.

8

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT If the registration fee is to be charged to a Deposit Account established in the Copyright Office, give name and number of Account.

Name Account Number
UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS INC. DAO 61522

9

CORRESPONDENCE Give name and address to which correspondence about this application should be sent.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS INC.
300 NORTH ZEEB RD.
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48106
Area Code & Telephone Number 313-761-4700

Be sure to give your daytime phone number.

CERTIFICATION I, the undersigned, hereby certify that I am the

- author
other copyright claimant
owner of exclusive right(s)

of the work identified in this application and that the statements made by me in this application are correct to the best of my knowledge.

authorized agent of JESUS ADOLFO DIAZ
Name of author or other copyright claimant, or owner of exclusive right(s)

10

Typed or printed name and date If this is a published work, this date must be the same as or later than the date of publication given in space 3.

Kimberly Fennell date OCT 21 1987

Handwritten signature (X)

Kimberly Fennell

MAIL CERTIFICATE TO

Certificate will be mailed in window envelope

Name: JESUS ADOLFO DIAZ
Number/Street/Apartment Number: PHILOSOPHY DEPT., KENT STATE UNIV.
City/State/ZIP: KENT, OH 44242-0001

Have you:

- Completed all necessary spaces?
Signed your application in space 10?
Enclosed check or money order for \$10 payable to Register of Copyrights?
Enclosed your deposit material with the application and fee?

MAIL TO: Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20559.

11

\* 17 U.S.C. § 506(e): Any person who knowingly makes a false representation of a material fact in the application for copyright registration provided for by section 409, or in any written statement filed in connection with the application, shall be fined not more than \$2,500.

# Copyright

United States Copyright Office

[Help](#)

[Search](#)

[History](#)

[Titles](#)

[Start Over](#)

## Public Catalog

Copyright Catalog (1978 to present)

Search Request: Left Anchored Title = toward an intentional nonlogical interpretation

Search Results: Displaying 1 of 1 entries

[◀ previous](#) [next ▶](#)

Labeled View

*Toward an intentional nonlogical interpretation of cartesian epistemology /...*

**Type of Work:** Text

**Registration Number / Date:** TX0002251686 / 1988-03-07

**Title:** Toward an intentional nonlogical interpretation of cartesian epistemology / Jesus Adolfo Diaz.

**Imprint:** Ann Arbor : University Microfilms International, 1987.

**Description:** microfiche.

**Copyright Claimant:** Jesus Adolfo Diaz

**Date of Creation:** 1987

**Date of Publication:** 1987-10-12

**Names:** Diaz, Jesus Adolfo, 1954-

[◀ previous](#) [next ▶](#)

### Save, Print and Email (Help Page)

Select Download Format

Enter your email address:

[Help](#) [Search](#) [History](#) [Titles](#) [Start Over](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [Request Copies](#) | [Get a Search Estimate](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) about Copyright](#) | [Copyright Office Home Page](#) | [Library of Congress Home Page](#)

*From Library of Congress website.*

12:30 AM  
4/24/2015 (Sat)  
J-103(K)

A mis padres  
Jesús y Virginia  
y a mi hermana  
Ileana

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	v
Bibliographic Conventions.....	viii
Glossary of Logical Symbols.....	ix
Introduction.....	1
Chapter I: TWO USES OF OBJECT THEORY	
1. Intentionality.....	17
2. Russell's Criticisms of Meinong's Theory.....	22
3. The Theory of Descriptions.....	25
4. Two Uses of Object Theory.....	33
5. Conclusion.....	59
Chapter II: ANALYTICITY, INTENTIONALITY, AND ONTIC COMMITMENT IN THE CARTESIAN IDEA OF GOD	
1. The "Ontological Argument" in Logical Form.....	61
2. Cartesian Analyticity.....	68
3. "God Exists" Reduced to an A-Type Categorical Statement.....	75
4. A-type Categorical Statements and Descartes' Ontic Commitment.....	81
5. God's Existence a Basic Belief of Cartesianism.,...	88
6. The Meinongian Kant of K.d.r.V.: A: 592-95; B: 620-23.....	113
7. Two Additional Characteristics of Basic Beliefs...	118
8. Two Advantages of My Interpretation.....	125
Bibliography.....	131



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My interest in Descartes' work precedes the date I formally began to work on this dissertation. Indeed, I had done a fair amount of thinking about Cartesian epistemology before this project began. Some individuals deserve to be singled out for their contributions to that thinking.

I am indebted to the three members of my dissertation committee: Professors Roderick M. Chisholm (the principal reader), Ernest Sosa, and Eugene Luschei. Each contributed something to this dissertation. Professor Chisholm's work made me aware of Meinong's theory of objects, which provides part of the framework I use in developing my exegesis. Chisholm read at least three early drafts of my work and provided valuable criticism. I had become dissatisfied with the available interpretations of Descartes' texts when I began to read Meinong's; somehow, I felt Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* was a more appropriate tool for interpreting Cartesianism than any other tool presently available, or at least known to me. Of course, my original suspicions were crude and developing them rigorously --- as well as finding their flaws ---demanded the work whose finished product this dissertation contains. Chapter I explains a crucial distinction between the epistemic and the semantic use of Meinong's theory of objects. The distinction is crucial because it lets us see how Russell's attack may conceivably be fatal to the semantic use, but leaves the epistemic use intact. It is also crucial because Russell's interpretation of the theory in exclusively semantic terms had a profound impact on analytic philosophy. It must be

emphasized that only the epistemic use applies to my interpretation of Descartes' work. One must note at the outset that *Gegenstandstheorie*, by itself, does not suffice for our exegetical effort; it must be supplemented with Descartes' rudimentary description of the analytic-synthetic distinction. This supplement, as well as other details, are outlined in Chapter II.

Professor Sosa's seminar on *The Methodology of Philosophy* (Fall 1981), especially the discussion of Rorty's book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, helped me to understand the thoroughly epistemic nature of Descartes' foundationalism in a way I had not understood it before. The seminar contributed to this understanding because it was my first explicit exposure, through the work of Sosa and others', to the current debate between foundationalists and coherentists. Professor Luschei's criticism of those parts that directly deal with logic served to improve their quality. In some cases, his criticism led him to write what can be described as small essays of my work. I am also indebted to Philip L. Quinn, who helped me realize that Descartes' notion of analyticity (if he had one) was not of the linguistic sort contemporary philosophers deal with. Donald Dreisbach, a colleague when I taught at Northern Michigan University, read all I had written as of March 1986, and provided useful comments. It was also at Northern that I had my first opportunity to teach *History of Modern Philosophy*, devoting part of that course to Descartes. As my previous teaching experience had taught me, the test of how well one knows something is having to teach it to others. If I go back in time, I should also thank Professors William Barrett and Hiram McLendon (NYU), for whom I wrote my first graduate papers on Descartes some eight or nine years ago.

Members of the Philosophy Departments at Kent State University, University of Texas at Arlington, and San José State University provided valuable comments of portions of my research I presented to them at their invitation. I am also grateful to *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, which will publish parts of Chapter II under the title "Cartesian Analyticity". These parts were also accepted by the Annual Discipuli Conference at the University of Southern California on 3 April 1987. Lorena García, my replier at that conference, provided useful critical comments. I must also thank the Brown University Graduate School for awarding me a Special (traveling) Stipend that made it possible to present my research at this conference. With so much assistance, it remains for me to say that remaining errors (if any) are mine.

The quality of my research would have been much poorer had it been accomplished without the generous pecuniary support received from the following sources during the periods indicated in parentheses: Brown University (1981-7); Roothbert Fund (1983-7); Leopold Schepp Foundation (1983-5); Scholarships Foundation (1985-7). I am particularly indebted to Carl Solberg (President, Roothbert Fund), Edith Bobrow (Executive Secretary, Leopold Schepp Foundation), and Elizabeth Rollins (Secretary, Scholarships Foundations). I am also indebted to the other directors of these foundations, too numerous to name here.

Last, but not least, I thank my parents and my sister for their love and for accepting me as I am. We all came to this country almost twenty years ago, escaping communist totalitarianism, not knowing a word of English. My accomplishments since those difficult early days in America would have been impossible without them. This is why I dedicate this dissertation to them, as the dedication page indicates. I will not translate the words on that page; they know their meaning.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONVENTIONS

*Principia Mathematica*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 3 Vols. All references to this source are abbreviated by PM x, where the first two letters stand for the title and "x" for the page. All references are to volume 1, unless specified differently. Thus, PM 17 refers to page 17 of *Principia's* first volume.

*The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, Tr. E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 2 Vols. All references to this source are abbreviated by x, HRy, z, where "x" is the title of the work (preceded by an author's name, when required), "HR" refers to the Haldane-Ross translation, "y" to the volume and "z" to the page; thus, " 'The Search After Truth,' HR I, 319" refers to Descartes' work by that name which may be found in the first volume of the Haldane-Ross translation; 319 denotes the page. The title of the work is spelled out in full only in the first reference to it and abbreviated thereafter in some common fashion; thus, the second and subsequent mentions of "Notes Directed Against a Certain Programme" will go as "Notes," HR I, followed by the page reference. "x, HRy, z" is always followed by references to the canonical edition of Descartes' works published by C. Adam and P. Tannery. These references are abbreviated by "AT a, b," where "AT" refers to the Adam-Tannery edition, "a" to the volume (always provided in Roman numerals) and "b" to the page. For example, "AT II, 7" denotes the seventh page of the second volume of the Adam-Tannery edition. Full bibliographic data for the AT edition are provided in the bibliography.

*Descartes's Philosophical Letters*, Tr. A. Kenny. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970). References to this source are abbreviated by PL, followed by a page number.

---

 GLOSSARY OF LOGICAL SYMBOLS
 

---

-	PM's assertion sign
--->	material implication
v	disjunction
<--->	biconditional
E!	existence predicate
(E )	existential quantifier
(E <sub>x</sub> )	numerically definite quantifier (x > 0)
F $\hat{x}$	the propositional function F
(!x)(Fx)	the thing that F's
( )	universal quantifier
-	negation
&	conjunction
=	equality
≠	inequality
{ }	empty set
e	is an element of
=Df	definition
[	conclusion indicator
wff	well-formed formula

iff if and only if

-

- to infinity

-

## INTRODUCTION

The fact that a lot has been written about a topic does not preclude the possibility of additional original contributions to that topic. However, so much has been written on Descartes' ontological argument that it seems unlikely new theses about it can be advanced. Now, a doctoral dissertation is a work of scholarship only if it furnishes new ways of looking at the problems it deals with. Given the scholarly abundance just alluded to, can an original dissertation on Descartes' ontological argument be written? Yes, it can. The purposes of this introduction are to explain how I intend to do this and to introduce some of the positions to be defended in the following chapters.

All philosophical research rests on theoretical frameworks. Loosely described, these frameworks are sets of beliefs that determine what kinds of problems are philosophical and define which tools are appropriate for their solutions. Due largely to Russell's seminal work, Anglo-American philosophy since the first decade of this century has been characterized by the problems and methods of analytic philosophy.

Anglo-American Cartesian scholarship has not escaped the influence of analytic philosophy. In particular, Russell's theory of descriptions has served as a criterion by which to judge the adequacy of the Cartesian concept of god. *Principia Mathematica's* functional calculus has also been used for that purpose. More recently, Hartshorne, Plantinga and others have used modal logics with similar intentions. One must note, however, that Hartshorne and Plantinga's work (as well as similar work by other

authors) appears to be more concerned with Anselm's second argument rather than Descartes'. Descartes' argument, some say, is a variant of Anselm's first.<sup>1</sup> To be sure, these modal logics are different from PM's; nonetheless, their exegetical use is also influenced by the analytic models of Anglo-American Cartesian scholarship, insofar as they assume that formal languages and deductive processes are indispensable for interpreting Descartes' ontological argument. Viewed from this perspective, the use of modal logics is not an innovation, but rather the employment of a different technique that leaves the methodological assumptions of analytic Cartesian scholarship unchallenged. Of course, the analytic approach to Descartes' texts was thoroughly nonMeinongian, because Russell, Ryle<sup>2</sup> and others regarded Meinong's theory of objects as woefully deficient.

Examples of this analytic approach abound. Just for review, let us quote two classics that initiated this approach by making their methodological assumptions explicit:

If the logical theories which we have summarized are correct, we can now answer the question implicit in Descartes' remarks: "I do not see to what class of reality you wish to assign existence." Our answer must be that, if when Descartes talks of a class of reality he means substances or

-----

- <sup>1</sup> Hartshorne and Malcolm were the first to notice that Anselm's *Proslogion* and *Responsio* contain two arguments with different conclusions. C. Hartshorne, *Man's Vision of God* (Chicago: Willcott, Clark & Company, 1941), Chapter IX. N. Malcolm, "Anselm's Ontological Arguments," *The Philosophical Review* 69 (1960), 41-62.
- <sup>2</sup> "Plato's 'Parmenides'," *Mind* 48 (1939), 129-151 & 302-25; *Oxford Magazine*, 26 October 1933; "Intentionality: Theory and the Nature of Thinking," *Jenseits von Sein und Nichtsein*, Ed. R. Haller. (Graz: Akademische Druck-u Verlagsanstalt, 1972), 7-9; "Imaginary Objects," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (Supplementary Volume XII, 1933), 18-43. This last article is part of a symposium with Braithwaite and G.E. Moore, whose papers follow. Also: G.E. Moore, "The Conception of Reality," *Philosophical Studies* 212. Also by Moore, "The Subject-Matter of Psychology," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. X, 36-62. These two essays by Moore are not concerned with the ontological argument proper. They are included here because they are classical examples of how early analytic philosophers dealt with problems of direct relevance to Meinong's theory of objects.



attributes or relations, existence belongs to no class of reality. The word "existence" is not a symbol for anything which can either be a constituent or a component of a simple proposition. It is only a logical auxiliary symbol. The sentence "tame tigers exist" is just one way of expressing the proposition "for some 'x', 'x' is tame and 'x' is a tiger." Other ways of expressing the same proposition are "there are tame tigers," "some tigers are tame," "something is a tame tiger." The sentence "tame tigers exist" may mislead philosophers into thinking that existence is a predicate, because it is grammatically similar to such sentences as "tame tigers growl" and "Rajah growls." Descartes fell into this confusion when he assumed that the proposition "God exists" has the same form as a theorem of geometry.

-----

In short, the (ontological) argument is merely a play on grammatical form.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the majority of the logical mistakes that are committed when pseudostatements are made, are based on the logical faults infecting the use of the word "to be" in our language (and of the corresponding words in other languages, at least in most European languages). The first fault is the ambiguity of the word "to be." It is sometimes used as copula prefixed to a predicate ("I am hungry"), sometimes to designate existence ("I am"). This mistake is aggravated by the fact that metaphysicians often are not clear about this ambiguity. The second fault lies in the form of the verb in its second meaning, the meaning of *existence*. The verbal form feigns a predicate where there is none. To be sure, it has been known for a long time that existence is not a property (cf. Kant's refutation of the ontological proof of the existence of God). But it was not until the advent of modern logic that full consistency on this point was reached: the syntactical form in which modern logic introduces the sign for existence is such that it cannot, like a predicate, be applied to signs for objects, but only to predicates (cf. e.g. sentence IIIA in the above table). Most metaphysicians since antiquity have allowed themselves to be seduced into pseudo-statements by the verbal, and therewith the predicative form of the word "to be," e.g. "I am," "God is." <sup>4</sup>

-----

<sup>3</sup> W. Kneale, "What Can Philosophy Determine?," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* Supplementary Volume 15 (1936), 163-64. The implicit question Kneale mentions can be found in Descartes' exchange with Gassendi, HR II, 185-6 and 288; AT VII, 323 and 382-3. Kneale's essay is part of a symposium with Moore, whose article follows. Also, see R. Carnap, "Intellectual Autobiography," *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, Ed. P. A. Schilpp. (La Salle: Open Court, 1963), 41.

Some of the basic concepts analytic philosophy rests upon are being reassessed today. This dissertation is partly inspired by one aspect of this reassessment --- the fact that Meinong's work is being read more favorably today than it was just a few years ago. That all intelligible discourse need not be referential, that human knowledge encompasses nonexistents, that intentionality is best explained nonlinguistically, that one can predicate of nonexistents --- these Meinongian theses are no longer anathema to some of us. In the same way that analytic philosophy is reassessing itself, it is time to reassess the Cartesian scholarship guided by those old analytic models. I want to begin that reassessment by examining Descartes' "ontological argument" using Meinong's theory of objects. My hope that this dissertation is a work of original scholarship rests not only on the belief that this is a novel approach to Descartes' corpus but also on the results obtained when this method is applied to Cartesian studies. To be fair, Meinong's name has begun to appear in some recent writings about Descartes' concept of god;<sup>5</sup> Descartes' name has also surfaced in some writings about Meinong's theory of objects.<sup>6</sup> But I know of no work that examines the similarities between that Cartesian concept and the Meinongian theory to the extent they are in this dissertation, especially in chapter II.

-----

<sup>4</sup> R. Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language," Tr. A. Pap. *Logical Positivism*, Ed. A. J. Ayer. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978), 73-4. The table Carnap refers to is on page 70 of his essay.

<sup>5</sup> A. Kenny, *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*. (New York: Random House, 1968), 155, 165-8; E. M. Curley, *Descartes Against the Skeptics*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 149-51.

<sup>6</sup> K. Lambert, *Meinong and the Principle of Independence*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 30-1; T. Parsons, *Nonexistent Objects*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 213, 217-8; R. Grossman, *Meinong*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 161.

The results hinted toward the conclusion of the previous paragraph need explication; these results are three components of the approach to Cartesianism I propose. Two of these components can be explained by clarifying the meaning of the phrase "intentional nonlogical," which is used throughout this dissertation to describe my interpretation of Cartesian epistemology. My interpretation is intentional because it only employs the concept of intentionality to explain how Descartes proceeded from knowledge of the *cogito* to knowledge of several intentionalia, one of which is god. The interpretation is also nonlogical because no formal system is used to explain how Descartes claimed to know god's existence. This claim is explained by the third component: analyticity. In fact, I shall argue that Descartes identified the analytic-synthetic distinction before Leibniz. Nonlogicality and analyticity are not necessarily parts of Meinong's theory of objects; so, by having nonMeinongian elements, the interpretation I propose goes beyond Meinong's theory of objects in several important ways.

I believe this approach is justified by the view (defended in chapter I) that Russell, and analytic philosophers with him, failed to distinguish two different uses of Meinong's theory of objects: the epistemic use and the semantic use. Russell correctly identified the semantic use but failed to identify the epistemic; hence his failure to differentiate the one from the other. According to the epistemic (or intentional) use, every thought has an object; this object may or may not exist. Russell regarded this as a semantic rather than an epistemic principle; thus, he attributed to Meinong the thesis that descriptions refer to objects, existing or not, contradictory or not. He went on to attack this semantic construal of the theory as if it were its only use. His essay "On Denoting" (and other related writings referred to in chapter I) exhibit this confusion at its best.

It is no secret that Russell's exclusively semantic exegesis had a profound influence on analytic philosophy. This influence led to interpreting the Cartesian concept of god in logico-linguistic terms, a gross distortion of Descartes' epistemic enterprise. In chapter II, I attempt to show that Descartes' Fifth Meditation and related passages exemplify the epistemic use of the theory of objects.

What is gained from the effort to develop an intentional nonlogical interpretation of Descartes' epistemology, and what is gained by having the finished interpretation itself? The effort to develop the proposed interpretation along Meinongian lines required, as a prerequisite, that the distinction between the epistemic and the semantic uses of Meinong's theory of objects be made explicit. I think this distinction is implicit in Meinong's work and in many writings about it; but I know of no place where it is made as explicit as it is in chapter I, where arguments and textual evidence are provided to support it. An explicit (and hopefully fairly precise) statement of the distinction between those two uses of Meinong's object theory is what we gain from the effort to develop an intentional nonlogical interpretation of Descartes' theory of knowledge. In a way, this attempt to explicate Descartes' work might have an additional exegetical effect on Meinong's, though this effect is not one of our purposes.

We gain several things from the finished interpretation of Cartesian epistemology. Provided our analysis is restricted to the syllogism and PM, we can explain rigorously why there can be no Cartesian ontological argument (in the sense of a train of deduction leading from premises to conclusion). The absence of such an argument contributes to the realization that Descartes understood what later came to be called "analyticity" and, in that way, he had the concept of the analytic-synthetic distinction, if not the words. This

distinction is crucial to his idea of god because the notion of existence is analytically included in that idea.

Regarding "god exists" as analytic allows us to reduce it to an A-type categorical proposition and, subsequently, we can apply to it the standard rules of conversion of the square of opposition. This reduction shows that neither the pre-Boolean nor the post-Boolean interpretations of the square of opposition justify the existential import of "god exists." This conclusion strengthens the view that Descartes could not rely on syllogistics to prove god's existence.

The intentional nonlogical interpretation lets us hint that the relation between the intentional *cogito* and god, when god is regarded as an intentional object (intentionalium) of the *cogito*, is much closer than in other interpretations. In fact, this close relation and the analytic inclusion of existence in the Cartesian concept of god are necessary to explain Descartes' purported knowledge of god's existence. Incidentally, in the process of elaborating the relation between the *cogito* and god we provide reasons to reject Gueroult's use of *l'ordre des raisons* (the order of reasons) to explain the different sequential orders of the causal and the ontological arguments in *Replies to Objections II (Geometrical Exposition)* and *Principles*, on the one hand, and the *Discourse* and *Meditations*, on the other.

The intentional nonlogical interpretation of the Cartesian concept of god to be developed in this dissertation allows us to look at Kant's criticism of that Cartesian concept in a slightly new way. The Kantian criticism is commonly interpreted as dependent on the idea that existence is not a property. Kant did use this idea in refuting the Cartesian concept of god; however, the idea is subservient to another more important element of his refutation. This more important element can be stated as follows: *Existential judgments*

*can never be analytic*. Descartes' concept of god is mistaken because it regards "god exists" as analytic. The idea that existence is not a property follows from this conclusion. It follows as a working hypothesis rather than as a principle Kant had to endorse in order to criticize Descartes. As we shall see in chapter II, Kant was arguing not so much that existence is not a predicate but rather that, if it were a predicate, then the representational relation between the Cartesian concept of god and its object in the external world could not obtain. This new look at Kant's criticism will let us conclude that Descartes' epistemic enterprise failed because that enterprise was not consistently Meinongian; in fact, as we shall see in chapter II, Kant's criticism anticipates several important Meinongian positions by stating Descartes did not follow those positions; so, as we shall see, it is not difficult to reformulate the Kantian criticism in Meinongian terms.

Finally, we gain something more from our interpretation. Kenny has argued persuasively that the *cogito* and the ontological argument cannot both be valid.<sup>7</sup> Our interpretation does not solve Kenny's problem; but his problem cannot arise in the context of our interpretation.

One may also note that the presence of a deductive ontological argument in the Fifth Meditation and related passages was taken for granted by analytic exegetes. To be sure, Descartes himself invited syllogistic interpretations sometimes<sup>8</sup> and rejected them at others;<sup>9</sup> but it is surprising that analytic philosophers continued to uphold deductive

-----

<sup>7</sup> *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*. (New York: Random House, 1968), 169-70. See also page 41ff for some remarks about the *cogito* presupposed by Kenny's argument.

<sup>8</sup> "Replies to Objections II," HR II, 45-6; AT VII, 49-0.

<sup>9</sup> "Arguments Demonstrating the Existence of God and the Distinction Between Soul and Body, Drawn Up in Geometrical Fashion," HR II, 55; AT VII, 163.

interpretations, because the theory of types does not allow translating from natural language to wffs of the first-order calculus sentences asserting that existence is a property. Analytic philosophers were not unaware of this but, like Kneale and Carnap, they brushed the point aside arguing that Descartes was wrong because his view was not the same as PM's. Also, I shall argue that neither syllogistics nor PM's logic possesses inference rules to conclude that an object (god or some other) exists because it has a property. I believe the restrictions of type theory and the absence of those inference rules pose probably insuperable difficulties to deductive interpretations of Descartes' concept of god, if those interpretations are dependent on the two logics just mentioned.<sup>10</sup>

But modern philosophical analysis is blessed with a plethora of logics. Unlike our predecessors, we are not confined to a few logical systems. This supply of formal languages has made it possible for several philosophers to interpret the ontological argument modally.<sup>11</sup> I do not discuss these modal interpretations here. An important interpretive and epistemic principle justifies this otherwise unscholarly omission. The principle is Descartes' rejection of logic as a truth-discovering tool. This requires some explication. The explanation need not be complicated, assuming the reader's familiarity with elementary logic.

-----

<sup>10</sup> My shortened defense of these theses can be found in "Cartesian Analyticity," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* (forthcoming). Chapter II of this dissertation contains a more detailed defense.

<sup>11</sup> Several authors come to mind, but the following two have defined the terms of the debate: A. Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), Chapter X. C. Hartshorne, *The Logic of Perfection*. (LaSalle: Open Court Publishing Company, 1962), esp. 49-57. Also by Hartshorne: *Man's Vision of God*. (Chicago: Willcott, Clark & Company, 1941), Chapter IX.

Loosely defined, a syllogism is a deductive argument whose conclusion is a necessary consequence of two premisses. How is the conclusion a necessary consequence of those premisses? The answer is provided by the form of the argument and the rules of syllogistic validity. Consider the following argument (call it i.1):

(1) All animals are mortal.

(2) All persons are animals.

[(3) All persons are mortal.

The requirements of syllogistic validity are observed: the middle term does not appear in the conclusion, equivocation is avoided in the three terms, .... (i.1) has a true conclusion and true premisses; but its validity depends on its form and the observance of deductive rules, not on the truth value of the propositions involved. Consider this other argument (call it i.2):

(1) All persons are white.

(2) All whites are black.

[(3) All persons are black.<sup>12</sup>

-----

<sup>12</sup> There is no good reason to restrict these examples to categorical syllogisms, as I have done in (i.1) and (i.2). The same point can be made using other types of syllogisms (disjunctive and hypothetical, for instance), taking care to note that deductive rules different from those applicable to categorical syllogisms are to be obeyed.



all of whose premisses and conclusion are false. Nevertheless, (i.2 ) is just as valid as (i.1 ), for deductive rules are meticulously observed in both. How do we know that the propositions of (i.1 ) are true, but those of (i.2) false? Certainly not by the rules of syllogistic validity. Some epistemic (nonlogical) criterion of truth must be used to answer the question, since syllogistic logic is concerned with formal rules only, not truth. This is the main reason why Descartes rejected the syllogism as foreign to his truth-seeking method. The validity of a syllogistic (or asyllogistic) argument is of no epistemic avail. The objection that the conclusion must be true if the premisses are true can be discarded, because we still need epistemic (nonlogical) criteria for knowing the truth value of the premisses.

It may perhaps strike some with surprise that here, where we are discussing how to improve our power of deducing one truth from another, we have omitted all the precepts of the dialecticians, by which they think to control the human reason. They prescribe certain formulae of argument, which lead to a conclusion with such necessity that, if the reason commits itself to their trust, even though it slackens its interest and no longer pays a heedful and close attention to the very proposition inferred, it can nevertheless at the same time come to a sure conclusion by virtue of the form of the argument alone. Exactly so: the fact is that frequently we notice that often the truth escapes away out of these imprisoning bonds, while the people themselves who have used them in order to capture it remain entangled in them. Other people are not so frequently entrapped; and it is a matter of experience that the most ingenious sophisms hardly ever impose on anyone who uses his unaided reason, while they are wont to deceive the sophists themselves.

Wherefore as we wish here to be particularly careful lest our reason should go on holiday while we are examining the truth of any matter, we reject those formulae as being opposed to our project, and look out rather for all the aids by which our thought may be kept attentive, as will be shown in the sequel. But to say a few words more, that it may appear still more evident that this style of argument contributes nothing at all to the discovering of the truth, we must note that the Dialecticians are unable to devise any syllogism which has a true conclusion, unless they first secured the material out of which to construct it, i.e. unless they have already ascertained the very truth which is deduced in that syllogism. Whence it is clear that from a formula of this kind they can gather nothing that is new, and hence the ordinary Dialectic is quite valueless for those who desire to

investigate the truth of things. Its only possible use is to serve to explain at times more easily to others the truths we have already ascertained; hence it should be transferred from Philosophy to Rhetoric.<sup>13</sup>

To be sure, Descartes did not reject logic altogether: He simply rejected it as a mechanism to discover truth, as a substitute for epistemology. We can use logic, but *only after our epistemic work has assured us of the truth of our beliefs*. In other words, formal validity merely preserves truth, if we already possess it prior to and independently of our use of any formal system. Given this Cartesian view of logic, we are not justified in interpreting human knowledge of god --- a crucial pillar of Descartes' foundationalism --- as dependent on one logic or another. This does not imply that the validity of an ontological argument, Anselmian or Cartesian, cannot be shown in any modal system. The modal ontological argument is valid in S5 (which is assumed by Hartshorne and Plantinga) but invalid in T (Von Wright's M) and in Lewis' S4. All I say is that Descartes' view of the relation between logic and epistemology --- a view that seems unobjectionable --- demands us to seek the epistemic justification of those beliefs to be used in formalizing the ontological argument *before* the linguistic expressions of those beliefs are used in formulating that argument. This is the important interpretive principle that permeates the intentional nonlogical interpretation I propose.

We must deal with an objection now. By shunning inferential interpretations, the interpretive principle used to omit a discussion of modal formalizations of the ontological argument should also be used to omit the rather detailed discussion of attempts at

-----

<sup>13</sup> Rule X, HR I, 32-3; AT X, 406. Cf. HR I, 5 & 49. "Discourse on Method," HR I 91-2; AT VI, 17-8.

formalizing the argument using syllogistics and PM. After all, syllogistics and PM are systems just as formal as modal logics. Can one consistently use the interpretive principle to omit discussing modal formalizations while two similar nonmodal efforts are so extensively discussed? One can discuss PM and syllogistics only, omitting modal systems (and perhaps others, too) and use the interpretive principle consistently. The reason was hinted in the earlier paragraph. The fact that the ontological argument is valid in S5 shows that at least one modal system allows a suitable formalization; hence, one must say the ontological argument can be formalized in some modal systems but not in others. The specific thesis I defend is that it cannot be formalized at all in either syllogistics or PM. The logical work to prove this is done in chapter II, sections 1, 3, 4, and in part of section 5. The fact that nobody has shown in significant detail (to the best of my knowledge) that the ontological argument cannot be formalized in PM or syllogistics (but it has been shown that formalizations are possible in some modal systems) is what allows one to exclude modalities and discuss PM and syllogistics only.

But do those suitable modal arguments not disprove a key thesis I defend, namely the need for an intentional nonlogical interpretation? Those suitable arguments leave my key thesis intact, for a simple reason mentioned when Descartes' rejection of logic was discussed. The fact that a set of propositions and the use of certain inferential rules deductively lead to a conclusion tells us nothing about whether or how those propositions are epistemically justified. This need for a prior epistemic justification has been admitted by some philosophers working on the modal versions of the ontological argument. The most recent example of this admission comes from G. Pottinger. Concluding his article on formal analyses of the ontological argument, he writes:

It remains to say something about the epistemic situation. Can we conclude that God exists necessarily on the basis of the argument of section 9?

I think the answer to this question is negative. As the interlocutor remarked in section 5, in order to determine whether the premisses are true, we would have to know a great deal about what possible worlds *really* are. I know of no way of determining the answers to such questions. Plantinga's *The Nature of Necessity* provides an impressive discussion of this issue, but it seems to me that the upshot is that nobody has yet produced argument sufficient to compel the believer to conceive the set of possible worlds in such a way as to conclude that the premisses of the argument in section 9 are false. This is not the same thing as showing that they are true.<sup>14</sup>

The intentional nonlogical interpretation is an attempt (it need be neither the only nor the best) to provide the epistemic justification logic alone cannot provide. An adequate epistemic justification is a necessary prerequisite *before* the use of formal logics in Cartesian studies can be considered. Using logics after epistemic justifications are obtained, one may find out that some systems allow the formalization of the linguistic expressions of those justified beliefs,<sup>15</sup> but other systems do not. One may choose to omit the epistemic work and start with the logical; but this will only be an exercise in logic. If offered as an interpretation, this logical work would be a gross distortion of Descartes' epistemic purposes.

---

<sup>14</sup> "A Formal Analysis of the Ontological Argument," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 20 (1983), 46. All references to sections in the quote are to Pottinger's article.

<sup>15</sup> Choosing the words "linguistic expressions of those justified beliefs" presupposes certain considerations about the primacy of the intentionality over language. These considerations are discussed in chapter 1, section 4.

The idea that formal systems can be employed after epistemic justifications are provided is a part of Gueroult's emphasis on the use of *l'ordre des raisons* to explain Descartes' thought. My rejection of Gueroult's use of the *ordre* to explain why the causal and the ontological arguments are not consistently arranged in the same sequential order throughout the Cartesian corpus does not entail a repudiation of the thesis that Descartes' work contains efforts to discover truths (the analytic order) and efforts to explain those truths (the synthetic order).

As the title of the dissertation and earlier comments in this introduction are meant to suggest, employing the epistemic use of Meinong's object theory to interpret the Cartesian concept of god results in an exegesis of that concept that dispenses with logic by using the notions of intentionality and analyticity only. In this way, we need not appeal to any form of inference in order to interpret Descartes' concept of god (and I think Cartesian epistemology as a whole, though I do not herein address the totality of Descartes' project). Dispensing with logic may seem awkward, but this intentional nonlogical interpretation is more faithful to Descartes' own ideas and to his place in the history of Western philosophy than logic-dependent interpretations are. This is so because, as just said, Descartes explicitly rejected logic as a truth-discovering tool, due to its alleged epistemic worthlessness.<sup>16</sup> *Epistemology, not logic, was the centerpiece of Descartes' philosophical*

-----

<sup>16</sup> I use "argument" and "ontological argument" in several parts of this dissertation. This use may seem awkward, since the thesis I advocate suggests banning them from Cartesian scholarship; as a substitute, I propose and use in several passages "Cartesian idea (or concept) of God." However, using my substitute exclusively would soon result in boring linguistic monotone. More important, it would be unfair to use the substitute when describing the views of scholars who interpret the Fifth Meditation as containing an argument and use the relevant terms. As a result, I employ the substituting expression as often as possible, but not always. Whenever "argument" and "ontological argument" are used, context indicates whether they can be replaced by "Cartesian idea of god" without distorting meaning.

*effort.*

My interpretation is not free of difficulties, as I shall note at various points. As all interpretations, it runs the risk of being incorrect by going beyond what is stated in the texts to be interpreted. It must run this risk, however, since merely repeating the content of texts is not to interpret them. Yet, it cannot deviate significantly from the textual formulation if it is to be just to the philosopher whose work is being interpreted. In addition to these two semi-conflicting requirements, an interesting interpretation must be critical by asking if the philosopher achieved his or her purposes. If shortcomings are found, the interpreter must point out if these can be corrected and how; as such, a good interpretation borders on reconstruction. I do ask my readers to compare my interpretation with others, to determine which has the best explanatory power, the fewest difficulties, and offers the simplest conceptual framework. If this comparison is done, I trust the intentional nonlogical exegesis of the following chapters will pave the way for new approaches to Cartesianism, even if my reading turns out to be defective in its details.

CHAPTER I  
TWO USES OF OBJECT THEORY

After vanquishing Meinong, Russell could settle into building the edifice of Principia.<sup>1</sup>

1. Intentionality

Discussing propositional attitudes, some philosophers found it necessary to grant existence or subsistence to things which are possible or false. This need derives from the theory of intentionality, which requires that mental acts be directed toward some object: when "F" thinks, "F" thinks something; when "Y" believes, "Y" believes something. In this view, even nonexistent objects must be granted ontic status; if not, there is nothing mental acts can be directed to --- neither would "F" be thinking nor "Y" believing anything.

Plato's statement of this doctrine is probably the earliest,<sup>2</sup> but we shall focus on Meinong's theory exclusively.

---

<sup>1</sup> J.F. Smith, "The Russell-Meinong Debate," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 45 (1985), 308.

<sup>2</sup> *Theaetetus*, 189. Cf. *Parmenides*, (Hypothesis V).

The Meinongian theory of objects ( *Gegenstandstheorie* ) rejects the thesis that only existing objects have properties.<sup>3</sup>

Traditional metaphysicians, according to Meinong, were exclusively concerned with two types of objects: those that exist and those that subsist. This "prejudice in favor of the actual"<sup>4</sup> led them to neglect beingless entities. The Meinongian theory of objects was meant to counter this negligence.<sup>5</sup>

For Meinong, an object ( *Gegenstand* ) is anything intended by thought or to which a mental process may be directed. Objects are divided into two different, but related, groups:<sup>6</sup> Objectives ( *Objektiv* ) and objectum ( *Objekt* ). Objectives (ideal objects), which relate to assumptions and judgments, can be things like the nondisturbance of the peace on a certain occasion. There must be an object of that judgment; if you wish, there must be a referent of the sentence expressing the person's judgment --- "There has been no disturbance of the peace." This referent cannot be the disturbance of the peace, for there

-----

<sup>3</sup> A. Meinong, "The Theory of Objects," Tr. I. Levi et. al. *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*. Ed. R.M. Chisholm. (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), 76-117.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 78-81.

<sup>5</sup> The discussion of Meinong's theory of objects in this chapter has two purposes: (1) To explain Meinongian views as part of a set of ideas Russell reacted against from 1905 on, particularly with his theory of descriptions, and (2) to highlight those aspects of Meinong's views resembling certain Cartesian theses defended in the Fifth Meditation and related passages. This similarity between the Cartesian and the Meinongian views will be explicitly examined in Chapter II, though the attentive reader will probably detect it here. The section is expository. Readers familiar with Meinong's views may skip it and start reading section 2.

<sup>6</sup> Meinong, *On Assumptions*, Tr. J. Heanue. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 37-8 & 49-0. Meinong admitted he had not proved this distinction to be exhaustive. Also J.N. Findlay, *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 69ff.



was none *ex hypothesi*. For Meinong, the referent must be "the nonexistence of the disturbance of the peace" or "that there was no disturbance of the peace."<sup>7</sup> In contrast, objects may be thought of as the concrete things we speak or think about --- the round square, the peace. Objects relate to presentations ( *Vorstellungen*) rather than to assumptions and judgments.<sup>8</sup> They may or may not exist, since they are "by nature indifferent to being."<sup>9</sup> Existence is not part of the object's nature. The relation between objectives and objects is clarified in the following passage:

Cognition is not merely a judgment that happens to be true; it is true by its own nature---true from within, as it were. A judgment is true, however, not insofar as it has an Object that exists, or even one that has being, but only insofar as it grasps an Objective that has being. That there are black swans, but that there is no *perpetuum mobile*, are both true judgments; but the first concerns an existent object, the second a non-existent object. In the one case, the being of the Object in question subsists; in the other case its non-being subsists. Truth is always bound up with the being of Objectives and it is therefore partially constituted out of it. The judgment would not be true if there were no Objective to which it referred.<sup>10</sup>

There are five types of objects: possible and impossible; complete and incomplete; and defective. Objects are possible when they do not have a contradictory *Sosein*. Some of these exist, like clouds and birds; others do not, like the golden mountain. Objects are impossible when their *Sosein* violates the law of contradiction, as the round square does. None of these exist, for their *Sosein* precludes their *Sein*. (The underlined terms will be

-----

<sup>7</sup> *On Assumptions*, 37-8.

<sup>8</sup> "The Theory of Objects," 80.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>10</sup> "The Theory of Objects," 90. Cf. F. Brentano, "Genuine and Fictitious Objects," *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*, 71-5, esp. 74.

explained shortly). All existing objects are complete. Incomplete objects need not accord to the law of the excluded middle. Defective objects are self-referential, such as "What I apprehend is correct;" they are so called because they fail to refer to entities other than themselves.<sup>11</sup>

This theory of objects rests on two theses: (1) Some objects do not exist and (2) The nonexistence of an object does not forbid true predication about it; in other words, nonexisting objects have properties. This does not imply that nonexisting objects exist. These two theses can be clarified by the Principle of Independence of the *Sosein* (character) from the *Sein* (being) of an object.<sup>12</sup> This principle, also known as the doctrine of *Aussersein*, can be stated as follows: Every object has the characteristics its has (its *Sosein*) whether or not it exists. An example seems useful at this point. Puzzled by laboratory results that do not conform to the predictions of theory "T," a scientist hypothesizes a subatomic particle, call it "p," with properties "F" and "G." "T" is modified by adding "p" to the number of entities it already includes. The puzzling laboratory results are not crisis-provoking now, since they coincide with the predictions of the modified theory. The ontic status of "p" is undetermined; nonetheless, "F" and "G" can be truly predicated of it. This example can be extended, *mutatis mutandis*, to entities like Pegasus, the round square and the present lunar king.

-----

<sup>11</sup> On this point see R. Routley, *Exploring Meinong's Jungle and Beyond*. (Canberra: Australian National University, 1980), 501-3. Meinong suggested these objects can throw light on some logico-semantical paradoxes, as Routley indicates; but we need not concern ourselves with this detail.

<sup>12</sup> Ernst Mally anticipated Meinong in proposing this principle; see Mally's "Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie des Messens," *Untersuchungen Zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie*, Ed. A. Meinong, (Leipzig: Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1904), 121-262.

Now it would accord very well with the aforementioned prejudice in favor of existence to hold that we may speak of a *Sosein* only if a *Sein* is presupposed. There would, indeed, be little sense in calling a house large or small, a region fertile or unfertile, before one knew that the house or the land does exist, has existed, or will exist. However, the very science from which we were able to obtain the largest number of instances counter to this prejudice shows clearly that any such principle is untenable. As we know, the figures with which geometry is concerned do not exist. Nevertheless, their properties, and hence their *Sosein*, can be established. Doubtless, in the area of what can be known merely *a posteriori*, a claim to a *Sosein* will be completely unjustifiable if it is not based on knowledge of a *Sein*.<sup>13</sup>

Following Grossman, we can rewrite these theses in mentalistic terms: Every mental act has an object as its intention and this object has properties regardless of its ontic status. The theory of objects is just the theory of intentions, without regard to their modes of being.<sup>14</sup>

Meinong defined the province of the theory of objects by employing the distinction between *a priori* (rational) and *a posteriori* (empirical) knowledge. In the Meinongian scheme, the dichotomy is based on the justification for making judgments, not on the way the objects of judgments are presented to us. This is so because rational knowledge does not exclude empirical factors; thus, *a priori* knowledge cannot be defined as experience-excluding cognition.<sup>15</sup> The distinctions between the two modes of cognition are found elsewhere. *A priori* knowledge is concerned with the *Sosein* of its objects. It is certain, evident, necessary (at least under favorable conditions) and immune to the existence or

-----

<sup>13</sup> "The Theory of Objects," 82.

<sup>14</sup> *Meinong*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 107. Also 110-1.

<sup>15</sup> Kant would certainly disagree with this. K.d.r.V., A:2; B:3.

nonexistence of its objects. All predicative judgments (which are about entities, subsistents, and beingless objects) are *a priori*. Conversely, *a posteriori* knowledge is confined to existential judgments and reducible to perception. No perception involves predication. Empirical knowledge is not necessary. That which is known *a priori*, just from the nature of the objects involved and nothing else, belongs to the theory of objects. Everything else is the subject of empirical knowledge. *Gegenstandstheorie* is concerned with rational knowledge.<sup>16</sup> In fact, object theory is an *a priori* science to be distinguished from metaphysics, which is an empirical science concerning reality. Suppose I release a stone I have been holding in my hands; it will fall to the ground. No conceptual analysis of the stone's *Sosein* would ever lead me to the conclusion that it must fall when released; empirical data are necessary to find this out. Nevertheless, I can know that red is different from green by nonempirical examination of these colors.<sup>17</sup>

## 2. Russell's Criticisms of Meinong's Theory

Russell detected contradictions in the intentionality thesis soon after the publication of his essay on Meinong's theory of complexes and assumptions:

(There are) difficulties which seem unavoidable if we regard denoting phrases as standing for genuine constituents of the propositions in whose verbal expressions they occur. Of the possible theories which admit such constituents the simplest is that of Meinong. This theory regards any

-----

<sup>16</sup> Grossman, *Ibid.*, 111, 121-4, 156.

<sup>17</sup> Grossman, 122ff. G.E. Moore's views on intentionality, which can be contrasted with Meinong's, are stated in *Some Main Problems of Philosophy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1953), 263. The early Russell defended a thesis similar to Moore's; "Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions," *Mind* 13 (1904), 204. However, the common view that Russell was a Meinongian in 1903 neglects the fact that Meinong tolerated nonexisting objects, but Russell did not; see Bourgeois' "Beyond Russell and Meinong," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 11 (1981), 656.

grammatically correct denoting phrase as standing for an *object*. Thus "the present King of France", "the round square", ect. are supposed to be genuine objects. It is admitted that such objects do not *subsist*, but nevertheless they are supposed to be objects. This is in itself a difficult view; but the chief objection is that such objects, admittedly, are apt to infringe the law of contradiction. It is contended, for example, that the existent present King of France exists, and also does not exist; that the round square is round, and also not round; ect. But this is intolerable; and if any theory can be found to avoid this result, it is surely to be preferred.<sup>18</sup>

The reader should have noticed a sudden change of topics. Meinong's theory was primarily concerned with (mental) intentionality; but Russell criticizes it as if it were semantical. The thesis that Russell attributed to Meinong the view that descriptions refer to objects --- and in doing so failed to distinguish two different uses (the epistemic and the semantic) of *Gegenstandstheorie* --- is central to this chapter; we shall develop this thesis later. At any rate, three puzzles arise in Russell's exclusively semantic interpretation of Meinong's work:

Puzzle 1: If  $a=b$ , whatever is true of one is true of the other, by the definition of equality<sup>19</sup> and either may be substituted for the other *salva veritate*. George IV wished to know whether Scott was the author of *Waverly*. Scott was the author of *Waverly*; hence, George IV wished to know if Scott was Scott.<sup>20</sup>

-----

<sup>18</sup> "On Denoting," *Mind* 14 (1905), 482-3. For a clearer contrast between the earlier and latter Russell, see Quine's "Russell's Ontological Development," *Bertrand Russell*, ed. D.F. Pears. (Anchor, 1972), 290-304.

<sup>19</sup>  $a = b = \text{Df. } (F)(Fa \leftrightarrow Fb)$ . This definition is found in PM 169. For our purposes, a complication deriving from ramified type theory can safely be ignored.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

Puzzle 2: According to the Law of the Excluded Middle,  $P \vee \neg P$ ; so, "The present King of France is bald" or "The present King of France is not bald" is true. List the names and descriptions of all things that are bald and all those that are not; "the present king of France" will be mentioned nowhere.<sup>21</sup>

Puzzle 3: Consider the statement "A differs from B." If true, there is a difference between 'A' and 'B' which may be expressed by "the difference between A and B subsists." Suppose "A differs from B" is false; the latter statement may be rewritten as "The difference between A and B does not exist." How can a nonentity be the subject of a statement?<sup>22</sup>

Frege's distinction between the sense ( *Sinn* ) and the meaning ( *Bedeutung* ) of signs suggests itself as a solution to these puzzles.<sup>23</sup> Puzzle 1, for instance, can be solved by letting linguistic terms have the same sense, but differ in meaning; recall "The Morning Star" and "The Evening Star". Meaning and sense ought not be confused with each other. For Russell, Frege's distinction explains why it is valuable to express identity. Sentences such as "Scott is the author of *Waverly*" denote the same thing, but differ in meaning.<sup>24</sup>

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

23 "On Sense and Meaning," *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. Geach and Black. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), 56.

24 "On Denoting," 483. "Denote" and "meaning" are the words used by Russell to describe Frege's *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*.

Frege, like the early Wittgenstein, defended an extensional theory of language in which every correctly-formed expression corresponds to a fact of some sort or the other. The same would be true of artificial language, by the convention that "0" be the meaning of denotationless formulae.<sup>25</sup> For Frege, failure to mean (denote) is an imperfection of natural languages not to be tolerated in formal systems.

Russell did not endorse Frege's theory. If descriptions were allowed to have denotation and meaning, descriptions which do not denote would create problems on the assumption there is an entity referred to as well as on the counterassumption that no such entity exists.<sup>26</sup> Russell's solution consists in abandoning the view that denotation is what is concerned in propositions which contain denoting phrases.

### 3. The Theory of Descriptions.

After building the sentential calculus in *Principia*, (Part I, section A), the authors proceeded to construct the functional; the latter, not the former, is able to deal with descriptions, since the sentential calculus does not analyze propositions by using quantifiers.

-----

<sup>25</sup> Frege, "On Sense and Meaning," *Translations from the Philosophical Writings*, 70-1. E. H. W. Kluge, *The Metaphysics of Gottlob Frege*. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980), 132-8. It might be worth noting that Thiel has argued Russell misunderstood Frege's concept of thought and might have confused it with Meinong's concept of assumption. *Sense and Reference in Frege's Logic*. (Dordrecht: D. Reideal Publishing Company, 1968), 103-4ff. See Frege's "Thoughts," *Logical Investigations*, Ed. P.T. Geach. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 1-30. A slightly different translation of the same paper was published with the title "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry," *Mind* 65 (1956), 289-311.

<sup>26</sup> "On Denoting," 483-4.

Various names are used to name the theory explained here: theory of incomplete symbols, of descriptions, of denoting phrases, of definite descriptions. Such abundance invites confusion, so it is prudent to make some clarificatory remarks. As Russell, I distinguish descriptions from incomplete symbols. All descriptions are incomplete symbols, but an incomplete symbol is not necessarily a description. An incomplete symbol means nothing by itself, but it may occur as part, and contribute to the meaning, of many expressions; thus, parentheses and the calculus integral sign are incomplete symbols. In Russell's words, "something has to be supplied before we have anything significant. Such symbols have what may be called a "definition in use."<sup>27</sup> In *Principia*, descriptions (and related notation) are introduced as incomplete symbols.

The purpose of the theory is to avoid the puzzles discussed in the previous section by rewriting statements containing descriptions so these descriptions do not appear in the rewritten version, which is construed as the correct logical analysis of the original statement that contained the description.<sup>28</sup> Consider statements of the form "The so-and-so is such-and-such"; one such is "The author of *Waverly* was a man"; properly rewritten, the statement reads "One, and only one, entity wrote *Waverly*, and that one was a man." There are two types of descriptions:<sup>29</sup> *indefinite* and *definite*. The former refers to phrases like "a man," "some man," "any man," "all men"; the latter to phrases like "the present

-----

27 PM 66

28 "On Denoting," 482. The theory of descriptions is restricted to singular terms; but the strategy of rewriting statements has been extended to tense indicators, counterfactual conditionals, negating devices and other natural-language expressions deemed troublesome in their analysis. Some of these extensions are surveyed by R.H. Stoothoff, "Elimination Theses," *Mind* 77 (1968), 36-47.

29 *Ibid.*, 479.



King of England," "the present king of France," "the center mass of the solar system," "the revolution of the sun round the earth." A phrase is denoting solely in virtue of its form.<sup>30</sup> "The only thing that distinguishes "the so-and-so" from "a so-and-so" is the implication of uniqueness.<sup>31</sup>

Having explained propositional functions and proved that descriptions are incomplete symbols,<sup>32</sup> the next step is to show how to reduce descriptions to propositional functions. Take:

(1.1)        The round square

Reduction goes as follows:

(1.2)        An object "x" has the properties of being round and square

or, using the "is" of predication:

(1.2')       An object "x" is round and square

Use "R" and "S" for the properties of roundness and squareness, respectively; juxtapose "x" with those predicate letters, as follows:

(1.3)        Rx & Sx

---

<sup>30</sup> *Principles of Mathematics* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1937), 56. *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), 167ff.

<sup>31</sup> *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, 176.

<sup>32</sup> PM 67ff

(1.3) is a function in "x". We introduce the existential quantifier to get rid of the propositional function (binding the variable):

$$(1.4) \quad (Ex)(Rx \ \& \ Sx)$$

(1.4) reads "There is some (at least one) 'x' that is round and square." The existential quantifier asserts that there exists at least one value of the variable "x." <sup>33</sup> The existential implication of (1.4) is explicit in *Principia*.

An asserted proposition of the form " $(Ex).Fx$ " expresses an "existence theorem", namely "there exists an 'x' for which  $Fx$  is true". The above proposition gives what is in practice the only way to prove existence-theorems: we always have to find some particular "y" for which  $Fy$  holds, and thence to infer  $(Ex)(Fx)$ .<sup>34</sup>

In virtue of " $\vdash \neg(x).Fx. \dashrightarrow .Fy$ " and " $\vdash \neg.Fy. \dashrightarrow .(Ex).Fx$ ", we have " $\vdash \neg(x).Fx. \dashrightarrow .(Ex).Fx$ ", i.e. "what is always true is sometimes true." This would not be the case if nothing existed; thus, *our assumptionns contain the assumption that there is something*. This is involved in the principle that what holds for all, holds for any; this would not be true if there were no any."<sup>35</sup>

The denial of (1.4) is simple:

-----

<sup>33</sup> PM 46

<sup>34</sup> PM 20. In PM, to assert a proposition is to say that the asserted proposition is true; the symbol  $\vdash$  is used for that purpose. As Russell and Whitehead put it: "For example, if ' $\vdash \neg(p \dashrightarrow p)$ ' occurs (in PM), it is to be taken as a complete assertion convicting the authors of error unless the proposition ' $p \dashrightarrow p$ ' is true (as it is). Also a proposition stated in symbols without this sign ' $\vdash$ ' prefixed is not asserted, and is merely put forward for consideration, or as a subordinate part of an asserted proposition." PM 8-9.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Italics mine.

$$(1.5) \quad \neg(\exists x)(Rx \ \& \ Sx)$$

The connection of existence to descriptions is crucial, for existence can *only* be asserted of definite and indefinite descriptions, never of names, for names *always* denote.<sup>36</sup>

An object exists when the value of a propositional function is a true proposition. (1.4) is not true by our interpretation, for "x" denotes no existing object. Changing the interpretation, let "R" and "S" be the properties of edibility and softness, respectively; then, (1.4) is true. In interpreted systems, the ontological issue (satisfaction of propositional functions) is relative to semantics.

What criterion helps us determine what exists and what does not? The criterion is a robust sense of reality. Russell's words are important and too delightful not to be quoted:

The question of "unreality" which confronts us at this point, is a very important one. Misled by grammar, the great majority of those logicians who have dealt with this question have dealt with it on mistaken lines. They have regarded grammatical form as a surer guide in analysis than, in fact, it is. And they have not known what differences in grammatical form are important. "I met Jones" and "I met a man" would count traditionally as propositions of the same form, but in actual fact they are of quite different forms: the first names an actual person, Jones; while the second involves a propositional function, and becomes, when made explicit: "The function 'I met x and x is human' is sometimes true." (It will be remembered that we adopted the convention of using "sometimes" as not implying more than once.) This proposition is obviously not of the form "I met x", which accounts for the existence of the proposition "I met a unicorn" in spite of the fact that there is no such thing as "a unicorn."

For want of the apparatus of propositional functions, many logicians have been driven to the conclusion that there are unreal objects. It is argued, e.g. by Meinong, that we can speak about "the golden mountain," "the round square," and so on; we can make true propositions of which

-----

<sup>36</sup> *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, 178-9.

these are the subjects; hence they must have some kind of logical being, since otherwise the propositions in which they occur would be meaningless. In such theories, it seems to me, there is a failure of that feeling of reality which ought to be preserved even in the most abstract studies. Logic, I should maintain, must no more admit a unicorn than zoology can; for logic is concerned with the real world just as truly as zoology, though with its more abstract and general features. To say that unicorns have an existence in heraldry, or in literature, or in imagination, is a most pitiful and paltry evasion. What exists in heraldry is not an animal of flesh and blood, moving and breathing of its own initiative. What exists is a picture, or a description in words.

-----

A robust sense of reality is very necessary in framing a correct analysis of propositions about unicorns, golden mountains, round squares, and other such pseudo-objects.

-----

In obedience to the feeling of reality, we shall insist that, in the analysis of propositions, nothing "unreal" is to be admitted. But, after all, if there *is* nothing unreal, how, it will be asked, *could* we admit anything unreal? The reply is that, in dealing with propositions, we are dealing in the first instance with symbols, and we attribute significance to groups of symbols which have no significance, we shall fall into the error of admitting unrealities, in the only sense in which this is possible, namely, as objects described. In the proposition "I met a unicorn," the whole four words together make a significant proposition, and the word "unicorn" by itself is significant, in just the same sense as the word "man." But the *two* words "a unicorn" do not form a subordinate group having a meaning of its own. Thus if we falsely attribute meaning to these two words, we find ourselves saddled with "a unicorn," and with the problem of how there can be such a thing in a world where there are no unicorns. "A unicorn" is an indefinite description which describes nothing. It is not an indefinite description which describes something unreal. Such a proposition as "x is unreal" only has meaning when "x" is a description, definite or indefinite; in that case the proposition will be true if "x" describes something or describes nothing, it is in any case not a constituent of the proposition in which it occurs; like "a unicorn" just now, it is not a subordinate group having a meaning of its own. All this results from the fact that, when "x" is a description, "x is unreal" or "x does not exist" is not nonsense, but is always significant and sometimes true.

-----

37 *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, 168-70. Cf. Meinong's "The Theory of Objects," 79: "...the totality of what exists, including what has existed and will exist, is infinitely small in comparison with the totality of the Objects of knowledge. This fact easily goes unnoticed, probably because the lively interest in reality which is part of our nature tends to favor that exaggeration which finds the non-real a mere nothing

If the object described exists, we use:

$$(1.6) \quad E!(1x)(Fx)$$

and

$$(1.7) \quad -E!(1x)(Fx)$$

if it does not.

(1.7) may be rewritten as:

$$(1.7') \quad -\{(Ec):Fx. \langle \text{---} \rangle_x .x = c\}$$

which shows that  $(1x)(Fx)$  to be an incomplete symbol, since it disappears when (1.7) is rewritten.

Though  $E!(1x)(Fx)$  cannot be defined, it is the definiens of:

$$(1.8) \quad (Ec): Fx. \langle \text{---} \rangle_x .x = c. \text{ }^{38}$$

$f\{(1x)(Fx)\}$  is defined as:

$$(1.9) \quad f\{(1x)(Fx)\}. = :(Ec):Fx. \langle \text{---} \rangle_x .x = c \ \& \ fc \ Df. \text{ }^{39}$$

-----

--- or, more precisely, which finds the non-real to be something for which science has no application at all or at least no application of any worth."

<sup>38</sup> PM 68

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

showing (once more) that  $(\exists x)(Fx)$  is an incomplete symbol. That propositions of the form " $a = (\exists x)(Fx)$ " are not trivial can be shown now, for they are equivalent to " $Fx. \leftrightarrow_x .x = a$ " and by definition:

$$(1.10) \quad (\exists c):Fx. \leftrightarrow_x .x = c \ \& \ a = c.^{40}$$

PM's existential assumptions can be clarified a bit more by pointing out that the use of  $(\exists x)(Fx)$  in " $f(\exists x)(Fx)$ " is made possible by the following five theorems: <sup>41</sup>

$$(1.11) \quad \vdash \neg :E!(\exists x)(Fx). \rightarrow : (x).fx. \rightarrow .f(\exists x)(Fx)$$

$$(1.12) \quad \vdash \neg :(\exists x)(Fx) = (\exists x)(Gx). \rightarrow .f(\exists x)(Fx) \leftrightarrow f(\exists x)(Gx)$$

$$(1.13) \quad \vdash \neg :E!(\exists x)(Fx). \rightarrow . (\exists x)(Fx)$$

(1.11) and (1.13) deserve close attention. In (1.11), the consequent is true only when  $E!(\exists x)(Fx)$ ; thus, the ontic status of  $(\exists x)(Fx)$  is crucial to truth value. (1.13) is clarified by the following quote:

In the case of  $(\exists x)(Fx)$ , the chief way in which its incompleteness is relevant is that we do not always have  
 $(x).fx. \rightarrow .f(\exists x)(Fx)$ ,

-----

40 *Ibid.*

41 PM 82.

i.e. a function which is always true may nevertheless not be true of  $(1x)(Fx)$ . This is possible because  $f(1x)(Fx)$  is not a value of  $\hat{f}x$ , so that even when all values of  $\hat{f}x$  are true,  $f(1x)(Fx)$  may not be true. This happens when  $(1x)(Fx)$  does not exist. Thus for example we have  $(x).x = x$ , but we do not have

the round square = the round square.

The inference

$$(x).fx. \text{ ---} > .f(1x)(Fx)$$

is valid only when  $E!(1x)(Fx)$ . As soon as we know  $E!(1x)(Fx)$ , the fact that  $(1x)(Fx)$  is an incomplete symbol becomes irrelevant so long as we confine ourselves to truth functions. But even when  $E!(1x)(Fx)$ , the incompleteness of  $(1x)(Fx)$  may be relevant when we pass outside truth functions. For example, George IV wished to know whether Scott was the author of Waverly, i.e. he wished to know whether a proposition of the form " $c = (1x)(Fx)$ " was true. But there was no proposition of the form " $c = y$ " concerning which he wished to know if it was true.<sup>42</sup>

$$(1.14) \quad \vdash \text{---} : (1x)(Fx) = (Fx)(Gx). <\text{---} > .(1x)(Gx) = (1x)(Fx)$$

$$(1.15) \quad \vdash \text{---} : (1x)(Fx) = (1x)(Gx).(1x)(Gx) = (1x)(Zx). \text{ ---} > .(1x)(Fx) = (1x)(Zx)$$

#### 4. Two Uses of Object Theory

Analyzing statements containing descriptions as involving functions, not denotations, permits dealing with unreal and self-contradictory objects and solving the three puzzles without either positing existence nor violating the Law of Contradiction. (Sets, instants, numbers, particles of matter, points, and relations in extension are treated similarly, but our purposes do not require considering these).

-----

<sup>42</sup> PM 83. Also, see the proof of  $\vdash \text{---} : E!(1x)(Fx). \text{ ---} > : (x).Gx. \text{ ---} > .G(1x)(Fx)$  in PM 180.

The proposed solutions follow:

Puzzle 1: The puzzle arises because "Scott is the author of *Waverly*" has not been so analyzed that the description in it disappears when it is rewritten as:

(1.16) One, and only one, entity wrote *Waverly*, and Scott was identical with that one.

Symbolically:

(1.16')  $(E_{1x})(Ey)(z)[Wz \rightarrow (xRz \ \& \ x = y)]$

Rewriting "Scott was the author of *Waverly*," as prescribed by the theory of descriptions, solves the puzzle by showing that the proposition "... does not contain any constituent 'the author of *Waverly*' for which we could substitute Scott." <sup>43</sup>

Puzzle 2: The solution depends on whether the description has primary or secondary occurrence. Consider:

(1.17) The term having the property "F" has property "G"

as meaning:

(1.18) One, and only one, term has the property "F" and that one term has the property "G".

In symbols:

-----

<sup>43</sup> "On Denoting," 488-89.



(1.19)  $(E_{1x})(Fx \ \& \ Gx)$

If "F" belongs to no term, or to many, (1.17) - (1.19) are false, since the "one, and only one" restriction imposed by the interpretation of (1.17) in (1.18) would not hold. Thus:

(1.20) The present King of France is bald

is false, for the property "the present King of France" belongs to no term; but:

(1.21) The present King of France is not bald

is false if its means (primary occurrence)

(1.21') There is exactly one thing which is now King of France and is not bald

and true if it means (secondary occurrence):

(1.21'') It is false that exactly one thing is now King of France and is 'bald.<sup>44</sup>

Puzzle 3: The solution follows from the previous ones. "'x' is the difference between 'A' and 'B'" is true iff A and B differ; there is one, and only one, entity "x" such that "x" is that difference. No such entity exists if A and B do not differ. "'x' is the difference between A and B denotes an entity, "x," when A and B differ, not otherwise.<sup>45</sup>

44 *Ibid.*, 490.

45 *Ibid.*, 490-1.

The infringement of the Law of Contradiction that worried Russell is explained away by not regarding descriptions as necessarily denoting some entity, and by a "robust sense of reality" through which we know what things are admissible to ontology. These things are the denotata of the substituents of the arguments in propositional functions, such that the value of the function is a true proposition, where truth is understood by the correspondence theory.<sup>46</sup>

Is Russell's theory as effective as it seems? One could reject the theory, arguing it is a paraphrasing program rather than a proven method; but this is not the best reason. Not everything in logic can be proved. One must use unproved axioms (in axiomatic systems) or assumptions (in natural deduction systems) and primitive inference rules if theorems are to be proved. We reduce the number of unproved wffs and rules to the minimum, but cannot dispose of them. It is conceivable description theory could have a status comparable to that of axioms, assumptions and unproved rules --- a program accepted on pragmatic grounds not to get deduction started, but to save the functional calculus from embarrassments related to nonexistents and the violation of classical logical laws. This last point provides a more adequate criterion of effectiveness on which to assess the theory. The theory was meant as: (1) A refutation of Meinong's doctrine of *Aussersein* and (2) a means to salvage the laws of the excluded middle and noncontradiction from the paradoxical conclusions Meinongian ontology leads to, in Russell's view.<sup>47</sup> Does the theory

-----

<sup>46</sup> For Russell's explicit endorsement of the correspondence theory see *The Problems of Philosophy*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, n.d.), 189-90.

<sup>47</sup> The theory was also meant as a solution to difficulties in Frege's theory of sense and meaning; but this aspect can be ignored for our purposes.

achieve these purposes?<sup>48</sup>

The Russellian analysis of denotationless descriptions had two options: They denote either nothing or unreal things. Russell's robust sense of reality cannot select the latter, so the former is the choice; but the selection is based on arguments, not on a capricious disjunctive syllogism. The grammatical form of natural-language sentences containing descriptions does not exhibit the logical structure of such sentences. This structure is shown by translating the sentences to *Principia's* artificial language. In general, the tactic is to translate natural-language sentences containing descriptions into wffs of the functional calculus in such a way that descriptions in natural-language sentences appear as bound variables, not as singular terms, of the corresponding functional calculus formulae; thus, singular terms of the calculus are denied semantical interpretations in terms of grammatical proper names and descriptions.

-----

48 Another criterion is this: A technique of rewriting natural-language statements found troublesome after analysis can be deemed satisfactory iff statements and wffs resulting from rewriting are at worst less troublesome, at best altogether troubleless, when compared to the original statements. Do the statements and wffs resulting from such rewriting conform to this criterion of efficacy? To answer this question is not obviously relevant to the purposes of this dissertation, since it would be a critical study of the technique itself rather than a preparatory exercise for the interpretation of Cartesian epistemology to be outlined in the remaining chapters. Consult the following sources for recent criticisms of the rewriting technique: C. Caorci, "Algunas Observaciones a Propósito de Oscuridades de 'On Denoting,'" *Revista Latinoamericana de Filosofía* 9 (1983), 242-50. J. Hintikka, "On Denoting What?," *Synthese* 46 (1981), 167-83. S. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980). L. Linsky, *Names and Descriptions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), esp. chapters 2, 3 and 5; also by Linsky, *Oblique Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), esp. chapters 1, 2, 4 and 7. R. Orayen, "Tres Dificultades en la Teoría de las Descripciones de Bertrand Russell," *Crítica* 7 (1975), 69 -104. Three sources by P. Strawson: "Singular Terms, Ontology and Identity," *Mind* 65 (1956), 433-54; *Individuals*. (London: Methuen & Company, Ltd., 1959), 194-98; "Singular Terms and Predication," *The Journal of Philosophy* (1961), 393-412. W.V. Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1960), section 38.

The formal proof of validity of many arguments would be forbidden if the tactic is adopted as exceptionless. In some instances, we can handle descriptions as Russell suggests, but we cannot in others. An example of the former is:

(i)

(1) The author of the Iliad wrote the Odyssey.

[ (2) Someone wrote both the Iliad and the Odyssey.

The description "The author of the Iliad" must be treated as such, to get the provable sequent

$$(Ex)\{(Ix \ \& \ Ox) \ \& \ (y)(Iy \ \rightarrow \ x=y)\} \ [ \ (Ex)(Ix \ \& \ Ox);$$

if we treat it as a noun, we get the invalid sequent

$$Om \ [ \ (Ex)(Ix \ \& \ Ox).$$

Now, consider the argument:

(ii)

(1) Only Smith and the guard at the gate knew the password.

(2) Someone who knew the password stole the gun.

[ (3) Either Smith or the guard at the gate stole the gun.

Here, we can treat "the guard at the gate" as a singular term (n) and prove validity:

$$(x)(Kx \ \rightarrow \ x=m \ \vee \ x=n), \ (Ex)(Kx \ \& \ Sx) \ [ \ Sm \ \vee \ Sn.$$

It is possible, at least in some instances, to translate descriptions as singular terms and prove validity; hence, description theory is not an obligatory tool of logical analysis.<sup>49</sup>

Description theory successfully fights the war of liberation from nonbeing, insofar as nonexistents cannot be admitted to the universe of discourse (model) used to interpret PM's functional calculus. This restriction accords not only with the assumption (required by functional calculus inference rules, when semantically understood) that at least one object exist in the model, but also with the related PM assumption that only that which exists can have properties since, for some "x", if it does not exist, it cannot be a subject of attribution.

Odd inferences are obtained if PM's language is unmodified but the the two assumptions just mentioned are disposed of. Consider "The round square is round." Existential generalization (EG) yields  $(\exists x)(Rx \ \& \ Sx)$  --- there exists (canonical interpretation of (E )) something that is round and square, a *contradictio in adjecto*. Now, consider "Pegasus is the horse pasturing on Mount Helicon." It follows from the first assumption mentioned in the previous paragraph that we must (contrary to the facts) treat "Pegasus" as denoting an entity if we are to quantify over it à la *Principia*. Applying EG leads to the conclusion there is something which (in fact) does not exist. In Russell's views, these are the sort of oddities Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* leads to; but Russell was mistaken. The application of EG in each of the two previous examples assumes (as a necessary condition for that application) that an impossible and a possible object exist, respectively. Meinong said the *Sosein* of impossible objects precludes their *Sein*; thus, the

-----

<sup>49</sup> I borrow these examples from Lemmon's *Beginning Logic*. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978), 163-67; he adapted them from Quine's *Methods of Logic*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), Chs. 41-4.

use of EG in the first instance is inappropriate by Russell's own EG standards. "Pegasus" is a possible object which, like the golden mountain, has no *Sein*; once more, Russell misapplies EG and misinterprets Meinong's ideas. One can use EG iff the relevant entity exists; one cannot use EG first and draw existential conclusions later.

Are the logical laws of the excluded middle and noncontradiction salvaged from what Russell regarded as the paradoxical conclusions Meinong's theory leads to? The answer depends on which one of two different uses of Meinong's object theory is considered.

One use is "epistemic" or "intentional." This is the use we shall put to work in our Cartesian exegesis. The theory of objects is meant to explain how knowledge encompasses existents and nonexistents. The explanans is the segregation of *Sein* from *Sosein*. Meinong's article "The Theory of Objects" supports this interpretation.

Meinong defined psychology as the science which studies noncognitive phenomena like assumptions, feelings and judgments. In section eight (*The Theory of Objects as Epistemology*) he was prompt to warn against an inadequate mixture of psychology with object theory. The mixture is inadequate when it confuses psychology with "that part of the theory of knowledge which is and must remain the theory of Objects."<sup>50</sup> Psychology cannot qualify as the theory of objects and must remain partially separated from it, due to its prejudice in favor of the actual.

Psychology can take interest only in those Objects toward which some psychological event is actually directed. Perhaps we could put this more briefly: psychology can take interest only in those Objects which are actually presented, whose presentations thus exist, and which, accordingly, themselves exist at least "in our presentation of them," or, more correctly,

-----  
<sup>50</sup> "The Theory of Objects," 97.

have pseudoexistence.<sup>51</sup>

The inadequate mixture just mentioned results from the failure to separate *Nichtsein* from *Sosein*.

One falls into psychologism if one fails to grasp the significance and the distinctive character of the Objective and, accordingly, looks to the Object for the being which belongs to all cognition. In such a case one does not sufficiently appreciate the possibility of *Nichtsein* and *Sosein*, and one says that something actual must be involved in anything that has being.<sup>52</sup>

There are several examples in recent literature of this epistemic use.<sup>53</sup> We focus on Chisholm's, because his distinction of linguistic from mental activity ---coupled with the view that the latter can be explicated without reference to the former--- exemplifies what I regard as the epistemic use of *Gegenstandstheorie*.

Chisholm's point is that we do not have to employ linguistic concepts to develop a theory of intentionality. The concept of propositional attitude (acceptance, entertainment or endeavor) is all we need. The reason is that linguistic activity presupposes thoughts and

-----

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 89

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 96-7.

<sup>53</sup> G. K ung's use of object theory to explain the relation between the intentional and the real object is, so far as I can see, an example of Meinong's theory in an epistemic nonlinguistic context: "The Intentional and the Real Object," *Dialectica* 38 (1984), 143-56 (There is a hint of the semantical use on 152). Also R. Haller, "Objects, Acts, and Attitudes," *Dialectica* 38 (1984), 179-90. I should stress two points: (1) Chisholm, Haller and K ung do not distinguish a semantic from an epistemic use of object theory and (2) it should not be inferred that they would agree either with the distinction I propose or with my interpretation of their work as exemplifying the epistemic use of the theory.

not vice versa.<sup>54</sup>

An intentional definition of "proposition" is offered at the start (I do not number the following definitions sequentially, but retain their numerals in the paper cited):

D1 "p" is a proposition =Df. It is possible that there is someone who accepts "p".

Now, we can speak of a proposition as entailing certain properties:

D3 "p" entails the property of being "F" =Df. "p" entails a proposition which is necessarily such that it is true iff something has the property "F".

For instance, "some men being mortal" entails the properties of *being a man* and *being mortal*.

There is a tendency to explicate *de re* belief in linguistic terms. This approach uses so-called "vivid names" and causal relations between the thing named and the person believing something *de re* about that thing; but this type of belief need involve no reference to linguistic phenomena, as D6 suggests:

D6 "x" is believed by "S" to have property "F" =Df. "S" accepts a proposition which implies "x" to have the property "F".

-----

<sup>54</sup> "Thought and its Reference," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 14 (1977), 167.



This definiendum, together with others, is used to explain the notions of perception, reference to oneself without using language, and thought. We need consider the last of these three only.

Two new definitions are introduced to explain thought. There are two senses of "'x' is thought about by 'S'": "'x' is entertained by 'S' and "'S' entertains a proposition about 'x'."

The first definition is meant to capture both:

D14 'S' has a thought that is directed upon 'x' =Df. 'S' entertains a proposition which implies 'x' to have some property, or 'S' entertains 'x'.

The other definition is:

D15 'x' is thought about by 'S' as having the property 'F' =Df. 'S' entertains a proposition which implies 'x' to have the property 'F'.

D14 and D15 are used to solve five puzzles: how thoughts may be directed upon a proposition without entertaining it; Wittgenstein's puzzle of how my idea of a person is my idea of that person; the certainty of one's thoughts, despite their possible error; the status of nonexistent *intentionalia*, and how one thinks about a particular thing without any linguistic use. We are only concerned with the fourth and fifth puzzles.

According to Meinong, the fact that an object does not exist or cannot exist does not bar knowing truths about it. But how can a truth be about a nonexistent object? Russell's paraphrasing strategy does not explain this puzzle away, for it fails to show the truth of A (see below) is not about a nonexistent. Consider Meinong's sentence:

A: The mountain I am thinking of is golden.

Its Russellian paraphrase would be:

A': There exists an "x" such that (i) "x" is a mountain I am thinking of, (ii) "x" is golden, and (iii) for every "y", if "y" is a mountain I am thinking of, then "y" is identical with "x".

A principle of description theory is that if a statement is true, no adequate paraphrase of it can be false. A' is an adequate paraphrase of A, but A can be said to be true of a nonexistent though A' cannot, since the mountain I am thinking of does not exist, as A' claims. What are we to do?

There are at least three possible answers. The nonexistence of a golden mountain is recognized by A, not by A'. This can be explained by noting description theory presupposes that all statements are *Sein* or negations of these; thus, it can admit no *Sosein* statements. Consequently, description theory does not prove the doctrine of *Aussersein* wrong; it just assumes it is.<sup>55</sup> Another answer appeals to the notion of entertainment. We might say that "The proposition that 'S' is entertaining entails the proposition that there is a golden mountain, and it does not entail the proposition that there is more than one golden mountain."<sup>56</sup>

Another approach is to consider intentional sentences in terms of an "adverbial theory" which would explain intentionality in linguistic terms. A statement like "Jones is thinking about a unicorn" would be paraphrased as "Jones is thinking unicornically." This

-----

<sup>55</sup> Chisholm, "Alexius Meinong," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Ed. P. Edwards. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967), Vol. 5, 261.

<sup>56</sup> "Thought and its Reference," 172.

paraphrase is proposed as a philosophically less misleading locution than the original "Jones is thinking about a unicorn." The rewriting is said to guide us on the clearer path, because the original statement relates Jones to a nonexistent, which is impossible, since relations between two (or more) entities obtain only when both entities exist. The original statement has no more to do with unicorns than "The Emperor decorated his tunic ornately."<sup>57</sup>

Consider the implications of this adverbial theory:

(iii)

(1) Jones thinks only of those things that exist.

(2) Jones is thinking about a unicorn.

[ (3) There are unicorns.

(iv)

(1) Jones never thinks of things that do not exist.

(2) Jones is thinking about a unicorn.

[ (3) There are unicorns.

It follows from (iii) and (iv) that, if the adverbial theory is correct, the validity of (v) can be preserved:

(v)

-----

<sup>57</sup> Chisholm, "Homeless Objects," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 27 (1973), 210-11.

- (1) Jones thinks unicornically.  
 (2) Jones thinks only of things that exist.  
 [ (3) There are unicorns.

But how can (v) be valid if "Jones thinks unicornically" has no more to do with unicorns than "The Ship's Store has a fine anchor selection?"

It seems incorrect to say that "Jones is thinking about a unicorn" has no more to do with the a horned equine than "I am writing this paragraph on 20 August 1985." We can be more specific: The proposed linguistic explanation of *intentionalia* fails to accomplish its task due to the relation it asserts between the conscious individual and some linguistic expression. If this could be done, then we would have to think of the name of the thing our consciousness is directed to before consciousness could be directed to that thing; but this leads to an infinite regress, for to think of the name of the thing (now the focus of our consciousness) one would have to think first of the name of the name of the thing, and so on ad infinitum.<sup>58</sup>

But, can we think about a thing before using language? No, some philosophers say. There must be a purpose to communicate (a speech-act) for reference to take place. This necessitates communication media and uptake on a receiver's part. If one can think without linguistic occurrences, it follows there is no reference in thought. If this is so, how can we think about a thing?<sup>59</sup> D14 is used to solve this puzzle, by dropping the idea that

-----

<sup>58</sup> "Homeles Objects," 211-12

<sup>59</sup> A form of this puzzle is attributed to Vendler by Chisholm, "Thought and its Reference," 172.

intentionality involves linguistic activity. Intentionality requires no intention to communicate.<sup>60</sup>

The previous arguments suggest Meinong's doctrine of *Aussersein* is the best of the presently-available ways to understand *intentionalia*, particularly those dealing with nonexistents. "The 'aboutness' of words is to be explicated by reference to the 'aboutness' of thought, rather than conversely."<sup>61</sup>

By "the epistemic use of *Gegenstandstheorie*" I understand an explicit separation of language from intentionality, of the sort Chisholm advocates. If we choose, we might understand this epistemic use as the rejection of linguistic theories of *intentionalia*. Knowledge encompasses existents and nonexistents due, in part, to the primacy of the intentional.

This epistemic use of object theory is a complement of psychology; in a way, the former is broader in scope, and more fundamental, than the latter. Psychology is limited by existence assumptions, but object theory explains how we know existents and nonexistents. One might think of the epistemic employment as Meinong's counterproposal to Russell's "robust sense of reality;" it is Meinong's explanation of how "the totality of what exists, including what has existed or will exist, is infinitely small in comparison with the totality of the Objects of knowledge." Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* is, together with Husserl's phenomenology, part of a tradition of divergent views on intentionality traceable to Brentano's notion of intentional inexistence.<sup>62</sup> It is also a contemporary example of

60 *Ibid.*, 172.

61 "Homeless Objects," 212

unnaturalized epistemology.<sup>63</sup>

The other use of Meinong's theory is semantical. The theory of objects can be used to explain how linguistic units (words, phrases and sentences) can be meaningful regardless of the ontological status of the entities language deals with; generally speaking, a semantics is Meinongian if it uses nonexistent objects by predicating about them and, perhaps, quantifying over them. Meinong explicitly excluded linguistics from object theory:

The reference of linguistic science, already introduced, shows in another respect how little psychology can qualify as the true science of Objects. In dealing with the meaning of words and sentences, linguistic science is necessarily also concerned with Objects in a very basic way. Thus, in point of fact, the viewpoint from which psychology was to have been conceded any prerogative in this matter is not apparent; rather, it is clearly seen that neither of these two disciplines can be that science of Objects we are seeking.<sup>64</sup>

Thus, the semantical use of this work has no explicit epistemic purpose. We must turn to chapters two and three of *On Assumptions* to discover the relation between the theory of objects and language. Chapter two defends several linguistic views without substantially invoking the theory of objects. Words, whose significations are objects, express individual ideas; most sentences, whose significations are judgments, express

---

<sup>62</sup> See J.N. Findlay, "Meinong the Phenomenologist," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 27 (1977), 161-77.

<sup>63</sup> See Grossman, 106-7; Findlay, *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values*, 328-40ff. In general, naturalized epistemology calls for a close relation between itself and psychology; see Quine's "Epistemology Naturalized," *Empirical Knowledge*, Ed. Chisholm and Swartz. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), 59-74, esp. 63ff.

<sup>64</sup> "Theory of Objects," 88

complete thoughts.<sup>65</sup> The chapter is based on what we might call "the primacy of the intentional" ---linguistic reference is to be explained in terms of the intentionality of thought, and not conversely.<sup>66</sup> We must turn to the next chapter, particularly to section ten (dealing with objectives and language) to find the semantical use of *Gegenstandstheorie*.

The section contains a complicated set of arguments trying to discover which language forms have objectives as their significations. These arguments lead to the conclusion that objectives are significations of sentences:<sup>67</sup> but they can also be the signification of words, such as *credo*, which qualifies as sentences.<sup>68</sup> "There was no disturbance of the peace," the earlier example, is as relevant now as it was then, for the point is that language does contain units dealing with nonexistents.<sup>69</sup> Intelligible discourse neither is nor need be referential.

In sharp contrast, we find Donnellan's effort to develop a non-Meinongian semantic; more exactly, a theory to explain how descriptions and singular terms neither refer to nor truly predicate about nonexistent nonfictional entities.<sup>70</sup> These entities are those we mention in language on "the assumption that the speaker is talking about people, places,

-----

<sup>65</sup> *On Assumptions*, 25 & 28. Examples of dependent and independent sentences that do not express judgments are discussed in section six; hence the qualification "most sentences" is needed.

<sup>66</sup> See 22-3 & 29. I take the definition of "primacy of the intentional" from Chisholm's "The Primacy of the Intentional," *Synthese* 61 (1984), 89.

<sup>67</sup> *On Assumptions*, " 48.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 28, 48.

<sup>69</sup> Findlay, *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values*, 66, 327 and section 11 of chapter 3.

<sup>70</sup> "Speaking of Nothing," *The Philosophical Review*, 83 (1974) 3-31.

or things that occur in the history of the world." <sup>71</sup> An example is Jacob Horn, whose diary contained data about the colonial history of Washington County. Subsequent research cast doubt on the authenticity of the journal, as well as Horn's existence. The child's eventual bankruptcy of her or his belief in Santa Claus is another example. Conversely, discourse about Snow White and the seven dwarves would be fictional, since the physical actuality of these entities is never assumed. For Donnellan, predicative statements about fictional entities can be true, even on the acknowledgment they do not exist, since "the intent of the speech act" is mythological or legendary. In statements regarding nonexistent nonfictional entities, however, the speaker cannot admit the nonexistence of what he or she speaks about. <sup>72</sup>

How are statements like "Jacob Horn does not exist" to be analyzed? The "natural view," rejected by Donnellan (and Russell) leads to the conclusion that Horn, though nonexistent, must nevertheless have some reality for the proposition to be meaningful; we end up with "the Meinongian population explosion." <sup>73</sup> Crudely put, Donnellan's explanation for the failure of reference of such predicative expressions consists in the technical (admittedly not well defined) notion of "block." A block occurs when the use of a description or singular term with referential intention ends up with no entity to act as the referent of that expression, for the entity whose existence was taken for granted by the user of the language turned out to be a nonexistent due to false data (the case with Horn), parental stories (Santa's example) or numerous other factors. Rule (R) can be stated as

---

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.



follows:

(R) If N is a proper name that has been used in predicative statements with the intention to refer to some individual,<sup>74</sup> then "N does not exist" is true iff the history of those uses ends in a block.

For Donnellan, one of the advantages of his theory is that "it has no Meinongian implications, no overpopulation with entities whose existence is being denied."<sup>75</sup>

This exposition of the two uses of object theory allows us to answer the question posed earlier: Are the logical laws of the excluded middle and noncontradiction salvaged from what Russell regarded as the paradoxical conclusions Meinong's theory leads to? To answer this question, we must consider each use separately from the other. We take the epistemic first.

Allowing for the ambiguity and vagueness of the term "knowledge," it is doubtless knowledge is not limited to existents. We know many things about centaurs, geometries, Pegasus, sirens and unicorns, though none of these objects exist, as Meinong insisted. Meinong's theory explains how this cognition is possible: the existence and the properties of objects must be segregated from one another. At once, the theory meets the traditional requirements that consciousness be directed at something --- the objective --- and explains how that direction is possible when the object does not exist.<sup>76</sup> Pushing the point a bit, we might say the epistemic use of object theory coincides with those portions of Meinong's

---

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-7.

<sup>76</sup> *On Assumptions*, 37-8.

theory of evidence dealing with direct, *a priori* and certain evidence. In fact, as we shall argue in chapter III, Descartes' gnoseology in the fifth Meditation is Meinongian due to its anticipation (though lax use) of the epistemic use of *Gegenstandstheorie* and of the doctrine of *Aussersein*. The epistemic use of Meinong's theory can be classed among those many attempts to explain intentionality; as such, no mention of linguistic forms is made, which would properly be parts of a theory of linguistic meaning and reference. Even if linguistic forms come into the picture, they do so at a later stage, due to the primacy of the intentional. Objections can be raised against the epistemic use of object theory, as Brentano did;<sup>77</sup> but it is curious to note Brentano did not invoke language in his rebuttal.

In this use of the theory, there is need to salvage neither the law of the excluded middle (LEM) nor the law of noncontradiction (LNC). Take LEM: Either "p" is true or "p" is false. Let "p" be an object consciousness is directed to, say the color blue (an incomplete object), for explicitness; thus:

(vi)  
"Blue" is true,

or

(vii)  
"Blue" is not true.

-----

<sup>77</sup> "Genuine and Fictitious Objects," Tr. D. B. Terrell, *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*, 71-5.

Only (vi) or (vii) can be true, by LEM; the other must be false. Put generally, that one having a certain truth value necessarily precludes the other from also having that same truth value. (It is assumed we have only two choices of truth value: truth and falsity). There is a conceptual confusion in this reasoning. Incomplete objects have a *Sosein* that violates LEM. Predications about such objects are neither true nor false; for some property E (say, extension), the object neither has nor lacks E.

It could be objected this conceptual confusion applies to incomplete objects only; it does not apply to the other types of objects Meinong identified. To demonstrate that there is no need to salvage LEM in the epistemic use of object theory one must show that comparable conceptual confusions arise when the epistemic use of object theory is extended to these other objects. This is easily done. Applying LEM to the epistemic use of *Gegenstandstheorie* involves the conceptual mistake of predicating truth values of the objects of our consciousness. LEM states that either "p" is true or "p" is false. Applying LEM to the epistemic use of object theory requires us to replace the variable "p" by the name of the object of our consciousness; hence, we would say "chair" is true or "chair" is false. (Of course, you can replace "chair" by the name of any other object). But objects have no truth values, only propositions about them do. We can say "The chair is black" is true or "The chair is black" is false, but we cannot drop the grammatical predicates of these sentences and predicate truth values of the objects their dropped grammatical subjects denote.

This can be stated in Meinongian terms: In *On Assumptions* (Chapter 2), Meinong separated sentences (*Sätze*) from objectives (*Objectives*). The referents of sentences are objectives, while objects (*Objekte*) are the parts of which objectives are made. For

instance, "grass" and "green" are the objects of which the objective "The grass is green" is composed. Meinong denied that objectives can be reduced to objects; thus, *Objektive* might have truth value (pushing terminology a bit), but *Objekte* cannot.

The Russell-Meinong debate on this point is funny. That the round square is round and also not round follows from Meinong's theory, according to Russell. This conclusion is intolerable, for it allows an object infringing LNC.<sup>78</sup> This intolerable view results from an unacceptable theory which regards "denoting phrases as standing for genuine constituents of the propositions in whose verbal expression they occur."<sup>79</sup> Meinong replied that LNC applies to actual and possible objects, not to impossible ones. Russell countered:

*This reply seems to overlook the fact that it is of propositions ... not of subjects that the law of contradiction is asserted. To suppose that two contradictory propositions can both be true seems equally inadmissible whatever their subjects may be.*<sup>80</sup>

In 1905 Russell attacked object theory (its semantic use, to be precise), arguing its ontology includes objects violating LNC. When Meinong moved to exempt impossible objects from LNC, Russell accused him of overlooking the fact that LNC does not apply to subjects and, by implication, it does not apply to the objects these subjects denote (recall Russell said Meinong's theory "regards any grammatically correct denoting phrase as standing for an object.")<sup>81</sup> How can one state an objection on the basis that an object

78 "On Denoting," 483.

79 *Ibid.*, 482.

80 Russell's review of Meinong's *Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften*, *Mind* (1904), 439. Emphasis mine.

violates LNC and then, when the forthcoming reply tries to exempt the object from the law, say the reply ignores the fact LNC does not apply to objects? In situations like this, unless reasons for the change of heart are given (none was presented by Russell), it is not unreasonable to suspect contradictory stances at best, *ad hoc* practices at worst.

Separating the epistemic use from the semantical allows us to speak of truth values *only after* the intentionality of consciousness has been linguistically expressed as a predicative statement about one or more objects our consciousness is directed to; thus, the epistemic use is consistent with Meinong's endorsement of the primacy of the intentional and his theory's thrust that consciousness can be directed toward objects considering neither their ontological status nor the truth value of predications about them. In this light, one can explain how consciousness can be directed to (vi) and (vii); they are prelinguistic foci of mental activity. The necessary truth-value exclusivity of LEM would make this explanation very difficult, if at all possible, since LEM would seem to restrict the direction of consciousness to either (vi) or (vii) necessarily excluding the other. But LEM is a semantic, not an epistemic, notion. It deals not with the relation between consciousness and its objects, but with the relation between statements and what they refer to (their "designata" or "denotata"), this latter relation understood in terms of a two-valued theory of truth.<sup>82</sup>

The linguistic expression of intentionality, when understood in PM's terms, brings the semantical use of the theory to the fore.

---

81 "On Denoting," 482.

82 Similar arguments, *mutatis mutandis*, exorcise LNC from the Russellian puzzles.

The two-valued semantics used to interpret PM's formal language must assume the existence of at least one object. The semantical interpretation of the inference rules involving quantifiers in this language must also make the same assumption.<sup>83</sup> In other words, PM's semantics cannot include those aspects of Meinongian ontology covering nonexistents. Take the statements resulting from the linguistic expression of intentionality in (vi) and (vii). If we translate them to PM notation and use the required non-Meinongian semantics, contradiction would result in wffs like:

$$(Ex) (Bx \ \& \ Ex) \ \& \ \neg(Ex)(Bx \ \& \ Ex).$$

This shows neither that Meinongian semantics is untenable nor that its development is necessarily futile; it does not show quantification must tie to existence. One thing is suggested: Meinong's object theory cannot be semantically utilized to handle incomplete objects in a logical system whose "robust sense of reality" and two-valued semantics exclude objects which are incapable of being (but are nonetheless given to our consciousness) and whose *Sosein* violates LEM which only holds without reserve for existing (fully determined) objects.

Reverting to the epistemic use of object theory, its point is that every thought has an object; this object may or may not exist. Russell transferred this principle to language, attributing to Meinong the thesis that descriptions refer to objects, existing or not, contradictory or not.<sup>84</sup> Russell failed to distinguish the two uses of Meinong's object theory

---

<sup>83</sup> I say "the inference rules ...," since it would be inaccurate to say all quantified wffs of PM necessarily involve existence; for instance,  $(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$  need not.

<sup>84</sup> T. Parsons, *Nonexistent Objects*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 30. N. Griffin, "Russell's 'Horrible Travesty' of Meinong," *Russell* (1977), 39-51.

and exclusively attacked the linguistic, as if it were its only use.

We have regarded the contributions by Chisholm, Küng and Haller as examples of the epistemic use of object theory. A recent paper by Smith does not use the theory in either way; but it helps to clarify some of the points I have made.

She correctly indicates the Russell-Meinong debate dealt with at least three issues: intentionality, nonexistents and reference.<sup>85</sup> My point in differentiating one use from the other is that these three related issues are not clearly separated by most writers, but are often conflated. Intentionality and linguistic reference can point to existents and nonexistents; so ontological issues arise for both. This does not imply the two are to be mixed together, though they are related. This relation is exemplified by the debate on whether linguistic reference is explained by the intentionality of thought or vice versa.

One of Smith's point is that Russell's misgivings regarding *Gegenstandstheorie* centered on infringements of the laws of the excluded middle and noncontradiction. Now, I have indicated such violations are relevant only for the semantic use of the theory within *Principia's* framework. She argues several passages in "On Denoting," *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* and *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* exhibit semantical, rather than ontological, concerns. Consider passages like the direct quote from "On Denoting" I used to open the second section of this chapter.<sup>86</sup> In that quote, Russell denies that descriptions function referentially. His options are dropping the assumption that each element of a proposition refers to some existent or offering criteria to distinguish denoting

85 "The Russell-Meinong Debate," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 45 (1985), 305.

86 *Ibid.*, 315. *Mind* 14 (1905), 482-3ff.

from nondenoting singular terms; otherwise, he might be faced with a contradictory theory of denoting. In the end, only "logically proper names" guarantee their denotata.

Three of Russell's objections against Meinong's nonexistent are: (1) Denoting phrases are not the proper logical subjects of propositions; (2) Meinong erroneously assumed those propositions can be analyzed in subject-predicate terms, and (3) mistakenly concluded some descriptions denote nonexistent.<sup>87</sup> These objections are grammatical, logical and semantic; they are not epistemic. Moreover, they depend on the view that propositions are timeless wholes each of whose parts denote some sort of existent. If the apparent referent of a description is self-contradictory, then it cannot exist (the tacit assumption is that contradictory objects cannot exist), so there would be nothing for the description to denote. Of course, the elimination of descriptions by analysis shows they are just part of the natural-language expression of the propositions in which they occur and not of their (symbolic or not) logical form. Meinong's views are diametrically opposed to Russell's. The former's denial that objectives reduce to objects, in the way a whole can be broken into its parts, is a sharp contrast to the Russellian view of propositions. Moreover, Meinong restricted the law of noncontradiction to actual and possible objects; Russell applied it to all objects. In conclusion, "Meinong and Russell were operating on two different concepts of sentence or proposition and two different notions of part-whole relations for Meinongian objectives and Russellian propositions, respectively."<sup>88</sup> They did not critically assess their views, but talked past each other instead.<sup>89</sup>

-----

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 311 (point 6). She lists these three points as one objection. I suspect they are independent, but must be brought together to construct Russell's argument.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 332.

<sup>89</sup> For a discussion somewhat related to Smith's points, see Curley's *Descartes Against*



## 5. Conclusion

Let us sum up the main points of this chapter, before moving on. This summary highlights just those points crucial in understanding the remaining chapters.

(1) At least one object must exist in the model (universe of discourse) used for the semantical interpretation of PM's artificial language. This is required by the canonical reading of (E) and by the inference rules of the functional calculus when these rules are understood semantically rather than syntactically. However, not all wffs of the functional calculus need existence assumptions for their interpretation; for example,  $(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$  does not.

(2) In PM, properties can be truly predicated of only those things that exist. This follows from (1) and from the explanation of how propositional functions are satisfied (robust sense of reality). Similarly, relations obtain only when the things said to be related exist; in fact, two-place relations ("xRy," for example) are just binary predicates.

(3) There are two uses of Meinong's theory of objects: one is epistemic, the other semantic. Russell failed to distinguish the one from the other; his criticism of object theory applies only to its semantic use. Descartes' Fifth Meditation and related passages exemplify the epistemic, not the semantic, use of *Gegenstandstheorie*. (This last point will be argued in Chapter III).

CHAPTER II

ANALYTICITY, INTENTIONALITY AND ONTIC COMMITMENT IN THE

CARTESIAN

IDEA OF GOD

My first task is, therefore, to grasp the eidetic typology of what lives in my consciousness in its immanent temporality. This is what Descartes called the stream of my *cogitationes*. The fact that they are intentional makes them what they are. Every single *cogito*, and every combination of them into the unity of a new *cogito* has its corresponding *cogitatum*. And the latter, qua *cogitatum*, taken exactly as it appears, is essentially inseparable from the *cogito*.<sup>1</sup>

The time has come to: (i) buttress explicit support for the thesis that god's existence is an analytic fact of Cartesian foundationalism and (ii) challenge the notion that the deity's existence is proved by logical deduction. This support is found in:

(1) Descartes' rejection of the syllogism as a truth-discovering tool prevented him from using it to prove the existence of god, as a matter of internal consistency.

(2) Descartes' ontological argument cannot be symbolized in either syllogistics or *Principia's* system.

(3) Descartes understood what later came to be called "analyticity"; in this sense, he had the concept if not the word.

-----

<sup>1</sup> E. Husserl, "Phenomenology and Anthropology," *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*, Ed. R.M. Chisholm. (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), 139-0.

Let us consider these three points.

1. The "Ontological Argument" in Logical Form.<sup>2</sup>

Difficulties arise if we try to interpret the "ontological argument" using Aristotelian logic or *Principia's* functional calculus. (Whether other logics are more promising candidates for the job is a topic I do not address here). To see this, let us write the alleged argument in logical form and find the inferential rules allowing the purported passage from premisses to conclusions. If the presently accepted inferential interpretations are tenable, we should be able to translate each proposition in the argument from natural language to the predicate calculus and find the appropriate inferential rules among the finite stack of such rules each of those systems possesses; but we can neither translate those propositions nor find such rules.

To make the point clear, let us see how the "ontological argument" runs in ordinary language. The footnotes after each proposition in the "argument" indicate the approximate place in the Cartesian corpus from which each proposition was extracted. For brevity, call my rendering OA:

(1) The concept "god" has all positive properties.<sup>3</sup>

(2) Existence is a (positive) property.<sup>4</sup>

-----

<sup>2</sup> A version of the first two sections of this chapter can be found in mine "Cartesian Analiticity," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, forthcoming.

<sup>3</sup> "Discourse on Method," HR I, 102-3; AT VI, 33-5.

<sup>4</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 181-2; AT VII, 67.

[ (3) The concept god has existence.<sup>5</sup>

[ (4) God exists.<sup>6</sup>

One objection must be dealt with before proceeding. There are natural-language renderings of the "ontological argument" different from OA; hence, I must be certain that the theses to be developed in the sequel are neither excessively nor exclusively dependent on OA. If they are so dependent on OA, those theses would have little (if any) value for the wider context of Cartesian scholarship.

Certainly, OA is merely one of several renderings of the argument;<sup>7</sup> however, it is not easy to see how renderings claiming fidelity to the Cartesian corpus can fail to have components C1 and C2. These two components are: (C1) A statement or combination of statements declaring that existence is a property (or perfection) of god or of our concept of god and (C2) Another statement or combination of statements asserting that god exists. How these statements are worded and where they or their combinations appear may vary from one rendering to another.

To see this, let us examine Curley and Sievert's versions just alluded to (footnote 19). The fourth statement in Curley's rendering ("I perceive clearly and distinctly that existence belongs to the true and immutable nature of a supremely perfect being") qualifies

5 "Meditations," HR I, 181; AT VII, 69. Some of my critics prefer to write "The content of our concept of god has existence." If this suggestion is accepted, a corresponding rewording of premise (1) would seem to be required.

6 "Meditations," HR I, 181-2; AT VII, 66-7.

7 For two other renderings see E.M. Curley, *Descartes Against the Skeptics*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 141-2. D. Sievert, "Descartes on Theological Knowledge," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 43 (1982), 201-19.

as C1. In fact, Curley states (page 142) that fourth statement is justified by a subargument one of whose premisses is "Existence is a perfection," a statement that satisfies C1. The conclusion of Curley's version is identical to OA's. Sievert's first premise satisfies C1: "...the idea of existence is necessarily connected with other ideas which, jointly, constitute the idea of God." (page 203). Sievert worded the conclusion "Thus God necessarily exists." To be sure, one cannot conclude from a brief comparison of three versions of the "ontological argument" that C1 and C2 must be present in all other versions of that "argument"; instead, my point is that the difficulties arising in the effort to interpret the "ontological argument" using Aristotelian logic or *Principia's* language are due to C1 and C2 and not to the peculiarities of any version of the argument. In other words, not only can C1 and C2 be stated as conditions to be fulfilled by all natural-language renderings of the "ontological argument" true to Descartes' text, but those conditions can also be stated independently of any natural-language version of the "ontological argument" one might use to illustrate (not to prove) those two conditions. The challenge I present my objector is to propose a natural-language rendering of the "ontological argument" which can claim fidelity to Descartes' text, despite the fact that C1 and C2 are missing from his or her proposed rendering. If my reasoning is correct, the theses defended below do not depend on OA, which is merely used as an illustrative example. Let us proceed.

(2) is a problematic premise in attempting to translate the "argument" to functional-calculus notation. It is the type of statement that attributes the property of being a property to the referent designated by its (presumably existent) grammatical subject; the statement says that the property of being a property can be attributed to existence. We say this with confidence, for "is" in (2) does not serve any other linguistic function (such as

identity) commonly ascribed to the verb *to be*. Consider statements of the form "Existence is G," where "G" can be substituted by any property-denoting phrase or word. The property of being a property is attributed to existence only when "G" is replaced by the phrase "a property."<sup>8</sup>

In the functional calculi, properties attributed to things (objects, properties, pairs,...) are symbolized by predicate letters (technically called "functions") written to the left of the symbol (the argument of the propositional function) designating those things of which one or more properties are being predicated. For example, in the first order calculus, we use the wff "Fa" to say that "an object 'a' has property 'F'"; so, letting 'b' be the name "Pegasus" and "H" the property of having wings, we write "Hb". Recall the theory of types regulates the conditions of property attribution in order to avoid paradoxes. This regulation is effected by a stratification, assumed by the hierarchy of calculi, that can be readily understood with a diagram of the following sort ("T" denotes type, the number following which one; thus, "T1" means "type 1"). The three dashes on the top of the diagram indicate that the stratification of types goes on to infinity. Bear in mind that the diagram and the accompanying explanations are deliberately oversimplified accounts of the theory of types. These accounts are not intended to explain the details of the theory;

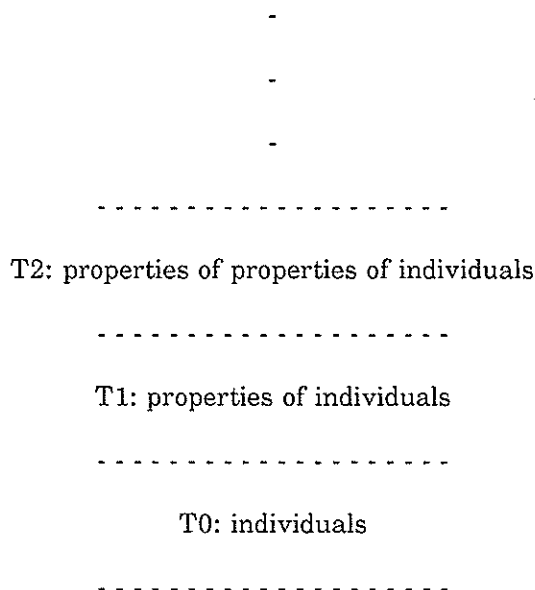
-----

<sup>8</sup> Sommers and Lockwood have argued independently that the distinction between the "is" of identity and the "is" of predication rests on dubious reasons; see Sommers, "Do We Need Identity," *Journal of Philosophy* 66 (1969), 499-504 and Lockwood, "On Predicating Proper Names," *The Philosophical Review* 84 (1975), 471-98. Sommers and Lockwood's points have been ignored in formulating the analysis of (2); there are two reasons for this. First, the rationale that led them to question the distinction between the two senses of "is" cannot be appropriately discussed in the context of a Cartesian exegesis without substantial diversions from our present purposes; second, their points are far from unobjectionable, though they have shown the distinction is not as clear as textbook parlance has it. For a critical appraisal of the Sommer-Lockwood hypothesis, see N. Griffin, "Do We Need Predication," *Dialogue* 16 (1977), 653-63.

rather, their sole goal is to illustrate the difficulties type theory poses when a translation of (2) is attempted.)<sup>9</sup>

-----

<sup>9</sup> Those interested in a rigorous explanation aimed at nonspecialists (but with a technical bibliography) should consult I.M. Copi, *The Theory of Logical Types*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971). Two original classics to consult are A.N. Whitehead and B. Russell, *Principia Mathematica*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), especially Chapter 2, and F. P. Ramsey, *The Foundations of Mathematics*, Ed. R.B. Braithwaite. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1931), 20-1, 24-5, 76-7. Ramsey's work is important because he was the first to note that Whitehead and Russell's version of the theory of types contains two distinct parts each dealing with different classes of paradoxes. One of the two classes of paradoxes is made up of logical or mathematical contradictions; the other class is composed of semantic contradictions.



The following rules governs the construction of wffs in the first-order calculus:

"Fa" is a wff iff the following is true: Let "m" and "n" be the types of "F" and "a", respectively; "Fa" is a wff iff  $m = n + 1$ .

Avoiding reference to any specific calculus, we can state the rule with full generality:

FX is a wff iff X's type is one below F's.

In other words, the predicate letter must be one type higher than the thing of which that letter predicates a property.<sup>10</sup> Technically, no predicate can occupy the position of an argument and no predicate can be its own argument.<sup>11</sup> The paradox of impredicability is derived from a question: Is the property of being impredicable impredicable? If it is, then it is not; if it is not, then it is; but the hierarchy of types rules impredicability out, for no

-----

<sup>10</sup> For a formal definition of "type," see Voss and Sayward's "The Structure of Type Theory," *The Journal of Philosophy* 77 (1980), 247.

<sup>11</sup> PM 40-1; 47-8.



property can be predicated of itself. Now, to say that a property is a property ("is" of predication) we would need formulae of the form  $F(F)$ , the same form required to say that an impredicable property is impredicable; but type theory prevents this by regarding such formulae ill-formed. Consequently, (2) cannot be translated to a wff of *Principia's* functional calculus.

Another argument leads to the same conclusion. Wffs such as "Hb" do not necessarily have existential import. Existential Quantifier Introduction must be used if we wish to assert that the object to which property "H" is being attributed exists. We replace the noun "b" with a variable (Hx) and bind the variable with the (variously called "existential" or "particular") quantifier to get the wff " $(\exists x)(Hx)$ "; existence is expressed by (Ex), not by "H". Quantifiers or "E!", not predicate letters, represent existence in the Frege-Russell-Whitehead functional calculus. Some may counter that formulae such as " $(\exists x)(Hx)$ " ought to be read substitutionally ("some substitution instance of 'F...' is true) rather than restrictedly ("there is a..."). But these alternative readings are not objections to my point, because both accept the semantic and syntactic fact that, in *Principia's* functional calculus, predicate letters stand only for properties and cannot stand for existence.<sup>12</sup>

(4) presents additional difficulties also related to the functional calculus. There is no rule of inference in the Frege-Russell-Whitehead (or set-theoretic) systems built on restricted quantification that allows one to conclude that an object exists because it has a

-----

<sup>12</sup> The restricted interpretation is defended by Quine: "Existence and Quantification," *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 94-7; "On What There Is," *From a Logical Point of View*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 38-9; 40-1. Marcus defends the substitutional: "Interpreting Quantification," *Inquiry* 5 (1962), 252-9; "Quantification and Ontology," *Nous* 6 (1972), 240-50. Marcus and Quine's works are singled out not as sources, but as vigorous defenses of these readings.

property. Moreover, it seems doubtful that Aristotelian logic, the only logic known to Descartes, allows such an inference. It is not clear that (4) follows from (1) - (3) either by classic nor modern logical rules; hence, we may doubt it as the conclusion of an argument in any of the systems just mentioned, where "argument" is defined in the sense of a train of deduction from premises to conclusion.

Thus, the problem is how to account for the epistemic justification and the existential import of Descartes' alleged knowledge of god's existence. More precisely, the task is to show that Descartes used the analytic-synthetic distinction without the modern jargon (which was unavailable to him). This is shown by indicating that Descartes himself explained the analytic-synthetic distinction in terms comparable to Kant's.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Cartesian Analyticity

The analytic-synthetic distinction plays a crucial role in philosophy generally, and particularly in analytic philosophy. Leibniz is credited for introducing this distinction to philosophic parlance,<sup>14</sup> and Kant for putting it to full use;<sup>15</sup> there is evidence to suggest both beliefs are mistaken. The analytic-synthetic distinction was identified by Descartes; moreover, the distinction might be a key point of what is regarded as the "ontological argument." One purpose of this section is to hint at the correction of those mistaken

---

<sup>13</sup> Aquinas' statement of the analytic-synthetic distinction, which is comparable to Kant's, anticipated Descartes'. See: *Summa Theologiae*, Pt. 1, Q. 94, Art. 2. Also see Pt.1, Q.2, Art. 1. Kant's version (or at least one of them) can be found in K.d.r.V., A: 4-8; B: 8 -11.

<sup>14</sup> *Monadology*, 33.

<sup>15</sup> K.d.r.V., A: 4-8; B: 8-11ff.

beliefs.

One word of caution before proceeding. Discussions of analyticity in contemporary philosophy, as in Carnap and Quine's writings, are primarily linguistic; they are mostly concerned with word synonymity, definitions of linguistic terms and questions of meaning and what is meant. Descartes, Leibniz and Kant, on the contrary, apparently worried about a nonlinguistic kind of analyticity that deals with predicate containment, concepts, judgments and things.<sup>16</sup> But Descartes did not consistently state the analytic-synthetic distinction by exclusive reference to nonlinguistic entities. In making the distinction, the text of Rule XIV uses words that refer to bodies and extension as well as sentences that refer to linguistic expressions denoting bodies and extension. My writing below is afflicted by this vagueness, to the extent it explicates texts which are themselves vague.<sup>17</sup>

Descartes recognized the analytic-synthetic distinction in an epistemic context. This should not be surprising, since foundationalist epistemologies require this distinction in order to avoid that interpretation and other factors, by mediating between the knower and what is know, could obstruct the person knowing the truth of incorrigible basic beliefs. The Cartesian explanation is rudimentary (like Aquinas, Leibniz and Kant's) by today's

-----

<sup>16</sup> See "Replies to the Second Set of Objections," HR II, 19 (AT VII, 115-6) for Descartes' explicit statement of the distinction between words and the things they refer to.

<sup>17</sup> Garver has argued that Kant explained the distinction in at least six *prima facie* different ways; "Analyticity and Grammar," *Kant Studies Today*, ed. L.W. Beck. (La Salle: Open Court, 1969), 245-73. This article is also published in *The Monist* 51 (1967), 397-425. Leibniz's use of "term" to denote concepts and not names might exempt his statement of the distinction from similar criticisms. *Leibniz: Logical Papers*, G.H.R. Parkinson, Ed. and Tr. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 18-24; 3. *Opuscles et Fragments inédits de Leibniz*, Ed. L. Couturat. (Paris: F. Alcan, 1903), 51-7; 243. H. Ishiguro, *Leibniz's Philosophy of Logic and Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 38-41; 120.

standards of rigor, but it is pretty clear. As a preliminary requirement, we must survey Descartes' thoughts on extension and space.

Extension is "whatever has length, breadth, and depth, not inquiring whether it be a real body or merely space."<sup>18</sup> Descartes averted the need to differentiate body from space due to his adoption of Aristotelian spatial theory. For Aristotle, space and place are synonymous. Space is an immovable limit taken up by a certain body.<sup>19</sup> Descartes accepted this view (the prevailing one in the Middle Ages), noting that there can only be a nominal difference between place and space;<sup>20</sup> thus, "by extension we do not here mean anything distinct and separate from the extended object itself."<sup>21</sup>

Discussing the fourteenth rule, Descartes considered three statements:

(i) Extension occupies place.

(ii) Extension is not a body.

(iii) Body possesses extension.

Of (i), he says that its subject may be substituted for "that which is extended" to yield a synonymous statement; of course, the synonymy of "extension" and "that which is extended" is a consequence of Descartes' identification of extension and space.<sup>22</sup> (i) and

-----

<sup>18</sup> Rule XIV, HR I, 57; AT X, 442.

<sup>19</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, IV, 4, 212a, 20.

<sup>20</sup> "Principles," Part II, HR I, 259-0 (Principles 11-16); AT VIII-I, 45-9.

<sup>21</sup> Rule XIV, HRI, 57 & 62; AT X, 442-3 & 448-49.

<sup>22</sup> Rule XIV HR I, 59; AT X, 444.

its equivalent statement resulting from deleting (i)'s subject and replacing it by "that which is extended" can be turned into logical truths by synonym substitution, where such truths contain logical particles as "not," "non" and "no". Logically true statements obtained by synonym substitution<sup>23</sup> are just those whose (cognitive) meaning depends only upon the semantic interpretation of the terms involved and not on any extralinguistic fact(s) referred to by the relevant sentence. The contradictories of such statements cannot be true, given the semantic interpretation employed; thus, their truth requires no empirical verification, the sole criterion for truth-value determination being not violating the law of contradiction. Thus, logical truths are *a priori* truths.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, we prove (i) analytic, for the set of logical truths obtained by synonym substitution is a proper subset of the set of analytic statements. (ii) is a self-contradiction, or so says Descartes, because the idea of extension necessarily involves the concept of body; thus, (ii) actually says "the same thing is at the same time body and not body," which he compared with "number is not the same thing that is counted."<sup>25</sup> This is a violation of the Law of Contradiction, since the grammatical predicate ("is not a body") contradicts the concept denoted by the subject; again, this denotation is a consequence of Descartes' identification of extension and body. We have a logical falsehood, the negation of "extension is body," the corresponding analytically true proposition.<sup>26</sup>

-----

<sup>23</sup> Here, I explicitly exclude logical truths (tautologies) as  $P \vee \neg P$ , which are true in all interpretations due to truth-functional connectors, not linguistic definitions.

<sup>24</sup> See Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge* (Englewood-Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), 40-1 and his references.

<sup>25</sup> Rule XIV, HR I, 59; AT X, 445.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. K.d.r.V., A: 8-10; B: 11-14.

(iii) is of the utmost importance for our purposes, since it is in reference to it that Descartes distinguishes analytic from synthetic statements:

Let us now take up these words: *body possesses extension*. Here the meaning of *extension* is not identical with that of *body*, yet we do not construct two distinct ideas in our imagination, one of *body*, the other of *extension*, but merely a single image of extended body; and from the point of view of the thing it is exactly as if I had said: *body is extended*, or better, *the extended is extended*. This is a peculiarity of those entities which have their being merely in something else, and can never be conceived without the subject in which they exist. How different is it with those matters which are really distinct from the subjects of which they are predicated. If, for example, I say *Peter has wealth*, my idea of Peter is quite different from that of wealth. So if I say *Paul is wealthy*, my image is quite different from that which I should have if I said *the wealthy man is wealthy*. Failure to distinguish between these two cases is the cause of the error of those numerous people who believe that extension contains something distinct from that which is extended, in the same way as Paul's wealth is something different from Paul himself.<sup>27</sup>

This quote provides a rudimentary criterion to differentiate analytic from synthetic statements.

Giving Descartes due credit for pioneering the analytic-synthetic distinction is historically valuable but philosophically uninteresting, unless we show how Cartesian analyticity might contribute to some exegetical issue. In the next paragraphs, I shall argue that what is regarded as the "ontological argument" may not be an argument at all, but merely a use of analyticity. This use of analyticity will let us employ the intentional view of the *cogito* developed in the previous chapter, so that the need for an ontological

-----

<sup>27</sup> Rule XIV, HR I 58-9; cf. 42-3. AT X, 444. Cf. K.d.r.V., A:7; B:11, where Kant states that "All bodies are extended" is an analytic judgment. A paper of related interest is A. Donagan's "Spinoza and Descartes on Extension," *Midwestern Studies in Philosophy* 1 (1976), 31-3.

argument does not arise.<sup>28</sup>

Descartes did not explicitly invoke the analytic-synthetic distinction in explaining his idea of god. This should come as no surprise, since these technical terms had not been coined when he wrote; but he did imply it. The subject of a proposition "N" is "god" and its predicate "exists." The subject of "N" is defined as a supremely perfect being endowed with all perfections; by definition, one cannot think of such a being as lacking any perfection. Existence is a perfection, said Descartes; hence, one cannot think of god without existence. In other words, existence is implicit in the concept god; for clarity's sake, let us make this point in a needless psychologistic way: think the concept "god" and you *ipso facto* think "existence." The situation is similar to that of "body" and "extension." Once the concept "god" is understood as a supremely perfect being (existence being regarded as a perfection) and body as that which occupies space, it is as redundant to say "god exists" as it is to say "bodies are extended," since "existence" and "extension" were already known through the mere apprehension of the concepts "god" and "body," respectively.<sup>29</sup>

Consider the statement "A triangle has three angles". Contradiction results if the subject is affirmed and the predicate denied. In the case of "N" (as well as "Bodies are extended"), this type of contradiction occurs by positing the subject while denying a

---

<sup>28</sup> The thesis that Descartes regarded "god exists" analytic was suggested by reading Meditation V in conjunction with the passage (from AT X, 444) quoted just above and K.d.r.V., A:4-10; B: 8-14.

<sup>29</sup> To prevent ambiguity, "god exists" is to be interpreted as an "All S is P" sentence. Where "x" stands for the term "existence," we say that "x" applies to S and P neither by equality nor identity of S and P, but because S is a conjunction of logically independent terms (omniscient, all-powerful, existence, ....) one of which is "x". See Chisholm's *Theory of Knowledge*, 56-7.

predicate that is already "contained in" the subject; in fact, we have a violation of the Law of Contradiction, a key criterion for verifying the truth of analytic statements.<sup>30</sup> Denying the predicates of statements prompts similar contradictions iff the statements are analytic; thus, "god exists" is analytic, *provided* existence is viewed as a perfection and god is defined as a supremely perfect being.<sup>31</sup>

Descartes repeatedly insisted that existence is not necessarily contained in concepts or in the objects of concepts; god is the only exception --- existence is necessarily contained in god's essence (see passages in footnote 31); but he did not clearly explain *how* this containment obtains, except by comparing the containment to the triangularity of triangles and the inseparability of mountains from valleys. The theses just defended provide a plausible hypothesis to understand what Descartes could have meant by such insistence. They also provide a framework to understand why Kant rebuffed Descartes on the grounds that existential statements are not analytic.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, they afford a clue to interpreting the claim that god's existence can be known nonargumentatively.

*Fifthly*, I require my readers to dwell long and much in contemplation of the nature of the supremely perfect Being. Among other things they must reflect that while possible existence indeed attaches to the ideas of all other natures, in the case of the idea of God that existence is not only possible but wholly necessary. For from this alone and *without any train of reasoning* they will learn that God exists, and it will be not less self evident to them than the fact that number two is even and number three odd, and similar

-----

<sup>30</sup> Leibniz, *Monadology* 33; Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, section 2.

<sup>31</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 181; AT VII, 66. "Principles of Philosophy," HR I, 224-5; AT VIII-I, 10. "Reply to Objections I," HR II, 20; AT VII, 116. "Reply to Objections V," HR II, 218-9 & 228-9; AT VII, 368-0. "Arguments Drawn up in Geometrical Fashion," HR II 57; AT VII, 166-7.

<sup>32</sup> K.d.r.V., A:595-99; B: 623-27; *Lectures on Philosophical Theology*, Tr. A. W. Wood et. al. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 46-7.



truths. For there are certain truths evident to some people, without proof, that can be made intelligible to others only by a train of reasoning.<sup>33</sup>

### 3. "God exists" Reduced to an A-type Categorical Statement.

We explained how "god exists" is analytic, in Descartes' scheme. Analytic statements are expressed in, or can be reduced to, A-type categorical propositions; but no argument was provided to support the latter position. Specifically, since the Cartesian analyticity of "god exists" has been explained, we must indicate how that statement can be reduced to, by rewriting, to an A-type categorical proposition, since it is not expressed as such.

Before proceeding, let us explain what prompts us to pursue this reduction. The reduction is a way of showing that the pre-Boolean and post- Boolean interpretations of the Square of Opposition do not justify the existential import of "god exists." In the pre-Boolean case, attempts to justify this existential claim by use of A-type statements beg the question; by comparison, we cannot even begin to justify the claim under Boole's interpretation of A-type statements in particular or the square as a whole. The reasons leading to these conclusions are outlined in this and the following section.

-----

<sup>33</sup> "Arguments Demonstrating the Existence of God and the Distinction Between Soul and Body, Drawn Up in Geometrical Fashion," H&R II, 55;; AT VII, 163. Italics my own. The Latin counterpart of the sentence a portion of which I have italicized is: "Ex hoc enim solo, & absque ullo discursu, cognoscent Deum existere." But see "Replies to Objections II," HR II, 45-6; AT VII, 49-0. The criticism Descartes is replying to can be found in HR II, 28; AT VII, 127. Cf. "Notes," HR I, 445-6; AT VII, 361-2. A paper of related interest is W. Doney's "Geometrical Presentation of Descartes' A Priori Proof," *Descartes: Critical and Interpretive Essays*, Ed. M. Hooker. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 1-25.

Analytic statements include those whose predicate is contained in the subject. This containment may be total or partial. If the former, the sets<sup>34</sup> designated by the subject and the predicate terms are precisely the same; "All men are males" and "All women are females" are examples of total containment. "All fish are aquatic animals" is an instance of partial containment, for the class of aquatic creatures includes not only fishes, but other animals as well. It is in the latter case that we say that the predicate is "analyzed out" of the subject which is conjunction of logically independent terms, one of which is the predicate. In either case, we can translate the propositions as "All S is P" or the equivalent  $(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$ , the traditional and modern logical renderings, respectively. Whether the predicate is partially or totally included into the subject in each of these two renderings depends, in part, on the semantic interpretation of the relevant symbols.

Categorical statements may be interpreted as assertions about classes, affirming or denying that one class is partially or totally included in another; these classes on one account are said to be those named by the subject and predicate terms. These definitions of analytic and categorical statements in terms of class containment indicate a relation between the two. This relation suggests that analytic statements are, or can be reduced to, A-type statements. However, not all A statements are analytic; for example, "All runners are cardiovascularly efficient" is synthetic. From the fact that some A statements are not analytic it does not follow that analytic statements cannot be of the A type.

A-type categorical statements refer to *all* members of the class named by the subject; they need not refer to the whole class designated by the predicate. Statements of this type assert that every element of the class denoted by the subject-term is also an element of the

---

<sup>34</sup> "Set" and "class" are used synonymously in the sequel, to avoid monotone.

class denoted by the predicate term. "All runners are cardiovascularly efficient" is an example of an A-type statement referring to the totality of the subject class, but only partially to the predicate class (swimmers are cardiovascularly efficient too, but some of them are not runners). Examples of this type of statement referring to the whole set named by the predicate are "All men are male" and "All women are female". These sentences refer to the whole subject class, by the definition of A-type categorical statements. The classes named by their predicate terms coincide with those named by the subject; thus, the statements refer to the totality of the predicate class as well, which is really identical to the subject class, though named differently.

For greater specificity, the question is: How can "god exists" be rewritten as an A-type categorical proposition? The proposed answer is to be understood as an approach potentially available to Descartes, given his implicit identification of the notion of analyticity in general and of "god exists" in particular, to argue that the ontic commitment of this basic statement of his foundationalist theory of knowledge results from the traditional ontology of A-type categorical propositions and not from a syllogism. He could have consistently avail himself of this approach, since this traditional ontology is not dependent on the syllogistic logic he had rejected; in fact, the opposite is the case.

Categorical propositions are not always given in A, E, I and O standard-form statements. For instance, sentences whose grammatical predicates are adjectives rather than substantives or obvious set-designating terms are not readily understood as categorical propositions; now, since every property determines the class of things having that property (with the restrictions of type theory), it is possible to rewrite such statements in categorical form. The noncategorical statement "Some flowers are

beautiful" may be rewritten as "Some flowers are beauties," an I statement. Likewise, "god exists" may be regarded as a categorical proposition not given in standard-form, but reducible to an A statement.

"God exists" is a singular affirmative proposition. It designates only the one entity named by the subject, asserting that it exists. Whether "god" has a denotatum is controversial; but for our analysis, we may be satisfied with the interpretation in which the entity named by the subject is said to belong to the set of existing things. This satisfaction is based on the fact that the proposition asserts just what this interpretation states and nothing else, seeing no obvious reason at the moment to concern ourselves with the truth value of the statement, which is not a matter of logic.

Affirmative singular propositions of the form "s is P," where "s" is a unit (one-membered) class and P is any grammatical predicate, are regarded as A-type categorical statements.<sup>35</sup> The reason is that the unit class is said to be wholly included in the class named by P, as required by A-type statements. "God exists" is not in "s is P" form, but can be rewritten as such: "god is existing" or "god is an element of the set of existing things." This procedure resembles that followed when rewriting categorical statements

-----

<sup>35</sup> This discussion is phrased in terms of singular affirmative propositions, since "god exists" is among them; but the same point can be made using singular negative statements of the form "s is not P," which would pass as E-type statements. Kant knew this: K.d.r.V., A: 70-72; B: 95-97. Cf. Russell's *My Philosophical Development* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), 66. Technical difficulties arise if singular propositions are automatically treated as A and E statements in syllogistic arguments whose validity is checked by Venn diagrams and the ordinary rules for the validity of standard form syllogisms; but these difficulties are not relevant to the thesis defended here, since they apply only to deductive arguments and my interpretation of Descartes' foundationalism excludes deductions. For a discussion and a proposed solution, see I. Copi, *Introduction to Logic* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1982), 239ff.

whose main verb is not "to be" as allegedly equivalent statements with that usual copula. We have treated the whole statement, save its subject, in set-theoretic terms and replaced the grammatical predicate by the words naming a class-defining characteristic. Taking "god" as a unit class, we may say that its element is totally included in the set designated by the predicate, the class of existing things. Thus, "god exists," whose analyticity was explained earlier, is reduced to an A-type categorical statement.

Additional evidence to support this reduction can be buttressed by observing that the logical properties attributed to A-type statements apply to "god exists" also, as interpreted herein. A proposition *distributes a term* if it refers to all members of the class designated by that term; thus, A-type propositions distribute the subject, but not the predicate. The distribution of the subject in "god exists" is a consequence of treating it as a unit class; the undistribution of the predicate results from analyzing it as "the set of existing things," not all of whose members are referred to by the proposition. A categorical proposition is *converted* when its subject and predicate are interchanged; the converse must be true if conversion is to be a valid immediate inference. Conversion is not applicable to A-type statements, except those whose subject and predicate name exactly the same sets. That "god exists" cannot be converted is established by the failure to get a true and grammatically correct statement after interchanging subject and predicate, either in it or in any of the two proposed rewritings. In fact, note that converting "god is an element of the set of existing things" results in "The set of existing things is god," which would be true only in pantheism, a view Descartes never endorsed. However, *conversion per accidens* does apply to A statements: write the converse of the given A statement and change the quantity from universal to particular--- from "All S is P" deduce "Some P is S". In term of our analysis, "god exists" becomes "some (at least one) element of the set of

existing things is god". *Obversion* is a valid immediate inference when correctly applied to any categorical proposition; so it must be valid if properly applied to "god exists". Given an A statement, leave the subject term and quantity unchanged, but change the quality and replace the predicate by its complement: <sup>36</sup> from "All S is P" we get "No S is non-P". In our analysis, "No element of the unit class designated by "god" is an element of the class of nonexisting things." The *contrapositive* of categorical statements is formed by replacing the subject-term by the complement of the predicate-term and changing the predicate-term to the complement of the subject leaving the quantifier and quality unchanged (except when applied to E statements); hence, the contrapositive of A statements are of the form "All non-P is non-S". In our analysis, "All elements of the complement set of the class of existing things are elements of the complement set of the unit class whose sole element is god" or "All elements of the class of nonexisting things are elements of the class of things that are not god." Let us explain this contrapositive, since it may be obscure. Consider the following: The complement set of the unit class named by the word "god" contains all those things that are not god; some of these things exist, others do not. The complement set of the set of existing things is contained in the latter subset. Summing up this paragraph, note that each of the logically-equivalent expressions is consistent with Cartesian doctrine.

Two theses regarding the statement "god exists," in Cartesian thought, have been established thus far: (1) It is analytic and (2) It can be reduced to an A-type categorical statement. (2), it was argued, is a consequence of (1). We continue with the latter thesis, to stay within the confines of logic before shifting to epistemology.

-----

<sup>36</sup> The subject and predicate terms of categorical statements point to set-defining characteristics. For any set W, its complement is the collection of things that are not elements of W.

#### 4. A-type Categorical Propositions and Descartes' Ontic Commitment

In the square of opposition, A-type categorical propositions are regarded as: (1) the universal affirmative superaltern implying (in Aristotelian logic) the particular affirmative subaltern I; and (2) the contradictory of O statements. There are several interpretations of the square. Treated historically, any interpretation can be pre-Boolean or post-Boolean. Descartes could have known pre-Boolean interpretations only (none of the interpretations proposed up to Descartes' lifetime contained substantial elements that anticipated Boole's work, as far as I know). We begin by considering Aristotle's interpretation. Later, we shall consider Boole's interpretation as we evaluate the Cartesian idea of god.<sup>37</sup>

The existential import of A-type statements has been proved a necessary and sufficient condition for the correctness of the traditional square. In that square, I and O propositions have existential import, for they assert that the classes designated by their subject terms exist; thus, A and E propositions must also have such import, given the implicative relation between A and I, on the one hand, and E and O on the other, respectively; that is, "All S is P" and "No S is P" imply "Some S is P" and "Some S is not P," respectively. Put differently, if subalternation between universal and particular affirmatives and universal and particular negatives is to hold, A and E must have existential import if I and O do; otherwise, there could be no immediate inferences from A to I and from E to O.

-----

<sup>37</sup> For simplicity, I speak of pre and post Boolean interpretations of the square of opposition. However, the doctrine of existential import we shall discuss was implied by Arthur Cayley (1871), defended by Franz Brentano (1874) and explicitly related to mathematical logic by C. S. Peirce (1880) and John Venn (1881).

Notation may clarify these points. Customarily, A, E, I and O categorical propositions are represented in the first-order functional calculus by  $(x)(Sx \rightarrow Px)$ ,  $(x)(Sx \rightarrow \neg Px)$ ,  $(\exists x)(Sx \ \& \ Px)$  and  $(\exists x)(Sx \ \& \ \neg Px)$ , respectively. However, given the existential import of A and E in traditional logic, the old account requires the two superalterns be represented by  $[(\exists x)(Sx)][(x)(Sx \rightarrow Px)]$  and  $[(\exists x)(Sx)][(x)(Sx \rightarrow \neg Px)]$ . The prefix (E), if interpreted canonically, insures that the class named by S is not empty. The choice between these two translations --- those prefixed by (E) and the unprefixed ones --- is relative to the interpretation of the square of opposition: the interpretations of A and E prefixed by  $[(\exists x)(Sx)]$  are the pre-Boolean, the other two are Boole's (this distinction will be clearer as we proceed). As noted, subalternation requires the additional premiss  $[(\exists x)(Sx)]$ . In addition, the validity of conversion by limitation of A and contraposition by limitation of E also require A and E's existential import. In particular, A statements must have such import if the conclusions of certain syllogisms are to be true. Consider arguments of the form "All golden mountains are mountains, All golden mountains are golden; thus, Some mountains are golden," whose conclusions are false if A statements are ontologically null.<sup>38</sup> This means they require  $[(\exists x)(Sx)]$ , too; hence, A and O propositions have existential import in traditional logic.

Now, recall that A and O are contradictories (they cannot be both true and cannot both be false, since the one is the exact negation of the other); if the truth of A and O is connected to their existential import, then both could be false if the alleged objects referred to by their subjects do not exist; so they would not be contradictories. This can be

-----

<sup>38</sup> The example is Russell's, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), 197.



illustrated by considering examples as "All unicorns have horns" and "Some unicorns do not have horns"; if their truth depends on the existence of unicorns, then they are both false and hence not contradictories, for there are no unicorns in the world of fact. This implies that the Aristotelian doctrine of categorical propositions is neither coherent nor self-consistent.<sup>39</sup>

These difficulties are overcome in the Boolean interpretation. I and O retain existential import in this modern interpretation (we assume the quantifiers are not interpreted substitutionally); hence, both are false and not subcontraries if the class designated by their subject term is empty. A and E remain as contradictories of O and I, respectively; in fact, the relation of contradictories is all that remains of the traditional square under the new interpretation. However, if the classes designated by A and E's subject terms are empty, I and O are false (as stated just above), but A and E are true nonetheless. This is possible because the Boolean interpretation does not link the truth value of universal propositions to ontology; in fact, such propositions are interpreted as having no existential import, even if true. In Aristotelian logic, "All sirens are half women" can be true iff sirens exist; this is denied now. In modern mathematical logic, the statement means "Whatever 'x' may be, if it is a siren then it is half woman" ("is" of property attribution). The truth of universal conditional statements requires the truth neither of the antecedent nor the consequent. For vividness' sake, consider the truth-table definition of " $\rightarrow$ ". The implication sign can be defined as true though both antecedent and consequent are false. (This use of truth tables is merely explanatory, since the decision

-----

<sup>39</sup> For a few aspects of the traditional view, see Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, Ch. 5ff. and *Analytica Priora*, Bk. I. For another view of a criticism of the traditional square related to the remarks I have made in the paragraph, see G. Englebretsen, "The Square of Opposition," *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* 17 (1976), 531-41.

procedure of the pure functional calculus of first order is unsolvable, as Church has proved; but the employment is useful nonetheless, insofar as the use of sentential connectives is formalized at the propositional-calculus level); thus, sirens do not have to exist and be half female for the universally quantified statement to be true. In conclusion, the truth of A and E propositions in modern logic does not imply the existence of anything; thus, the Boolean interpretation of A-statements will be of no use for Descartes' ontological purposes; moreover, inferences based on subalternation are not valid in general.<sup>40</sup>

Can the ontic commitment of "god exists," in Cartesian thought, result from its reduction to an A-type categorical statement, interpreting the reduced sentence in a pre-Boolean fashion?

We noticed that "god exists" can be treated as an analytic statement within the confines of Cartesian epistemology, which had identified the analytic-synthetic distinction. Analyticity contributed to reducing the statement, by rewriting, to an A-type proposition. A-type propositions have existential import in the pre-Boolean interpretation of the square of opposition. This was the only interpretation known in Descartes' days; consequently, some might argue, Descartes had no need for an (ontological) argument to prove the existence of god. The analyticity of the statement and its subsequent reduction to an A-type categorical proposition, together with the pre-Boolean square, suffice to grant the required ontological truth. (This approach begs the question, as I shall note shortly).

-----

<sup>40</sup> An analysis of Boole's work can be found in J. Corcoran and S. Wood, "Boole's Criteria for Validity and Invalidity," *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* 21 (1980), 609-38.

Four additional reasons make this approach attractive. As was noted earlier, "god exists" cannot be proved as the conclusion of the "ontological argument," for there is no rule of inference in Aristotelian logic to yield the conclusion that an object exists because it has a property; likewise, set-theoretic systems built on restricted quantification lack a comparable rule. Besides, the restrictions of simple type theory, as well as the role of restrictedly interpreted quantifiers and  $E!$ , do not allow the translation of "Existence is a property" to functional-calculus notation. In any case, Descartes' rejection of the syllogism as a truth-discovering tool prevented him, as a matter of consistency, from using it to establish god's existence. Moreover, the ontological limitations of Cartesian deduction render this method fruitless for proving the existential import of propositions. Consequently, analyticity and the traditional ontology of A-type proposition seem to be the only avenues available to Descartes.

The following objection can be raised: Treat "Pegasus exists" as "god exists" has been; then, the former statement must also have existential import, though there is no existent Pegasus. If the type of reduction outlined is left unchecked, any statement given in, or reducible to, the "s is P" form (where "s" is a unit class) would have existential import. This objection is valid in general, but it misconstrues Cartesianism. Descartes never said that existence is analytically contained in all concepts; he deplored this view. It is only in the concept of god that it is necessarily contained.<sup>41</sup> It is this differentiation which would have allowed him to use the reduction to A-type propositions in a manner consistent with his own doctrines and the condition of the Square of Opposition in his days, since the proposed containment of "existence" in "god" justified the reduction. Remember, as I said

-----

<sup>41</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 180-3; AT VII, 66. "Principles," HR I, 224-5; AT VIII-I, 10. "Reply to Objections V," HR II, 218-19 and 228-9. AT VII, 368-9; 382-83.

above, Descartes could have availed himself of this approach and still be consistent with his rejection of the syllogism as a truth-discovering tool. This is so because the ontology of the pre-Boolean square does not depend on the rejected syllogistic logic.

A better objection would consider the fact that the incoherences and inconsistencies in the traditional interpretation of the square afflict any view that relies on that interpretation. Assume the ontological truth of "god exists" depends on the ontological import of A propositions to which the statement may be reduced; since A and O are contradictories in the traditional and modern squares, "god exists" and "Some (at least one) god does not exist" are contradictories. Linking the truth value of A propositions to ontology (as done in traditional logic), we have that "god exists" is true and "Some god does not exist" false. Descartes would welcome this conclusion as consistent with his doctrines arguing, in the language of this dissertation, that the second statement is the denial of the first, the first being an analytic truth; thus, the second must be false by the law of contradiction, since the contradictories of analytic truths are falsehoods.<sup>42</sup> In contrast, we may argue with Kant (Aquinas, Gassendi and Caterus as well) that existence does not result from logico-conceptual exigencies; thus, "god exists" would be false if there were no god as a matter of fact. In this case, the contradiction between "god exists" and "some god does not exist" would be maintained because the latter, not the former, is true. Allowing ourselves a brief digression, it might be said that Kant anticipated the Boolean criticism of the traditional square in just this sense, despite his doctrinaire adherence to and use of Aristotelian logic in his first critique and elsewhere. Back to our topic, it seems that Cartesianism must seek means other than the ontology of A-type statements to establish

-----

<sup>42</sup> See letter to Clerselier, June 1646. PL 197; AT IV, 442.

the ontic truth of "god exists"; but it is not obvious what these other means could be, considering the inability of syllogistic logic to yield the desired conclusion, Descartes' rejection of that logic as a means of discovery and the ontological futility of Cartesian deduction. In conclusion, though the ontic commitment of "god exists" can be a consequence of reducing it to an A-type categorical statement and interpreting the rewritten statement in pre-Boolean terms, the only terms available to Descartes, the afflictions of the pre-Boolean interpretation render this reduction ontologically null, for we must deprive A statements, and hence "god exists," of existential import to cure those afflictions. Obviously, depriving A statements in general, and "god exists" in particular, of ontic import renders the pre-Boolean square useless for Cartesian purposes, as we concluded earlier. Besides, as just noticed, the contradiction between "god exists" and "some god does not exist" may be maintained at the price of rendering the latter true. Moreover, as we noted earlier, the pre-Boolean interpretation of the square of opposition incorporates the existential import of A-type statements as a necessary and sufficient condition for the correctness of the square. Clearly, Descartes would have begged the question had he used the reduction of "god exists" to an A-type categorical statement to prove god's existence.

Given Cartesian foundationalism, the epistemic justification of Descartes' knowledge of god's existence encompasses two options: that knowledge is self-justifiable or it may be justified in relation to other beliefs. The previous attempts explored the latter option from the perspective of logical deduction (including syllogisms, the traditional ontology of A-type categorical statements and PM's formal system.) It seems unlikely that Descartes could justify his purported knowledge of god's existence in a deductive fashion; thus, self-justifiability remains as the alternative to explore. In fact, self-justifiability is an attractive

choice, since Descartes identified the analytic-synthetic distinction and foundationalism needs this distinction to get basic beliefs. We shall conclude that: (1) The epistemic justification and ontic commitment of "god exists" are consequences of its Cartesian analyticity and (2) god's existence is a part of the *cogito*; as such, it is a basic belief of Cartesianism.

##### 5. God's Existence a Basic Belief of Cartesianism.

The time has come to show specifically how god's existence is a basic belief of Cartesian epistemology. This will be done by indicating how that knowledge claim, when taken as part of Descartes' scheme, meets three characteristics of basic statements. In a sense, we have dealt with these characteristics peripherally: The inability to account for "god exists" as resulting from other statements either by Cartesian or logical deduction and the subsequent explanation of the proposition as analytic.<sup>43</sup> These peripheral discussions suggest, but do not establish, the hypothesis the god's existence is a basic belief of Descartes' epistemology; thus, we must deal with these characteristics explicitly. What are these characteristics?

Characteristic I: *Basic statements are not derived from other statements. They need no justification, for they already possess all the justification needed for their acceptance.*

The thesis that "god exists" is basic blatantly militates against accepted interpretations of Cartesianism; for these interpretations, the proposition results from an "ontological argument." Several passages suggest the standard interpretation:

-----

<sup>43</sup> The reader's familiarity with foundationalism's need for the analytic-synthetic distinction was assumed, thus avoiding an explicit discussion of this issue.

In the fourth place we point out that the union of these things one with another is either necessary or contingent. It is necessary when one is so implied in the concept of another in a confused sort of way that we cannot conceive either distinctly, if our thought assigns to them separateness from each other. Thus figure is conjoined with extension, motion with duration or time, and so on, because it is impossible to conceive of a figure that has no extension, nor of a motion that has no duration. Thus likewise if I say 'four and three are seven,' this union is necessary. For we do not conceive the number seven distinctly unless we include in it the numbers three and four in some confused way.

-----

The union, however, is contingent in those cases where the things are conjoined by no inseparable bond. Thus when we say a body is animate, a man is clothed, ect. Likewise many things are often necessarily united with one another, though most people, not noticing what their true relation is, reckons them as among those that are contingently connected. As examples, I give the following propositions: --- 'I exist, therefore God exists': also 'I know, therefore I have a mind distinct from my body,' ect. Finally we must note that very many necessary propositions become contingent when converted. Thus though from the fact that I exist I may infallibly conclude that God exists, it is not for that reason allowable to affirm that because God exists I also exist.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, so far as my parents [from whom it appears I have sprung] are concerned, although all that I have ever been able to believe of them were true, that does not make it follow that it is they who conserve me, nor are they even the authors of my being in any sense, in so far as I am a thinking being; since what they did was merely to implant certain dispositions in that matter in which the self---i.e. the mind, which alone I at present identify with myself---is by me deemed to exist. And thus there can be no difficulty in their regard, but we must of necessity conclude from the fact alone that I exist, or that the idea of a Being supremely perfect --- that is of God --- is in me,<sup>45</sup> that the proof of God's existence is grounded on the highest evidence.

-----

<sup>44</sup> "Rules," HR I, 42-3; AT X, 421-22. On a peripheral point, the reader might wish to compare Descartes' idea that the numbers three and four are confusedly included in the number seven with Kant's denial that the proposition  $7 + 5 = 12$  (and mathematical formulae in general) is analytic: K.d.r.V: A:10; B:14-17.

<sup>45</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 170; AT VII, 50-1.

I will only add that the word 'principle' can be taken in several senses. It is one thing to look for a common notion so clear and so general that it can serve as a principle to prove the existence of all the beings (*entia*) to be discovered later; and another to look for a being whose existence is known to us better than that of any other, so that it can serve as a principle to discover them.

-----

In the second sense, the first principle is that our soul exists, because there is nothing whose existence is more manifest to us.

I will also add that one should not require the first principle to be such that all propositions can be reduced to it and proved by it. It is enough if it is useful for the discovery of many, and if there is no other proposition on which it depends, and none which is easier to discover. It may be that there is no principle at all to which alone all things can be reduced. They do indeed reduce other propositions to the principle that *the same thing cannot both be and not be at the same time*, but their procedure is superfluous and useless. On the other hand it is very useful indeed to convince oneself first of the existence of God, and then of the existence of all creatures, through the consideration of one's own existence.<sup>46</sup>

In a similar vein, Gueroult differentiates knowledge of the *cogito* from knowledge of god's essence. The *cogito* is such that it gives "the certainty of my certainty." This is so because there is no distinction between the *cogito's* truth and one correctly believing it; in contrast, knowledge that god's essence necessarily entails existence provides no guarantee that an existing object corresponds to our idea of god, because we only have the intuition of the idea of god which provides no assurance that an existent corresponds to that idea. One must first demonstrate the objective reality of the idea of god (that is, one must show that an object called "god" corresponds to one's mental idea of it) before knowledge of his existence-containing essence can be of ontological use. The objective reality of the idea of

-----

<sup>46</sup> Descartes' letter to Clerselier, June 1646, PL 197; (AT IV, 442). The italics correspond to Latin words in a French context. Also see "Principles," Principles VII and X; HR I, 221-2; AT VIII-I, 6-7 & 8.



god, Gueroult argues, is established by the causal arguments of the Third Meditation.<sup>47</sup>

As the title of his book suggests, Gueroult's interpretation emphasizes what is called "the order of reasons" (*l'ordre des raisons*). This order was explained by Descartes thus:

It is to be noted, *in whatever I write, that I do not follow the order of subjects, but only the order of reasons* --- that is, I do not undertake to say everything which pertains to a topic in one place, because it would be impossible for me to prove it properly, since some reasons would have to be drawn from further afield than others. But reasoning in an orderly fashion, from the simpler to the more difficult, I deduce what I can from it, now on one subject, now on another. In my opinion this is the right way to find and explain the truth.<sup>48</sup>

Gueroult's exegetical rule is simple: If Descartes stated thesis "a" before thesis "b", we must (i) assume that "a" is a prerequisite for "b" and (ii) try to understand why "a" is such a requirement.<sup>49</sup> This rule is vulnerable to damaging objections, as Curley and Gouhier have indicated.

The order of reasons may imply that Descartes could not use god's nature to establish the existence of the deity at some point before the Fifth Meditation; hence, divine existence depends on some thesis defended in an earlier Meditation but not necessarily on every thesis in those preceding Meditations.<sup>50</sup>

-----

<sup>47</sup> *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons*. (Paris: Aubier - Édition Montaigne, 1953), 339-44. Translated by R. Ariew as *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), Vol. I, 243-7ff.

<sup>48</sup> Letter to Mersenne, 24 December 1640 (?), PL 87; AT III, 262. Italics my own. Another very important passage is: "Reply to Objections II," HR II, 48-9; AT VII, 155-6.

<sup>49</sup> Gueroult's *Descartes*, 19-23 and throughout his book. Pages 5-7 in Ariew's translation.

Gouhier's objection is more devastating than Curley's. In *Geometrical Exposition* and *Principles*, the "ontological proof" precedes the causal arguments. Descartes could not reasonably arrange the proofs in this order if the causal arguments were preconditions to the ontological.<sup>51</sup>

To reply, Gueroult employs a distinction between the analytic order (the method to discover truths) and the synthetic order (the method to explain those truths the analytic method helped us find). Texts like the *Discourse* and the *Meditations* contain no syllogisms to prove god's existence; rather, divine existence is presented, after the causal arguments, as an immediate apperception of the fact that existence is a necessary property of god's essence. These texts are analytic and contain the method of discovery, the one Descartes preferred.<sup>52</sup> In contrast, *Replies to Objections I and II*, *Principles*, and *Geometrical*

-----

50 E. M. Curley, *Descartes Against the Skeptics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 159.

51 "La preuve ontologique de Descartes," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 29 (1954), 295-303. Also D. Cress, "Does Descartes Have Two 'Ontological Arguments'?" *International Studies in Philosophy* 7 (1975), 155-66. The purpose of Cress' article is to provide a resolution to the Gueroult-Gouhier dispute regarding the location of the ontological argument, relative to the causal, in the analytic and synthetic texts. Cress' solution consists in identifying two distinct ontological arguments in the Cartesian corpus; one of these appears in the Fifth Meditation, the other in *Principles* and *Arguments Drawn Up in Geometrical Fashion*. The arguments are different from each other because their major premises are not the same. Despite its ingeniousness, Cress' solution explicitly assumes there are two deductive ontological arguments in the sense of trains of deduction leading to conclusions ---the type of exegesis this dissertation questions. I have proposed a shorter version of my hypothesis in "Cartesian Analyticity," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*. forthcoming. *The New Scholasticism* published a series of exchanges related to the Gueroult-Gouhier dispute; the articles are: R.A. Imlay, "Descartes' Ontological Argument," 43 (1969), 440-48; also by Imlay, "Descartes' Ontological Argument: A Causal Argument," 45 (1971), 321-28; J.M. Humber, "Descartes' Ontological Argument as Noncausal," 44 (1970), 449-59; R.D. Hughes, "Descartes' Ontological Argument as not Identical to the Causal Arguments," 49 (1975), 473-85.

*Exposition* do contain syllogisms dealing with god's existence. In these texts, the "ontological argument" precedes the causal proofs. These syllogisms are futile and verbal, for god's existence can be known without them. It just happens that some persons require these "proofs," since ordinary ways of thinking make them unable to understand that god's essence contains existence. These texts are synthetic<sup>53</sup> and merely explain what has been previously discovered with the analytic method. Gouhier's objection is resolved by this distinction, Gueroult argues: The causal proofs must be placed before the ontological in the analytic texts, since the concern in these sources is to discover (not explain) god's existence and this requires that the objective reality of one's idea of god be demonstrated before his existence-containing essence can be of ontic use. Let us call this view "Gueroult's priority thesis." But clarity of explanation (not discovery) is the main concern in the synthetic texts; in these, the ontological proof can be placed before the causal arguments without loss of accuracy, if this order of presentation increases explanatory clarity.

The following comments might help us appreciate the force of Gueroult's priority thesis. If Descartes doubted (as he had in Meditation III)<sup>54</sup> that the properties of his mental ideas are sufficient to insure that those ideas are representations of objects existing outside his mind, consistency also required him to doubt that the necessary containment of existence in his mental idea of god, a property of that idea, is sufficient to insure that an

52 Descartes himself wrote in "Reply to Objections II": "But I have used in my Meditations only analysis, which is the best and truest method of teaching." HR II, 49; AT VII, 156.

53 Gueroult's *Descartes*, 22-3 & 353-55. Pages 7-8 & 255-6 in Ariew's translation. Also *Nouvelles Réflexions sur la preuve ontologique de Descartes* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1955), 17-9. "Reply to Objections II," HR II, 48-9; AT VII, 155-57. Do not equivocate "analytic" and "synthetic," as used by Descartes and Gueroult, with my epistemic usage of these two terms elsewhere in this dissertation.

54 HR I, 158, 159-0, 161; AT VII, 35, 37, 40.

entity existing outside his mind corresponds to that idea. In the order of discovery, according to Gueroult, the causal proofs must precede the ontological argument so we may be certain ---through means *other* than our mental idea of god--- that an object in the external world does correspond to that idea.

Gueroult buttressed this view with textual support. In the synopsis to the *Meditations*, Descartes described the causal proof as "the principal argument of which I make use in order to prove the existence of God" (*meum praecipuum argumentum ad probandum Dei existentiam*).<sup>55</sup> In "Reply to Objections IV," the causal proof is described as "the primary and principal, not to say the only means of proving the existence of god" (*causae efficientis esse primum & praecipuum medium, ne dicam unicum, quod habeamus ad existentiam Dei probandam* ).<sup>56</sup>

A contextual reading of (HR II, 109; AT VII, 238) seems appropriate. This passage is found in the midst of Descartes' reply to Arnauld's criticism of the causal argument. In the paragraphs leading to the passage, Descartes explained why he saw nothing offensive in the view "that God in a certain sense stands to Himself in the same way as an efficient cause does to its effect."<sup>57</sup> Simplifying a bit, Descartes replied that he chose his words carefully, but such complex matters cannot be clearly explained in language or fully understood by our imperfect understanding. Using the notion of causality, or related

-----

<sup>55</sup> HR I, 141; AT VII, 14.

<sup>56</sup> HR II, 109; AT VII, 238. "Replies to Objections I" (HR II, 9; AT VII, 101) is another passage provided by Gueroult as additional support for his position. The reference can be found on page 339, footnote 22, of the French original (page 323 of Ariew's translation).

<sup>57</sup> HR II, 107; AT VII, 235.

linguistic expressions, is just a practical way of demonstrating god's existence. Gueroult's quotation ("to consider the efficient cause is the primary and principal, not to say the only means of proving the existence of God") appears just below those comments. In this context, the quotation can be interpreted as asserting that, notwithstanding the importance of the causal proof, there are other ways to prove god's existence, should we be dissatisfied with the causal argument.<sup>58</sup>

However, the following may be the strongest objection to the use of Gueroult's priority thesis to explain why Descartes did not always place his two proofs of god's existence in the same sequential order. It is also an objection to Descartes' use of the causal proof when he only knew his existence as *res cogitans*. Cartesian epistemology starts with a universal doubt, the admission "that there is nothing at all that I formerly believed to be true, of which I cannot in some measure doubt."<sup>59</sup> We are justified in concluding that causality is included within Descartes' universal doubt, since he did not exclude it either explicitly or implicitly. To use causality ---something included within the universal doubt--- in order to overcome that same doubt begs the question by assuming the possibility of knowing causal connections before the universal doubt that stands in the way of that knowledge is overcome; hence, Descartes' use of causality to justify his knowledge of god's existence is fallacious. Some may object, arguing that Descartes' knowledge of his existence as a *res cogitans* shows he had triumphed over the universal doubt prior to his

-----

<sup>58</sup> (HR I, 141; AT VII, 14) does not lend itself to a detailed contextual reading; it is just a remark occurring in the synopsis to the Meditations. In sharp contrast to Gueroult's view, Wilson argues that the causal and the ontological argument cannot both be sound. *Descartes*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 136, 172-76.

<sup>59</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 147-8; AT VII, 21; "Principles," HRI, 219; ATVIII-I, 5; "Discourse," HR I 83-4; 89; 100-01; ATVI, 4-5; 31-2.

use of the causal proof; but this objection ignores that the existence of a thinking entity does not entail the existence of causality as a fact of the world, though the idea of causality may be one of *res cogitans*' intentionalia. The objection may be pushed to its limit, arguing that Descartes had used the discovery of his thinking self to justify clearness and distinctness as criteria of truth;<sup>60</sup> the claim that "it is manifest by the natural light that there must be at least as much reality in the efficient and total cause as in its effect"<sup>61</sup> could be regarded as an application of those criteria to the notion of causality. Notwithstanding the fact that Descartes was never too clear about what he meant by "clear" and "distinct," the taxonomy that includes the distinction between efficient and total causes is part of the Aristotelian and Scholastic legacies that fell prey to the universal doubt and *res cogitans* alone does not reestablish it.

It is unlikely this sort of criticism would apply to Aquinas' causal proofs. Aquinas' proofs are *a posteriori*; they proceed from knowledge of empirically-experienced things to the conclusion that god exists. This dependence on empirical knowledge is not one of Thomism's vulnerable points, insofar as Aquinas never faced universal skeptical doubts; but Descartes did. Thus, if Descartes is to avoid the *petitio principii*, causal connections or proofs depending on them can be appealed to only after the universal doubt is overcome to such a degree that causality, as a fact existing in the world (not just as one of *res cogitans*' intentionalia), is one of the things known by the person who had been universally doubtful originally, but whose knowledge gradually increases. Gueroult's priority thesis, as well as Descartes' use of the causal proof when he does, are unacceptable because they ignore

-----

<sup>60</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 157-8; AT VII, 35.

<sup>61</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 162; AT VII,40.

this.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover, there is textual evidence to refute Gueroult's thesis that Descartes' regarded the *Meditations* as syllogism-free. In his objections to the *Meditations*, Caterus accused Descartes of plagiarizing one of the proofs for the existence of god rejected by Aquinas and passing this plagiarism off as the ontological argument. The argument Aquinas rejected runs as follows, according to Caterus:

(1) God is a being, a greater than which cannot be conceived.

(2) A being a greater than which cannot be conceived includes its existence.

[(3) God (by his very name or notion) includes his existence.<sup>63</sup>

For Caterus, Descartes' ontological argument (as presented in Meditation V) is an argument of the same form as the above, with its propositions rewritten as follows:

(1) God is a being of extreme perfection.

(2) The most perfect being comprises existence within itself.

[(3) God's existence is inseparable from his essence.<sup>64</sup>

-----

<sup>62</sup> For additional criticism of Descartes' use of causality to prove god's existence, see Wilson's *Descartes*, 136-8.

<sup>63</sup> "Objections I," HR II, 6-7; AT VII, 98-9. AT provides the following reference to *Summa totius Theologiae*: quaestio 11, art. 1, p.6, col. 1.

<sup>64</sup> "Objections I," HR II, 6-7; AT VII, 98-9.

Descartes' reply to Caterus provides a test of Gueroult's interpretation of the *Meditations* because, had Descartes intended a nonsyllogistic interpretation of the *Meditations*, he would have asserted that Caterus' syllogistic exegesis missed the point. But in his reply, Descartes did not deny the syllogistic interpretation presupposed by Caterus:

My opponent here compares one of my arguments with another of St. Thomas's, so, as it were to force me to show which of the two has the more force. This I seem to be able to do with a good enough grace, because neither did St. Thomas use that argument as his own, nor does he draw the same conclusion from it; consequently there is nothing here in which I am at variance with the Angelic Doctor. He himself asked whether the existence of God is in itself known to man, i.e. whether it is obvious to each single individual; he denies this, and I along with him. Now the argument to which he puts himself in opposition can be thus propounded. *When we understand what the word God signifies....*

-----

My argument, however, was of the following kind --- That which we clearly and distinctly understand to belong to the true and immutable nature of anything, its essence, or form, can be truly affirmed of that thing; but, after we have with sufficient accuracy investigated the nature of God, we clearly and distinctly understand that to exist belongs to His true and immutable nature; therefore we can with truth affirm of God that he exists. This is at least a legitimate conclusion. But besides this the major premise cannot be denied, because it was previously conceded that *whatever we clearly and distinctly perceive is true*. The minor alone remains, and in it there is, I confess, no little difficulty. This is firstly because we are so much accustomed to distinguish existence from essence in the case of other things, that we do not with sufficient readiness notice how existence belongs to the essence of God in a greater degree than in the case of other things.<sup>65</sup>

The passage just quoted suggests that Descartes was not disturbed by syllogistic interpretations of the *Meditations*; notice he left Caterus' syllogistic exegesis unchallenged. He merely corrected what he perceived as Caterus' misunderstanding of the argument he

-----

<sup>65</sup> "Reply to Objections I," HR II, 18-9; AT VII, 115-6.



had intended. Reference to the fact that Gueroult classified "Reply to Objections I" as a synthetic text is a useless objection to my point. We may grant that "Reply to Objections I" is a synthetic text; nonetheless, the specific language in Descartes' reply to Caterus' deductive interpretation clearly refers to the text of the *Meditations* and not to the text of "Reply to Objections I."

The previous arguments show that Gueroult's use of *l'ordre de raisons* fails to explain why the causal and the ontological arguments are not consistently arranged in the same sequential order throughout the Cartesian corpus.

One objection against my intentional nonlogical exegesis can be raised now. If Descartes was not disturbed by syllogistic interpretations of the *Meditations*, then nonlogical interpretations miss the point by ignoring Descartes' explanation of his own work. This objection depends on a misunderstanding of the motivation for my interpretation; presumably, the objection would dissipate once that motivation is clarified: The intentional nonlogical interpretation I propose does not exclusively rest on references to the Cartesian corpus, but it does to some extent. Passages where Descartes rejected the syllogism as a truth-discovering tool provide parts of that textual support; other parts are provided by passages where the *cogito* is described in intentional terms and the thesis that the human idea of god necessarily contains existence is presented as an instance of analyticity. Nonetheless, the interpretation I propose is primarily motivated by the fact that technical difficulties arise if Cartesian epistemology is interpreted syllogistically or through PM's functional calculus (which contains and expands Aristotle's logic); those difficulties are examined at various points throughout this dissertation. I know of no textual references where Descartes stated such difficulties arise when the details of those

deductive interpretations are worked out. Descartes could have considered the difficulties of syllogistic interpretations but not the functional ones, for obvious historical reasons; but twentieth century scholarship can consider both. However, twentieth century scholarship, particularly Anglo-American, has missed sight of the difficulties in syllogistic as well as functional interpretations. My interpretation may suffer from difficulties; but these ought to be of a different kind than those afflicting deductive readings.<sup>66</sup> Incidentally, these remarks expose an inconsistency in Cartesianism. As we noted in the beginning of this chapter, Descartes' rejection of the syllogism as a truth-discovering tool prevented him from using it to prove god's existence, as a matter of internal consistency; nonetheless, in his reply to Caterus, he used a syllogism to explain his own doctrine about god's existence. Of course, Descartes would escape the inconsistency charge if he used the syllogism merely to explain a doctrine he had discovered using the asyllogistic method of discovery; but he did not make that intention explicit.

Gueroult's reading is very perceptive. It is consistent with Descartes' rejection of the syllogism as a truth-discovering tool but not as a method to explain truths otherwise discovered. I think this distinction is usually overlooked by most scholars; but his reading is unacceptable, due to the two reasons we have discussed: (1) Gueroult's priority thesis misses sight of the fact that the causal proofs are question-begging, and (2) Gueroult's view of the Meditations as syllogism-free cannot be reconciled with the fact that Descartes

-----

<sup>66</sup> The attentive reader must have noticed I have not discussed the other causal proof presented in the Third Meditation, where Descartes declared that god is the source of his (Descartes') existence and states that the distinction between creation and preservation is merely one of reason (HR I, 67-70; AT VII, 47-50). It seems clear that the question-begging I attributed to Descartes applies to any proof that uses the notion of causality or, for that fact, any explicit or implicit knowledge claim not freed from the universal doubt. Thus, for our purposes, a detailed discussion of this second causal proof seems unnecessary.

himself did not regard the Meditations as barren of syllogisms. Again, I do not view the Meditations or any other Cartesian text as syllogism-free; rather, within the narrow confines of my purposes in this dissertation, I accept Descartes' own description of his work and proceed to expose the odd logical consequences of that description. In this way, my work is critical, exegetical and reconstructive.

We began these remarks on Gueroult's views by referring to the sharp difference he sees between Descartes' knowledge of the *cogito* and his (Descartes') knowledge of god's essence. But we are now free to hypothesize a close relation between these two knowledges. We are free to do this not because we have shown that god's essence suffices to establish his existence; we have not shown that. Instead, our freedom derives from the fact that Gueroult's priority thesis (which we have rejected) is partly intertwined with the view that those two knowledges are different from each other. I say that Gueroult's priority thesis is partly intertwined with the alleged distinction between those two knowledges because Gueroult himself, while elaborating the priority thesis, strongly rejects the view that the two knowledges are similar to each other.<sup>67</sup> In any case, our arguments showing that Gueroult did not prove that the ontological argument depends on the causal stand by themselves, because the begging of the question we discussed would obtain regardless of the relation holding between the *cogito* and god's essence.<sup>68</sup>

The hypothesis that knowledge of god's existence precedes the *cogito* is made *ipso facto* untenable by the sequence of passages cited when we began discussing characteristic I; but these passages do not exclude the possibility of reducing that knowledge to the *cogito* itself.

-----

<sup>67</sup> Gueroult's *Descartes*, 341ff. Pages 244ff in Ariew's translation.

<sup>68</sup> Gueroult's theses are criticized by Curley, 157-67.

Precedence and reduction are not identical. In this context, "precedence" means "coming before," as basic beliefs are said to be prior and lead to derived ones; "reduction" means "being a part of," as three angles are part of a triangle. *Knowledge of god's existence neither results from nor precedes the cogito; rather, it is a part of it, one of res cogitans' intentionalia.* Let us elaborate this reductivist thesis.

He established (Meditation II) he cannot doubt he is thinking, though he had doubted (Meditation I) all taken for granted hitherto. It follows he exists as a thinking thing, "for there is a contradiction in conceiving that what thinks does not at the same time as it thinks exists;" <sup>69</sup> but bodily existence is not demonstrated by these considerations. The thinking self is described thus:

Ego sum res cogitans, id est dubitans, affirmans, negans, pauca intelligence, multa ignorans, volens, nolens, imaginans etiam & sentiens; ut enim ante animad verti, quamvis illa quae sentio vel imaginor extra me fortasse nihil fint, illos tamen cogitandi modos, quos sensus & imaginationes apello, quatenus cogitandi quidam modi tantum sunt, in me esse sum certus.<sup>70</sup>

69 "Principles," Principle VII. HR I, 221; AT VIII-I, 6-7.

70 AT VII, 34-5; HR I, 157. I feel the original Latin words, particularly the occurrence of the phrase "res cogitans," are better suited than their English counterparts to lead the way to the theses to be explained in the following paragraphs. The English translation reads: "I am a thing that thinks, that is to say, that doubts, affirms, denies, that knows a few things, that is ignorant of many [that loves, that hates], that wills, that desires, that also imagines and perceives; for as I remarked before, although the things which I perceive and imagine are perhaps nothing at all apart from me and in themselves, I am nevertheless assured that these modes of thought that I call perceptions and imaginations, inasmuch only as they are modes of thought, certainly reside [and are met with] in me."

The gist of my interpretation is contained in the latter part of the previous quote. The thinking self has numerous objects in mind; in other words, *res cogitans*' act of thinking is intentionally directed to many different objects. Such as philosophers ponder the ontological status of the objects mental acts (or linguistic expressions, for some) refer to, Descartes wondered whether or not the ideas in his mind are representations of objects actually existing in the external world:

But there was yet another thing which I affirmed, and which, owing to the habit which I had formed of believing it, I thought I perceived very clearly, although in truth I did not perceived at all, to wit, that there were objects outside of me from which these ideas proceeded, and to which they were entirely similar. And it was in this that I erred, or, if perchance my judgment was correct, this was not due to any knowledge arising from my perception.<sup>71</sup>

Concerning god's existence, Descartes's problem can be expressed by his need to answer a question: How to get from *res cogitans* to god's existence? This question can be rephrased, for the purposes of the interpretation I am proposing: How can god's existence be reduced to *res cogitans* ? *Principia*'s mechanisms are inept in our search for answers; but the epistemic use of Meinong's object theory provides a more adequate framework for criticism and explanation.

If *Principia* were used to explain the passage from *res cogitans* to god's existence, only two options seem to be available: (1) The passage is accomplished by existential generalization (EG), or (2) by the logic of relations.

---

<sup>71</sup> "Meditations," HR I 158; AT VII, 35.

Two reasons account for the seeming restriction to these two options. Descartes must establish the existential import of "god exists." It is customary to use premises as "Fa" and "Fm" (where "a" and "m" are arbitrary or proper names, respectively) to establish existential conclusions. EG is justified by the idea that if an existing object in a universe of discourse has a property, then something must have that property. Descartes already knows the existence of one object, to which the property of thought can be attributed; this object is *res cogitans*. Therefore, the prerequisites required for EG application ---that at least one object exist and have a property--- have been met. On the other hand, one can also be tempted to explain the passage from the *res cogitans* to "god exists" as a relation between the thinking substance and the deity. Let us examine each option.

The passage from *res cogitans* to "god exists" through EG would proceed as follows. Mental intentionality is directed to numerous objects, whose existence is uncertain; one of these objects is god. We can truly attribute properties to all of those objects, regardless of their ontic status and without empirical data; this is Meinong's doctrine of *Aussersein*. These predications deal with the *Sosein* of objects and are certain, evident, necessary, and irrelevant to the existence or nonexistence of those objects. (In contrast, *a posteriori* knowledge is confined to existential judgments and is dependent upon perceptions). Keep in mind Descartes can admit neither existential judgments nor perceptions at this point, since he doubts both. In god's case, however, we can predicate of it all positive attributes, existence being one of them; hence, it may be said:

There exists an "x" (use of EG here) such that (i) "x" is the god I am thinking of, (ii) "x" has all positive attributes and (iii) for any "y," if "y" is the god I am thinking of, then "y" is identical with "x."

Does this strategy establish the desired conclusion?

At this point in his epistemic enterprise, Descartes does not know if an existing object corresponds to the Cartesian idea of god. As we noted in chapter 1 (section 4), EG can be used iff the relevant entity exists; one cannot use EG first and draw existential conclusions later. Hence, EG cannot be employed to explain the passage from *res cogitans* to knowledge of god's existence.

An additional reason leads to the same conclusion. *Res cogitans* is the only object whose existence Descartes has established so far. I submit that he used no inferential process to support this ontic claim, being thus consistent with his rejection of logic and the basic role of the *cogito* in his theory of knowledge. Consistency also required him not to existentially generalize at this point; but even if he did, all he could conclude is: "There exists an "x" which may not be an extended physical object, but has the property of thinking nonetheless," since *res cogitans* is the only object in the universe of discourse so far.

It is fairly simple to show that PM's logic of relations is useless for this exegesis. Let "x" be *cogito*, "y" be god and "R" the act of thinking; write "xRy."

The intension of a two-place predicate is a binary relation, its extension being the set of ordered couples standing in that relation. A relation exists if there is at least one couple between which it holds:

$$(3.1) \quad E! R. = .(Ex,y). xRy \text{ Df.}^{72}$$

---

<sup>72</sup> PM 30, 228. In 225-6, (\*24.54), it is asserted that to say that a set exists is equivalent to saying that the set is not equal to the empty set:  $\{ \} \neq \{ \}$ .

Thus, *res cogitans* and god will have to exist for the interpretation to have its way; but Descartes only knows the existence of the former so far. Conversely, a relation does not exist if there is not an ordered couple between which it holds:

$$(3.2) \quad \{ \cdot \} : R = \{ \cdot \} \langle \dots \rangle . \text{-}\mathbb{E}!R^{73}$$

Some may object to this approach, pointing out the Russell and Whitehead explicitly avoided the decision as to whether the elements of a set must be existents.<sup>74</sup> But this objection leaves my point intact, because the specific relation Cartesianism needs does require two existents, *res cogitans* and god. The objection would be decisive if PM's avoidance totally excluded the possibilities of existents as elements of sets (which certainly is not the case, as \*24.54 (see footnote 72 in this chapter) indicates. Moreover, for our purpose we can be insensitive as to whether PM allows relations between nonexistents or between existents and nonexistents. To have the empty set as referent and relatum, or as relatum alone, would be clearly contrary to Descartes' text.

These arguments suggest PM's mechanisms cannot be used to explain the transition from *res cogitans* to god's existence. We go on to explain how the epistemic use of Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie* provides a better critical and explanatory framework, so that we can say that the Fifth Meditation and related passages anticipated the epistemic use of the Meinongian theory. Metaphorically speaking, we can say that the epistemic use of object theory and the Fifth Meditation can stand at each other's side without a substantial

-----

<sup>73</sup> PM 30

<sup>74</sup> PM \*20. Also *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, 12, 181-3.



crash of conceptual frameworks. What emerges from this marriage of Cartesianism and Meinongianism is an intentional nonlogical interpretation of Descartes' foundationalist epistemology.

The Meinongian interpretation to be developed is not without precedents. Curley and Kenny have proposed their own; however, there are substantial differences among the three.

According to Curley, the best textual support for his and Kenny's interpretations is provided by one of Descartes' replies to Burman:

All the demonstrations of mathematics are concerned with true beings and objects; and so the whole object of mathematics, and whatever mathematics considers in it, is a true and real being, and has a true and real nature, no less than the objects of physics. The only difference is that physics considers its objects not only as a true and real being but also as actual, and, as such, existing; whereas mathematics considers its objects only as possible, not actually existing in space, but still being able to exist.<sup>75</sup>

From this passage, Curley concludes that Descartes thought, as Meinong did, that things need not exist to be objects of true predications; but, unlike Meinong, that things must be able to exist (though need not in fact do) to be the objects of such predications.<sup>76</sup> Thus, Cartesian Meinongianism is not equivalent to *Gegenstandstheorie*, but merely resembles it.

-----

<sup>75</sup> AT V, 160.

<sup>76</sup> Curley, 149-50.

If Curley's conclusions were to follow, then Descartes must have used the passage either to expose Cartesian philosophy or to prescribe a normative distinction for philosophical investigations; but neither of these interpretations seems to apply to the passage. In the passage quoted, Descartes merely describes the common practice of regarding uninterpreted mathematical systems as unextensional (in the sense of lacking denotata), and then goes on to say that physics is extensional. But physics is not always extensional; it often deals with perfectly elastic bodies, perpetual motion machines, frictionless planes and other nonexistents. Hence, a physical theory may be unextensional; thus, Descartes's sharp distinction is inaccurate and has no bearing on the interpretation I am about to propose, since the extensionality or unextensionality of the two disciplines is consistent with the principle that consciousness may be directed to existents and nonexistents, a basic notion in the epistemic use of *Gegenstandstheorie* (Cf. *HR I*, 147; *AT VII*, 20).

The intentional interpretation I want to propose may be introduced as follows: *Res cogitans* (not *res extensa*) points to numerous intentionalia of undetermined ontic status.

Sed quid igitur sum? Res cogitans? Quid est hoc? Nempe dubitans, intelligens,<sup>77</sup> affirmans, negans, volens, nolens, imaginans quoque, & sentiens.

At this point, Descartes cannot admit empirical data for any purpose.<sup>78</sup> The idea of *res cogitans* pointing to those intentionalia can be clarified by a diagram (read "--->>>" as signifying mental intention):

-----

<sup>77</sup> AT VII, 28; HR I, 153.

<sup>78</sup> "Meditations," HR I 152-7; AT VII, 25-34.

res cogitans --->>>

candle's wax  
 unicorns  
 god  
 triangles  
 other objects

### Principle XIII

In what sense the knowledge of all things depends on the knowledge of God.

But when the mind which thus knows itself but still doubts all other things, looks around in order to try to extend its knowledge further, it first of all finds in itself the ideas of a multitude of things, *and while it contemplates these simply and neither affirms nor denies that there is anything outside itself which corresponds to these ideas, it is beyond any danger of falling into error.* The mind likewise discovers certain common ideas out of which it frames various demonstrations which absolutely convince us of their truth if we give attention to them. For example the mind has within itself the ideas of number and figure; it also has, amongst its ordinary conceptions this, that *'if equals are added to equals, the result is equal,'* and so on. From this it is easy to demonstrate that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, ect. Now mind perceives these and other facts to be true so long as the premises from which they are derived are attended to. But since it cannot always devote this attention to them [when it remembers the conclusion and yet cannot recollect the order of its deduction], and conceives that it may have been created of such a nature that it has been deceived even in what is most evident, it sees clearly that it has great cause to doubt the truth of such conclusions, and to realise that it can have no certain knowledge until it is acquainted with its creator.<sup>79</sup>

Cartesianism is paralyzed at this point. One indubitable basic fact has been attained, *res cogitans*; but the most it can do is think of numerous objects without knowing their existence. How to move from this basic truth to knowledge of the existence of physical objects corresponding to those intentionalia? In other words, how to move from *res cogitans* to knowledge of the external world in such a way that the totality of our knowledge rests

-----

<sup>79</sup> "Principles," HR I 224; AT VII, 9-10. The first italics in the quote are mine

upon *res cogitans* ?

As Meinong, Descartes insisted that existence is not necessarily included in the idea of any object; we have made this point earlier. Clearly, this insistence does not help to break the deadlock. But Descartes exempted god from the rule; existence is analytically contained in the concept god. What reasons support this exclusion?

Descartes' ability to answer this question is restricted, for he can use neither logic nor Cartesian deduction; it seems his idea of god is the only thing he can use to answer the question. In fact, he hints this is the case, by stating he is able to know many properties of the objects of consciousness, though none of them may exist (Meinong's *Aussersein*, again):

For being accustomed in all other things to make a distinction between existence and essence, I easily persuade myself that the existence can be separated from the essence of God, and that we can thus conceive God as not actually existing. But, nevertheless, when I think of it with more attention, I clearly see that existence can no more be separated from the separated from the essence of God than can its having three angles equal to two right angles be separated from the essence of a [rectilinear] triangle, or the idea of a mountain from the idea of a valley; and so there is not any less repugnance to our conceiving a God (that is, a Being supremely perfect) to whom existence is lacking (that is to say, to whom a certain perfection is lacking), than to conceive of a mountain which has no valley.<sup>80</sup>

In conclusion, the analytic containment of existence in the idea of god is Descartes' answer to the question in the previous paragraph. As Gueroult put it (though in a context different from that of this chapter), the finiteness of the essence of material things entails possible existence only; but the infinity of god's essence certainly entails necessary

-----

<sup>80</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 181ff; AT VII, 66.

existence.<sup>81</sup>

Descartes failed to realize that the inseparability of a certain predication from a concept does not necessarily make the object of that concept possible (I use "possible" in Meinong's sense). One cannot separate squareness from the concept of a square circle; in fact, there is an analytic inclusion here. But the square circle remains an impossible object nonetheless. To show that an object is possible, and might have a potential *Sein*, one must show that the law of contradiction (LNC) is not violated; in other words, one must show that contradictory attributions are not hidden within the concept of the object. Putting the point specifically, if the Meinongian Descartes is to establish that there exists an object corresponding to our concept of god, he must show that the concept does not violate LNC. Descartes failed to do this, admitting his negligence.

And we must not here object that it is in truth necessary for me to assert that God exists after having presupposed that He possesses every sort of perfection, since existence is one of these, but that as a matter of fact my original supposition was not necessary, just as it is not necessary to consider that all quadrilateral figures can be inscribed in the circle; for supposing I thought this, I should be constrained to admit that the rhombus might be inscribed in the circle since it is a quadrilateral figure, which, however, is manifestly false. [We must not, I say, make any such allegations because] although it is not necessary that I should at any time entertain the notion of God, nevertheless it happens that I think of a first and a sovereign Being, and, so to speak, derive the idea of Him from the storehouse of my mind, it is necessary that I should attribute to Him every sort of perfection, *although I do not get so far as to enumerate them all, or to apply my mind to each one in particular.*<sup>82</sup>

-----

<sup>81</sup> Gueroult, *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons*, 338. Page 242 in Ariew's translation.

<sup>82</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 182; AT VII, 67. See Principle XIX, too. The seeds of this negligence appear as early as Meditation III: "And this (our idea of god as clear and distinct) does not cease to be true although I do not comprehend the infinite, or though in God there is an infinitude of things which I cannot comprehend, or possibly even reach in any way by thought; for it is of the nature of the infinite that my nature, which is finite and limited, should not comprehend it; and it is sufficient that I should

Descartes admits he can neither list all divine perfections nor apply his mind to each single one; this is the negligence I just talked about. Nonetheless, analyticity is the reason why there exists an object corresponding to our idea of god, according to Descartes.

#### Principle XIV

That the existence of God may be rightly demonstrated from the fact that the necessity of His existence is comprehended in the conception which we have of Him.

When mind afterwards considers the diverse conceptions which it has and when it there discovers the idea of a Being who is omniscient, omnipotent and absolutely perfect, which is far the most important of all; in it it recognises not merely a possible and contingent existence, as in all the other ideas it has of things which it clearly perceives, but one which is absolutely necessary and eternal. And just as it perceives that it is necessarily involved in the idea of a triangle that it should have three angles which are equal to two right angles, it is absolutely persuaded that the triangle has three angles equal to two right angles. In the same way from the fact that it perceives that necessary and eternal existence is comprised in the idea which it has of an absolutely perfect Being, it has clearly to conclude that this absolutely perfect Being exists. <sup>83</sup>

The analytic inclusion of a property in the concept of an object does not eliminate the possibility that this analytic property may contradict another analytic or nonanalytic property, or that any two other properties may contradict each other. Descartes would have avoided this pitfall had he been consistently Meinongian, since Meinong maintained

-----

understand this, and that I should judge that all things which I clearly perceive and in which I know that there is some perfection, and possibly likewise and infinitude of properties of which I am ignorant, are in God formally or eminently, so that the idea which I have of Him may become the most true, most clear, and most distinct of all the ideas that are in my mind." (HR I, 166; AT VII, 46). Gassendi was probably the first to assail Descartes on this point; "Objections V," HR II, 165; AT VII, 295-6. Descartes' reply is on HR II, 218; AT VII, 367-8.

<sup>83</sup> "Principles," HR I, 224-5; AT VIII-I, 12.

that existence is not part of the nature of any object.

Descartes' admitted failure to list all the attributes of god and the subsequent inability to show the consistency of his concept of the deity lead us to Kant's criticism of the Cartesian idea of god. We are thus led not by considerations on whether or not existence is a predicate, a worn-out and unduly emphasized topic; rather, we are so led by my contention that Kant's criticism rests upon Meinongian principles.

6. The Meinongian Kant of K.d.r.V.: A: 592-95; B: 620-23.

Kant's dictum that all existential judgments are synthetic is the core of his criticism of the Cartesian idea of god. Descartes' less-than-thorough Meinongianism paved the road for this criticism. In particular, it was the negligence I have just attributed to Descartes (the failure to show, due to the inability to enumerate all divine attributes, that contradictory properties are not concealed in the concept of god) that provided the stimulus for the Kantian criticism.

Kant's criticism can be divided into two different, but related, commentaries:

- a) The existence of an object perfectly corresponding to our concept of it cannot be determined by mere analysis of the concept.
- b) A perfect concept-object correspondence requires that existence not be a property.

These two points are developed as follows:

a) A self-consistent concept merely suggests the ontological possibility of its object; this is so because a concept-object relation is always possible provided the concept is internally consistent. However, absence of conceptual contradiction does not insure that a concept has a corresponding object. Existential propositions are based on empirical data, not on the fact that the concept to which the object allegedly corresponds obeys the law of contradiction. These critical hypotheses led to the view that all existential statements are synthetic; in other words, ontic claims cannot be based on conceptual analysis; hence, existence can be "removed from" concepts without contradiction. All knowledge originates from empirical data, according to Kant, and we have no such data about god; hence, we have no way of knowing the existence of god.

(The) question is whether this idea of ours also has objective reality, that is, whether there actually exists a being corresponding to our idea of God. Some have wanted to prove this from the fact that in our concept there is nothing which contradicts it. Now this is obviously true, for our whole concept of god consists of realities. But it is impossible for one reality to contradict another, since contradiction requires that something be and also not be. But this not-being would be a negation, and nothing of this kind can be thought in God. Yet the fact that there is nothing contradictory in my concept of God proves only the *logical possibility* of the concept, that is, the possibility of forming the concept in my understanding. For a self-contradictory concept is no concept at all. But if I am to give objective reality to my concept and prove that there actually exists an object corresponding to my concept--- more is surely required for this than the fact that there is nothing in my concept which contradicts itself. For how can a concept which is logically possible, merely in its logical possibility, constitute at the same time the real possibility of an object? For this, not only an analytic judgment is required, but also a synthetic one. That is, I must be able to know that the effects of the realities do not cancel one another. For instance, decisiveness and caution are both realities, but their effects are often of such a kind that one cancels the other. Now I have no capacity to judge a priori whether the realities combined in the concept of God cancel each other in their effects, and hence I cannot establish the possibility of my concept directly.<sup>84</sup>

84 I. Kant, *Lectures on Philosophical Theology*, Tr. A. W. Wood et. al. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 46-7. Also K.d.r.V., A:595-99; B: 623-27; Cf. "The Second



It is easy to rephrase this passage in Meinongian terms: An object whose *Sosein* is noncontradictory is possible, but that object need not have a *Sein*. Existential conclusions regarding an object require more than just the absence of contradiction from the concept of the object, for a possible object may have no *Sein*. The most Descartes did was show the possibility of the concept; but even this is doubtful, given the negligence discussed earlier. Hence, the analytic containment of existence in the idea of god does not establish god's existence.

b) Kant used the dictum that existence is not a predicate to criticize Descartes' idea of god. Scholarly discussion has focused on this aspect of Kant's critique; unfortunately, this emphasis has ignored the fact that the texts suggest Kant's primary concern in stating his dictum was not to defend it but to argue that, if existence were a predicate, then a correspondence between our concept of god and its object could not be established. I venture to suggest Kant could use the dictum as a working hypothesis only and had no need to endorse it, at least for his criticism of the Cartesian idea of god; put bluntly, Kant was telling Descartes: "Look! If existence is one of the properties of either the concept or its object, then the representational relation you need between the concept of god and its object cannot obtain."

Kant started the attack by considering the following objection to the dictum: Though one might reject various concepts without inconsistency, rejecting the concept of an *ens realissimum* excludes its internal possibility. An *ens realissimum* contains all realities within itself, and existence is a reality; so, to assert that an *ens realissimum* does not exist

-----  
 Set of Objections," HR II, 28; AT VII, 127. The author of these objections anticipated Kant's criticisms quite closely.

is to negate in the predicate something included in the subject.<sup>85</sup>

This objection requires that existence be "included within" the concept of an object or within the object itself. If either or both were the case, then there could be no perfect concept-object correspondence, since that perfect correspondence (representation) absolutely requires that the contents of the concept, on the one hand, and its object, on the other, be *exactly identical*. Moreover, to impute necessary existence to a possible object is an oddity.

If, now, we take the subject (God) with all its predicates (among which is omnipotence), and say "God is", or "There is a God", we attach no new predicate to the concept of God, but only posit the subject in itself with all its predicates, and indeed posit it as being an *object* that stands in relation to my *concept*. The content of both must be one and the same; nothing can have been added to the concept, which expresses merely what is possible, by my thinking its object (through the expression 'it is') as given absolutely. Otherwise stated, the real contains no more than the merely possible. A hundred real thalers do not contain the least coin more than a hundred possible thalers. For as the latter signify the concept, and the former the object and the positing of the object, should the former contain more than the latter, my concept would not, in that case, express the whole object, and would not therefore be an adequate concept of it.<sup>86</sup>

Kant's criticism of Descartes' notion of god rests on the thesis that all propositions with existential import are synthetic. Descartes' notion is vulnerable because, if existence were a predicate analytically "included in" our concept of god, then the correspondence between our concept of god and its object --- a correspondence required to brake what we called *res cogitans'* impasse --- would not be possible. From the critical Kant's perspective,

85 *Lectures*, 58-9.

86 K.d.r.V., A: 598-99; B: 626-27; Cf. "Reply to Objections V," HR II, 220. AT VII, 371-72.

Descartes' insistence on this analytic inclusion not only unsubstantiates his epistemology, but also exemplifies the barren results obtained when reason, unassisted by empirical data, gropes among concepts.

"Existence is not a predicate" is a slogan attributed to Kant, though he did not originate it.<sup>87</sup> The previous considerations allow us to rewrite the slogan in a manner that is truly and originally Kant's: *Perfect concept-object correspondence requires that existence be analytically contained neither in concepts nor in the objects of such concepts. The function of "exist" is to posit the existence of objects corresponding to our concepts of them and such ontic determinations rely on empirical datum, never on conceptual analysis.* Less memorable and wordier than the popular dictum, but a bit more accurate. This implies (b) depends on (a).

According to the interpretation I am proposing, the transition from *res cogitans* to god's existence is not accomplished by logic, but by the intentionality of *res cogitans* and by exempting god from the principle of *Aussersein*. This explanation of the passage from *res cogitans* to god's existence is a crucial component of the intentional nonlogical interpretation of Cartesian foundationalism I am proposing. My interpretation avoids some of the problems afflicting inferential exegeses,<sup>88</sup> while exposing Descartes's *ad hoc* --- and unfruitful--- exemption of the concept god from the principle of *Aussersein*. In fact, Kant's criticism of the Cartesian idea of god was made possible by Descartes' insistence that *Aussersein* does not apply to god. It would have been better for Descartes to admit the

---

<sup>87</sup> Caterus and Gassendi should be regarded as the originators. See "Objections I," HR II, 7; AT VII, 98-9; "Objections V," HR II, 186; AT VII, 323-4. Descartes' replies can be found in "Replies to Objections V," HR II, 228; AT VII, 382.

<sup>88</sup> This point will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

injustifiability of this *ad hoc* immunity; but this admission would have resulted in an inability to break *res cogitans*' deadlock since, if *Aussersein* were to apply to god, Descartes could have not said that essence and existence are inseparably united in his idea of the deity. If this were the case, god's ontological status would be as indeterminable as that of all other intentionalia.

My criticism and interpretation of Cartesian epistemology have affinities with Kantian and Meinongian sources. Nonetheless, Descartes did think that exempting god from the principle of *Aussersein* was justifiable; the analytic inclusion of existence within the divine concept warranted the exemption. Passing from *res cogitans* to god's existence is the immediate nonlogical consequence of this departure from rule.

#### 7. Two Additional Characteristics of Basic Beliefs.

Finally, let us examine how god's existence, in the Cartesian scheme, meets two additional characteristics of basic beliefs.

Characteristic II: This characteristic is a cluster of two alleged properties of basic statements. They are listed together because both describe basic beliefs as fixed invariants (givens) whose truth is neither decreased nor increased by additional evidence. The properties are:

(i) Basic beliefs are not cultural variables. Two or more individuals may not differ in the basic beliefs they hold.

(ii) Basic beliefs are exempt from retrospective evaluation. Revisions of propositions derived from basic statements never require a corresponding revision of basic beliefs.

Let us document each.

(i) Asked by a critic to clarify his use of "idea," Descartes defined the term as "everything which can be in our thought."<sup>89</sup> He went on to distinguish three kinds of ideas, according to their sources: Invented by persons (the description of the sun given by astronomers); adventitious (appearing to originate from objects outside the mind; for example, the sun we see with our eyes) and innate (coming with the mind from the moment of biological conception.)<sup>90</sup> Descartes insisted that the idea of god is in the human mind;<sup>91</sup> then, what class does it belong to? It is an innate idea.

It only remains to me to examine into the manner in which I have acquired this idea from God; for I have not received it through the senses, and it is never presented to me unexpectedly, as is usual with the ideas of sensible things when these things present themselves or seem to present themselves, to the external organs of my senses; nor is it likewise a fiction of my mind, for it is not within my power to take from or add anything to it; and consequently the only alternative is that it is innate in me, just as the idea of myself is innate in me.<sup>92</sup>

Let us go on to show the Cartesian idea of god is a socio-historical constant. In a letter to Mersenne, he stated that "The universal agreement of all races (regarding god's existence) is sufficient to maintain the Godhead against the insults of atheists;"<sup>93</sup> but this

---

<sup>89</sup> Letter to Mersenne, 16 June 1641. PL 104; AT III, 382.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.; also "Meditations," HR I, 160; AT VII, 38.

<sup>91</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 171-2; AT VII, 51-3.

<sup>92</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 170; AT VII, 51. Also PL 104.

<sup>93</sup> PL 19. (25 November 1630); AT I, 177.

will not do, for it is a fallacious *argumentum ad populum*. A better argument is offered in a letter to Hyperaspistes dated August 1641. Nothing can be deprived of its essence; hence, neither can body be deprived of extension nor mind of thought. The idea of god is already present in the mind of the fetus, since it is innate.

I nowhere said that because an infant's mind acts less perfectly than an adult's it follows that it is no less perfect; so I cannot be criticized on that account. But because it does not follow either that it is more imperfect, I had the right to criticize someone who had assumed that to be the case. I had reason to assert that the human soul, wherever it be, even in the mother's womb, is always thinking. What more certain or evident reason could be wished for than the one I gave? I had proved that the nature or essence of soul consists in the fact that it is thinking, just as the essence of body consists in the fact that it is extended. Now nothing can ever be deprived of its own essence; so it seems to me that a man who denies that his soul was thinking at times when he does not remember noticing it thinking, deserves no more attention than a man who denied that his body was extended while he did not notice that it had extension. This does not mean that I believe the mind of an infant meditates on metaphysics in its mother's womb; not at all. We know by experience that our minds are so closely joined to our bodies as to be almost always acted upon by them; and though in an adult and healthy body the mind enjoys some liberty to think of other things than those presented by the senses, we know there is not the same liberty in those who are sick or asleep or very young; and the younger they are the less liberty they have. So if one may conjecture on such an unexplored topic, it seems most reasonable to think that a mind newly united to an infant's body is wholly occupied in perceiving or feeling the ideas of pain, pleasure, heat, cold, and other similar ideas which arise from its union and intermingling with the body. Nonetheless, it has in itself the ideas of God, itself, and all such truths as are self-evident, in the same way as adult humans have when they are not attending to them; it does not acquire these ideas later on, as it grows older. I have no doubt that if it were taken out of the prison of the body it would find them within itself.<sup>94</sup>

Later in the same letter, Descartes argued the idea of god is discovered: "I do not doubt that everyone has within himself an implicit idea of God, that is to say, an aptitude to perceive it explicitly; but I am not surprised that not everyone feels that he has it or

-----  
<sup>94</sup> PL 111; AT III, 422.

notices that he has it. Some people will perhaps not notice it even after reading my *Meditations* a thousand times." <sup>95</sup> Take Descartes' statement that "nothing can ever be deprived of its own essence" and his thesis that the idea of god, such as other innate ideas of body, mind and triangle, "represent true immutable and eternal essences." <sup>96</sup> It follows that we humans cannot alter the idea of god, as we cannot change the idea of a triangle to include five angles. In fact, Descartes argued that the divine idea is not a mental fiction, "for it is not in my power to take from or to add anything to it." <sup>97</sup> Consequently, the Cartesian idea of god, accessible even to the unsocialized fetus, is a socio-historical constant equally shared by all humans.

Gassendi objected to the ahistorical and asocial nature of this Cartesian idea. The idea of god, he wrote, is derived "from parents, from masters, from teachers, and from the society in which you have moved." <sup>98</sup> Descartes' reply implicitly rejects these human influences.

Nay, when you say that the idea of God possesses reality only *owing to the fact that we have heard certain attributes predicated of Him* I should like you to tell us whence men at the beginning, the men from whom we have learned them, drew this very idea of God. If it was from themselves, why may we

-----

<sup>95</sup> PL 117. Also letter to Mersenne of July 1641, PL 105-6. AT III, 391: "For by 'idea' I do not just mean the images depicted in the imagination, indeed, in so far as these images are in the corporeal fancy, I do not use that term for them at all. Instead, by the term 'idea' I mean in general everything which is in our mind when we conceive something, no matter how we conceive it."

<sup>96</sup> Letter to Mersenne, 16 June 1641. PL 103-4; AT III, 382.

<sup>97</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 170; AT VII, 51.

<sup>98</sup> "Objections V," HR II, 164; AT VII, 294. See HR II, 158 too; AT VII, 286. Cf. É. Gilson, *God and Philosophy*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 82-3. Gilson argued that the Cartesian idea of god was a reminiscence of what Descartes "had learned in church when he was a little boy."

not derive this same idea from ourselves? If from a revelation by God, this proves that God exists.<sup>99</sup>

According to Descartes' causal arguments for the existence of god, the idea of a deity cannot be derived from human nature; thus, the first of the two conditional statements ending the previous quote must be false, as a matter of consistency. This leaves us with the second conditional, which can be accepted as consistent with Descartes' doctrine about the idea of god being innate and planted in the human mind by god himself.

In conclusion, "god exists" meets the criterion of being equally shared by all persons and not being a cultural variable. This conclusion follows from: (1) The arguments just used to conclude that "god exists" meets the first property of the second characteristic of basic statements and (2) The thesis (defended earlier) that existence is analytically contained in the Cartesian idea of god.

(ii) The second property of basic statements is their immunity to retrospective evaluation. Descartes explicitly attributed this characteristic to "god exists":

But now, if just because I can draw the idea of something from my thought, it follows that all which I know clearly and distinctly as pertaining to this object does really belong to it, may I not derive from this an argument demonstrating the existence of God, that is to say, the idea of a supremely perfect being, in me, than that of any figure or number whatever it is; and I do not know any less clearly and distinctly that an [actual and] eternal existence pertains to this nature than I know that all that which I am able to demonstrate of some figure or number truly pertains to the nature of this figure or number, and therefore, although all that I concluded in the preceeding Meditations were found to be false, the existence of God would pass with me as at least as certain as I have ever held the truths of

-----

<sup>99</sup> "Reply to Objection V," HR II, 216; AT VII, 364.



mathematics (which concern only numbers and figures) to be. <sup>100</sup>

One may object that this passage from the fifth Meditation does not establish my point. The clause "all that I have concluded in the preceding Meditations" refers only to the first four meditations, not to the last two. Save a few introductory paragraphs on corporeal natures, Meditation V is devoted mostly to the "ontological argument," for which the quoted passage prepares the way; so, to answer the objection, one must only show the applicability of the passage to the sixth Meditation. This is easily done. In the sixth Meditation, Descartes offered his classic case for the existence of the external world; the case rests on god not being a deceiver. <sup>101</sup> This case obviously presupposes the existence of god which Descartes thought to have established, in Meditation V, by the analytic containment of existence in the concept of god (and, in Meditation III, by causal arguments, if my criticism in section six is ignored). Therefore, the quoted passage applies to the sixth meditation also, insofar as the certainty of our knowledge about the external world totally depends on the certitude of our knowledge of god's existence. We may doubt the existential import of our beliefs about the external world, since none of those beliefs is analytic; but we cannot doubt the existential import of our belief in god's existence because, according to Descartes, existence is analytically contained in our concept of god. Hence, "god exists" is exempt from retrospective evaluation; so, it meets this criterion of basic statements.

Characteristic III: *Basic beliefs are nondiscursive* (do not depend on language).

-----  
<sup>100</sup> "Meditations, " HR I, 180-1; AT VII, 65-6.

<sup>101</sup> "Meditations," HR I, 191; AT VII, 78-0.

Truth depends on the extralinguistic facts a proposition may refer to as well as the language in which the relevant statement is expressed. As Quine has indicated, the truth of "Brutus killed Caesar" depends upon the presently-accepted meaning of "to kill" and historical facts.<sup>102</sup> Now, discourse requires an input of truths if truths are to be its output; but language involves semantics and factors relative to time and place. Thus, basic propositions cannot rely on linguistic elements, for the relativities thus introduced would remove their incorrigibility and the possibility of rational agreement among disputants; hence, basic truths must be nondiscursive.

It follows that "god exists" must be nondiscursive. This view is explicitly stated by Descartes in his reply to Caterus' objections. In this passage, Descartes distinguished his "ontological argument" from Anselm's:

Now the argument to which he (Aquinas) puts himself in opposition can be thus propounded. *When we understand what it is that the word God signifies, we understand that it is that, than which nothing greater can be conceived; but to exist in reality as well as in the mind is greater than to exist in the mind alone; hence, when the meaning of the word God is understood, it is understood that God exists in fact as well as in the understanding.* Here is the manifest error in the form of the argument; for the only conclusion to be drawn is --- *hence, when we understand what the word God means, we understand that it means that God exists in fact as well as in the mind:* but because a word implies something, that is no reason for this being true. My argument, however, was of the following kind --- That which we clearly and distinctly understand to belong to the true and immutable nature of a anything, its essence, or form, can be truly affirmed of that thing; but, after we have with sufficient accuracy investigated the nature of God, we clearly and distinctly understand that to exist belongs to His true and immutable nature; therefore we can with truth affirm of God that He exists.<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," *From a Logical Point of View*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954,) 36.

This does show Descartes regarded the truth of "god exists" as nonlinguistic. I indicated early in section 3 (this chapter) that Cartesian analyticity seems to be nonlinguistic (assuming, for the sake of the argument, the concept-language division can be made). "God exists" meets the third criterion of basic statements.

However, if the reader checks the quoted passage and the lines leading to and from it, she or he will notice how Descartes' reply exhibits the type of tension I indicated in section 1 --- that "god exists" is known from an ontological proof and without a proof of any sort. Descartes agrees with Aquinas that the existence of god is not self-evident; it requires proof. On the next page (HR II, 20; AT VII, 116-7), Descartes writes of existence as necessarily contained in the concept of god only, not in any other. This necessary containment suffices to know "god exists," for "we understand that actual existence is necessarily and at all times linked to God's other attributes, it follows certainly that God exists. " <sup>104</sup> This is exactly the same point of (HR II, 55; AT VII, 163) where he states that this conceptual containment allows one to know god's existence "without any train of reasoning."

#### 8. Two Advantages of my Interpretation

Interpreting Cartesianism as containing the *cogito*, on the one hand, and "god exists," on the other, leads to certain difficulties. Kenny has pointed one of these out. He interprets the *cogito* as involving an inference from "I think" to "I exist." <sup>105</sup> Likewise, he treats

-----  
<sup>103</sup> "Reply to Objections I," HR II, 19; AT VII, 115-6. To read the objection Descartes is replying to, see HR II, 7; AT VII, 98-9.

<sup>104</sup> HR II, 20; AT VII, 116-7.

"god exists" as resulting from an ontological argument. The following problem arises. The ontological argument will be valid only if predications about nonexistent entities may be true. The reason is simple. Descartes modeled the ontological argument on predicative reasoning about objects which may or may not exist outside the mind, but have necessarily true and certainly known properties. The predicative reasoning about the deity attributes to it all perfections (almightiness, omniscience, ...) without being sure an entity existing outside the mind possesses them; the analogous reasoning about possibly nonexistent entities, triangles being the example Descartes selected, attributes to them various properties though they may exist nowhere outside the human mind.<sup>106</sup> If propositions whose grammatical subjects are not necessarily denoting terms can be true, we cannot derive "I exist" from "I think," for we could know we have the property of thinking, such as sirens are half birds, without necessarily existing:

If the ontological argument is not to be a great *petitio principii*, it is essential that it should be possible to prove properties of the problematically existent. It must be possible, at least in some cases, to be sure that X is F without being sure the X exists. But if that is so, then what becomes of the *cogito ergo sum*? I have argued that it is an essential step in the *cogito* that every attribute must belong to a substance; "in order to think one must exist" is just a particular case of this principles (AT VII, 8; HR I, 223). But what right has Descartes to assume that the substance, of which his thought is an attribute, exists? If I can be sure that a triangle has its three angles equal to two right angles without being sure that any triangle exists, why can I not be sure that *ego cogito* without being sure that *ego existo*? On the other hand, if I can argue: "I am thinking, therefore I am," why can I not argue: "The triangles has three angles equal to two right angles, therefore the triangle exists?"

-----

If what does not exist can have properties, then he can perhaps prove God's existence, but cannot prove his own. If what does not exist cannot have properties, he can perhaps prove his own existence, but he cannot prove God's existence from God's essence without begging the question. The

-----

105 *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy* (New York: Random House, 1968), 41ff.

106 "Meditations," HR I, 165ff; AT VII, 45ff. HR I, 179ff; AT VII, 64. and 179ff.

*cogito* and the ontological argument cannot both be valid. <sup>107</sup>

How does the interpretation I propose avoid Kenny's difficulty? "I think" is regarded as a basic statement, the thinking act "pointing to" numerous objects (god, mountains, triangles, ....) which may or may not exist outside the mind. Nonexistential analytic truths can be known about many of those objects (triangles have three angles, sirens are half female); but an *analytically true existential statement* holds for only one of them, god. Thus, just as there is no argument leading to the *cogito*, there is no argument leading to "god exists" ---the former is a basic statement, the latter is the only analytically true existential statement the propositional attitude of thinking refers to. Kenny's worry about fallacious reasoning cannot arise when the *cogito* is regarded as basic and the persistent notion that "god exists" results from an argument is discarded, since there is no inference in either case. The act of thinking may include nonexistentially true predications among its objects, Descartes might say, but there is only one analytically true existential fact, "god exists," whose object cannot be a nonexistent, because existence is necessarily contained within it, as the mark of its analyticity. Again, there is no begging of the question here. For this fallacy to occur, the conclusion must be among the propositions that lead to it; but the existential import and epistemic justification of "god exists," in Descartes' scheme, are best explained by regarding it as the only analytically true existential statement present to the *cogito*, not the conclusion of an argument. The reasons have been explained in the previous pages. Thus, the *petitio principii* that exercised Kenny does not arise in my interpretation, for in it there is no ontological argument, and hence no premisses, leading to the conclusion

---

<sup>107</sup> Kenny, 169-70.

"god exists." I have not solved Kenny's problem; rather, I offer a different interpretation in which his problem cannot occur. I think my interpretation is close to what Descartes had in mind, but did not consistently write. It also has the advantages of not overlooking Descartes' misgivings about syllogistic logic and being consistent with his sharp differentiation of the divine idea from all other ideas.

An additional benefit of my interpretation relates to the place assigned Descartes in the history of Western philosophy.<sup>108</sup>

Certain philosophic areas are prior to others in the sense that problems of the former must be solved before advances in the latter can be made; for instance, explaining analyticity in terms of meanings requires a theory of meaning. Philosophers disagree as to which area of their discipline is the first among the others. In general, logic was regarded as the first during the period dominated by Aristotle and the Scholastics. They thought logic must be straightened out at the very start of inquiry if we are to get correct answers to philosophical problems later on.

Descartes' introduction of new elements into philosophy in particular and Western thought in general earned him the title "father of modern philosophy": Medieval explanations of natural phenomena tended to be purposive; Descartes' were mechanical, as in *Passions of the Soul*. The Scholastics wrote in Latin; Descartes used the language of his

-----

<sup>108</sup> Formulating the explanation of this advantage owes much to two writings of Michael Dummett, but I have departed from them by adding some points relevant to this proposal and not to Dummett's purposes. The writings are: "Gottlob Frege," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Ed. P. Edwards. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967), Vol. 3, 225-37; *Frege: Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), Chapter 19. It should be stressed that Dummett's concern is not Descartes' place in the history of philosophy, but Frege's. There a few minor differences between the two sources referred to, but their point is the same.

country in some key works. Syllogistic logic was regarded as crucial to all inquiries; Descartes rejected it as a truth-discovering tool. This third point brings us to the fore of the argument.

One far reaching aspect of the Cartesian revolution was the removal of logic from the first position it had occupied; he gave that lofty post to a discipline that had not held it before --- the theory of knowledge. The problem philosophers were to solve before all others can be expressed in two questions: what can we know and how can our knowledge claims be justified? These questions dominated philosophy for two centuries. Frege rejected this Cartesian perspective; logic, or the theory of meaning, is the first discipline we must get in shape before the remaining philosophical problems can be solved. Thus, Dummett concludes, we are able to "date a whole epoch in philosophy as beginning with the work of Frege, just as we can do with Descartes. " 109

The basic role of god's existence in Descartes' theory of knowledge was shown. We have indicated how the belief meets three characteristics of basic beliefs. Given Descartes' rejection of logic as first discipline: is it accurate to say that he got a basic belief of his foundationalist scheme from logic? Can this question be formulated when Descartes explicitly rejected syllogistic logic as a truth-discovering tool? I hope that answers to these questions show the idea that there is a deductive (Cartesian) ontological argument must be abandoned as inconsistent with Descartes' place in the history of Western philosophy and uncognizant of his view of syllogistic logic. (Descartes' epistemic reasons for rejecting logic as a truth-discovering tool, and my related interpretative principle, were discussed in the introduction).

-----

109 *Frege: Philosophy of Language*, 669.

The interpretation I propose is afflicted by conflicting passages where Descartes suggests "god exists" results from an argument and others where he says the opposite. It also deviates from accepted interpretations by regarding "god exists" as basic, a part of the *cogito*. This is the price we pay. The dividend of deviancy is an interpretation which is consistent with Descartes' place in philosophical history and free from some of difficulties troubling standard interpretations.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is not comprehensive in any area this dissertation deals with. Readers interested in more extensive bibliographical sources should consult the following: G. Stebba, *Bibliographia Cartesiana: A Critical Guide to the Descartes Literature 1800-1960*. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964); W. Doney, *Descartes: A Collection of Critical Essays* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 369-86; also by Doney, "Some Recent Work on Descartes: A Bibliography," *Philosophy Research Archives* 2 No. 1134 (1975), 545-67 (for articles and books published between 1966-1975); T.L. Miethe, "The Ontological Argument: A Research Bibliography," *Modern Schoolman* 54 (1977), 148-66. Stebba's is an important English-language source, though weak in its coverage of scholarship from the perspective of twentieth century analytic philosophy; this shortcoming is somewhat corrected by Doney and Miethe's compilations.

### I DESCARTES

#### Some Primary Sources:

Descartes, R., *Oeuvres de Descartes*, publiées par Ch. Adams et. P. Tannery. Paris: Cerf, 1897-1913. Reprinted Paris, J. Vrin, 1957- . 12 Vols.

----, *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, Tr. Haldane and Ross. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

----, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Tr. J. Cottingham et. al.. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

----, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Tr. R. Rubin. Claremont: Areté Press, 1984.

----, *Meditations*, Tr. D.A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1984

----, *Discourse on Method*, Tr. D.A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1984

----, *Principles of Philosophy*. Dordrecht: A. D. Reidel, 1984. (Synthese Historical Library) Combines, in translation, the Latin and French texts.

----, *Descartes' Philosophical Letters*. Tr. A. Kenny. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970. Reprinted 1981.

## Some Secondary Sources:

- Alanen, L., "Studies in Cartesian Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind," *Acta Philosophica Fennica* 33 (1982), 1- 173.
- , "On The So-Called 'Naive Interpretation' of the Cogito Ergo Sum," *Acta Philosophica Fennica* (1981), 9-29.
- Anderson, D., "Three Views on the Cogito," *Kinesis* 13 (1983), 11-20.
- Balz, A., *Cartesian Studies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1951.
- Barnes, J., *The Ontological Argument*. London: Macmillan, 1972.
- Beck, L. J., *The Method of Descartes*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.
- , *The Metaphysics of Descartes*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.
- Bergoffen, D., "Cartesian Dialectics and the Autonomy of Reason," *International Studies in Philosophy* 13, (1981), 1-8.
- Boos, W., "A Self-Referential Cogito," *Philosophical Studies* 44 (1983), 269-90.
- Broughton, J., "Skepticism and the Cartesian Circle," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 14 (1984), 593-615.
- Canton, H., "Descartes' Anonymous Writings: A Recapitulation," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* (1982), 299-311.
- Carney, J., "Cogito, Ergo Sum and Sum Res Cogitans," *The Philosophical Review* 71 (1962), 492-96.
- Clarke, Desmond, "Descartes' Use of 'Demonstration' and 'Deduction'" *Modern Schoolman* 54 (1977), 333-44.
- Cress, D., "Does Descartes Have Two Ontological Arguments," *International Studies in Philosophy* 7 (1975), 155-66.
- Chinn, E., "A Journey Around the Cartesian Circle," *Philosophy Research Archives* 9 (1983), 279-92.
- Cummis, R., "Epistemology and the Cartesian Circle," *Theoria* 41 (1975), 112-24.
- Daher, A., "Divine Existence and Conceptual Necessity," *Philosophical Studies* 29 (Ireland) (1982-3), 34-47.
- Curley, E.M. *Descartes Against The Skeptics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

- Derisi, O., "El Espíritu de Dos Filosofías," *Estudios* 57 (1937), 469-514.
- Doney, W. Ed. *Descartes*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968.
- Dunlap, J., "Cogito Ergo Sum,: Neither Inference nor Performance," *Personalist* 57 (1976) 386-90.
- Dura, N.S. et. al., "Matemáticas, Intuición y Dios en Descartes: Un Apunte Sobre "El Círculo Cartesiano," *Pensamiento* 39 (1983), 437-48.
- Dreisbach, D., "Circularity and Consistency in Descartes," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 8 (1978), 59-78.
- Erde, E., "Analyticity, The Cogito and Self-Knowledge in Descartes," *South Western Journal of Philosophy* 6 (1975), 79-85.
- Feldman, F., "On the Performative Interpretation of the Cogito," *The Philosophical Review* 82 (1973), 345-63.
- Frankfurt, H., *Demons, Dreamers and Madmen: The Defense of Reason in Descartes's Meditations*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970.
- , "Descartes' Discussion of His Existence in the Second Meditation," *The Philosophical Review* LXXV (1966), 329-56.
- , "Memory and the Cartesian Circle," *The Philosophical Review* 71 (1962), 504-11.
- Friedman, J., "Kripkean Necessity and the Ontological Argument," *Communication and Cognition* 15 (1982), 173-84.
- Jones, W.T., "Somnio Ergo Sum: Descartes' Three Dreams," *Philosophy and Literature* 4 (1980), 145-66.
- Judge, B., "Thoughts --- And Their Contents," *American Philosophical Quarterly* (1983), 365-74.
- Haight, D.F., "Back to Intentional Entities and Essences," *New Scholasticism* 55 (1981), 178-90.
- Hamelin, O., "Valeur de la preuve ontologique," *Les Études Philosophiques* 12 (1957), 144-50.
- , *Le système de Descartes*. Paris: L. Robin, 1921.
- Harrison, J., "The In corrigibility of the Cogito," *Mind* 93 (1984), 321-35.
- Hartshorne, C., *The Logic of Perfection*. La Salle: Open Court, 1962.

Hauptli, B.W., "Frankfurt on Descartes: Consistency or Validation of Reason," *International Studies in Philosophy* 15 (1983), 59-70.

Hintikka, J., "Cogito Ergo Sum: Inference or Performance?", " *The Philosophical Review* 71 (1962), 3-32.

----, "Cogito, Ergo Sum as an Inference and a Performance," *The Philosophical Review* 72 (1963), 487-496.

Hooker, M., "Descartes' Argument for His Claim that his Essence is to Think," *Grazer Philosophische Studies* 1 (1975), 143-63.

Gewirth, A. "The Cartesian Circle," *The Philosophical Review* 50 (1941), 368-95.

Gibson, A., *The Philosophy of Descartes*. London: Methuen, 1932.

Gilson, E., *Discours de la Méthode: texte et commentaire*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1967.

---- Ed., *Études sur le rôle de la pensée médiévale dans la formation du système cartésien*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1951.

Gouhier, H., *Descartes: Essais sur le "Discours de la Méthode," la Métaphysique et la Morale*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1973.

----, "La preuve ontologique de Descartes," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 29 (1954), 295-303.

Grene, M., *Descartes*. University of Minnesota Press, 1985

Gueroult, M., *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons*, Tr. R. Ariew, 2 Vols. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

----, *Descartes Selon l'Ordre des Raisons*, 2 Vols. Paris: Aubier (Éditions Montaigne), 1953.

----, "La Vérité de la science et la vérité de la chose dans les preuves de l'existence de Dieu," *Descartes: Cahiers de Royaumont*, no. 2. Paris: Édition de Minuit, 1957.

----, "Le cogito et l'ordre des axiomes metaphysique dans les Principia philosophiae cartesianae de Spinoza," *Archives de philosophie* 23 (1960), 171-85.

----, *Nouvelles Réflexions sur la preuve ontologique de Descartes*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1955.

Katz, J. *Cogitations: A Study of the Cogito in Relation to the Philosophy of Language, and a Study of Them in Relation to the Cogito*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Keeling, S. V., *Descartes* London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Kenny, A., *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*. New York: Random House, 1968.

- , "The Cartesian Spiral," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* (1983), 274-256.
- Lafleur, L., *Discourse on Method and the Meditations*. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1960.
- Lechere, I., "The Ontology of Descartes," *Review of Metaphysics* 37 (1980), 297-24.
- Lluberes, "Descartes y el Argumento Sobre Su Existencia," *Revista Venezolana de Filosofia* 2 (1975), 83-119.
- Mahaffy, J. P. , *Descartes*. Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1969. (Originally published in 1902).
- Markie, P., "The Cogito Puzzle," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 43, (1982), 59-81.
- Morris, J., "What the Skeptic Cannot Doubt," *Philosophical Forum* 11, (1980), 363-85.
- Mourant, J.A., "The Cogitos: Augustinian and Cartesian," *Augustinian Studies* 10 (1979), 27-42.
- Oakes, R., "Containment, Analyticity and the Ontological Argument," *Thomist* 39 (1975), 319-31.
- Oakes, R., "Material Things: A Cartesian Conundrum," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* (1983), 144-50.
- Odegard, D., "Escaping the Cartesian Circle," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 21 (1984), 167-73.
- O'Neil, B. E. *Epistemological Direct Realism in Descartes' Philosophy*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974.
- Orenduff, J.M., "Existence Proofs and the Ontological Argument," *Southwestern Philosophical Studies* (1980), 50-4.
- , "The Cartesian Circle," *Philosophical Topics* (1980), 109-113.
- Peetz, V., "Is Existence a Predicate," *Philosophy*, 57 (1982), 395-401.
- Plantinga, A., *The Nature of Necessity*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.
- Pompa, L., "The Incoherence of the Cartesian Cogito," *Inquiry* 3 (1984), 3-22.
- Priest, S., "Descartes, Kant and Self-Conscious," *Philosophical Quarterly* 31 (1981), 348-51.

- Ratzsch, D., "I Think, Therefore I Am: A Reply to Orenstein," *International Logic Review* 8 (1977), 92-
- Riley, P., "Leibniz's Unpublished Remarks On the Abbé Bucquoi's Proof of the Existence of God," *Studia Leibnitiana* 15 (1983), 215-20.
- Romero, F, Ed. *Escritos en Honor a Descartes*. La Plata: Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 1938.
- Rosenthal, D., "Possibility, Existence and the Ontological Argument," *Philosophical Studies* 30 (1976), 185-92.
- Schact, R., *Classical Modern Philosophers: Descartes to Kant*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.
- Schiffer, S., "Descartes on His Essence," *Philosophical Review* 85 (1976), 21-43.
- Sleak, P., "Descartes's Diagonal Deduction", *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 34 (1983), 13-36.
- Smith, N. K., *New Studies in the Philosophy of Descartes*. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1952.
- Sosa, E., "Hasta Donde Puede Llevar la Duda," *Revista Latinoamericana de Filosofia* 2 (1976), 71-3.
- Spinoza, B. *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1961.
- Sushanta, S., "The Ontological Argument Revisited," *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* 10 (1983), 219-42.
- Tlumak, J., "Squaring the Cartesian Circle," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 16 (1978), 247-57.
- Tweyman, S., "Truth, No Doubt: Descartes' Proof that the Clear and Distinct Must be True," *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 19 (1981), 237-58.
- VanCleve, J., "Conceivability and the Cartesian Argument for Dualism," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* (1983), 35-45.
- Vision, G., "Cogito Per Cogitationem, Ergo Sum," *The Philosophical Forum*, 11 (1980), 340-62.
- Wagner, S., "Descartes' Cogito: A Generative View," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 1 (1984), 167-80.
- Weinberg, J., "Cogito, Ergo Sum: Some Reflections on Mr. Hintikka's Article," *The Philosophical Review* 71 (1962), 483-91.

Wells, N.J., "Material Falsity in Descartes, Arnauld and Suarez," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 22 (1984), 25-50.

Wong, D., "Cartesian Deduction," *Philosophy Research Archives* 8 no. 1506 (1982)

Yarvin, H., "Language and the Cogito," *Journal of Critical Analysis* 6 (1977), 109-18.

Williams, B., *Descartes*. London: Penguin Books, 1978.

Wilson, M. *Descartes*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

### III GENERAL WORKS

Baier, A., *Postures of Mind*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.

Findlay, J. *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Grossman, R., *Meinong*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974.

Hartshorne, C., *Anselm's Discovery. La Salle: Open Court, 1965.*

Hinton, J.M., "Quantification, Meinongism and the Ontological Argument," *Philosophical Quarterly* 22 (1972), 97-109.

Lambert, K., *Meinong and the Principle of Independence*. Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Meinong, A., *On Assumptions*, Tr. J. Heanve. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.

Parsons, T. *Nonexistent Objects*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.

Plantinga, A., *The Ontological Argument*. New York: Doubleday, 1965.

Rapaport, W.. "Meinongian Theories and a Russellian Paradox," *Nous* 12(1978), 153-80.

Routley, R., *Exploring Meinong's Jungle and Beyond*. Canberra: Australian National University, 1980.

Tomberlin, J., "Plantinga and the Ontological Argument," *Alvin Plantinga*, ed. James E. Tomberlin et. al. D. Reidel, 1985.

Thom, P., *The Syllogism*. Munich: Philosophia Resources Library, 1981.

Williams, C.J.F., *What is Existence?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.