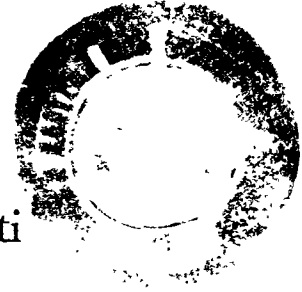


GOD IN DESCARTES' PHILOSOPHY

Thesis submitted
to The University of Gauhati
for the Degree
of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the FACULTY OF ARTS,
1997



Ranjan Kumar Behera

Chairman

Dept. of Philosophy
Patkai Christian College
NAGALAND - 797 103

Phil

DS
194
BEH

STANDARD
No. 103170
Ser. No. 234399
Date 1/3/91
Issued by [Signature]
Checked by
Approved by

DEPARTMENT of Philosophy
UNIVERSITY of GAUHATI

Dr. Dilip Kumar Chakravarty
Professor



Ref.

DATE *7-4-97*

This is to certify that this research work under the title 'God in Descartes' Philosophy' has been carried on by Sri Ranjan Kumar Behera, Chairman Dept. of Philosophy, Patkai Christian College, Nagaland under my guidance and supervision. He has fulfilled all the requirements under the Ph.D. regulations.

The thesis is the result of his own investigation and no part of the thesis was submitted to any other University for any research degree.

D.K. Chakravarty
(Dilip Kumar Chakravarty)
Professor, Dept. of Philosophy
University of Gauhati

PREFACE

Rene Descartes(1596-1650) is considered to be the father of modern philosophy. The search for certainty dominated his thoughts. The thesis seeks to explain, elaborate and evaluate Descartes' conception of God. It consists of seven chapters. Chapter I is introductory in nature. Here a special attention is given to Descartes aim, Cartesian method, methodic doubt and cogito ergo sum. In chapter II, the problem is discussed from the standpoints of Geometry, Theology, and Philosophy. The Euclidean geometry has played a very significant role in history of European thought in general and European philosophy in particular. Accordingly attempts were made in the past to evaluate the paradigms set by Euclid as regards all intellectual activities. In short, it was an attempt to set everything GEOMETRICO. Theology was no exception to this. The theologians in the middle ages attempted to provide arguments for the existence of God. The attempt continued even through the works of rationalists and empiricists. In other words, what is the role that reason plays in our idea of God ? Or does sense-experience give us the idea of God ? This chapter discusses in detail the importance and relavance of geometrical method in philosophy in general and theology in particular

In chapter III, the causal argument is examined. It owes its origin mainly to Aristotle in European philosophy. The first cause argument has been set forth in detail by Aristotle, and it has been accepted by his followers particularly by the theologians in the Medieval period. In this regard, an attempt is made to discuss and examine the causal argument. The views of Aristotle, Descartes, Hume and Kant are also discussed here in detail.

In chapter IV, the cosmological argument is examined. It is explained that the argument begins with the idea of the world as effect to God as its first cause. The basis of the existence of God is imperfection and contingency of the universe. The universe cannot be self-explained and intelligible only by non-contingent, necessary, perfect, absolute and self-explained being which is called God. According to Aristotle, God as the first cause of creation is the First mover or the prime mover. It states that everything has a cause and if this is accepted as the law of causation, then universe itself must have a cause which is called God. Hence, God must be the infinite first cause of the cosmos. In Indian Philosophy, Nayayikas say that God is the efficient cause whereas the universe is the material cause. St. Thomas Aquinas in his book 'Summa

Theologica', gives five ways to prove the existence of God. These are derived from Aristotle's conception of unmoved mover is so far from current science or metaphysics, because God of Aristotle's metaphysics neither made nor sustains the being of the world.

In chapter V, the Ontological argument is explained and examined. It is the most important argument to prove the existence of God, where the existence of God is proved from the idea of God. But since Kant the most popular criticism has been that existence is not a predicate. An attempt is made to evaluate Ontological argument in its various forms in the light of contemporary reflections. Problems about existence, reference and necessity are also discussed.

The VIth chapter deals with the role of God in Cartesian philosophy. Like any other moderners, Descartes could not change the entire legacies, particularly the mental legacy. As a result of this, God is the central problem for him . However, his concept of God is quite different from that of the ancient and Medieval thinkers. He was the first rationalist philosopher who sought to free philosophy from the shackles of religious Dogmatism. The concluding chapter is a summary of the

chapters written. It also points to the necessity of admitting the intuitive existence of God.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge my immense indebtedness and profound gratitude to the various sources and persons through whom I had received help and guidance for my present research work.

First of all, I remain profoundly indebted to Prof. D.K. Chakravarty under whose inspiration and guidance I have completed this thesis. He has been the very picture of good will and co-operation in everything. In fact, it was because of his untiring efforts and sincerity of purpose that I have completed the thesis in time. I express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to him

I was greatly benefited by writings of several distinguished scholars and men of letters, in preparing this thesis. First of all, I consulted a number of books and Journals in the K.K.Handiquie Library of Gauhati University, Central Library of the North Eastern Hill University, Patkai Christian College Library, Nagaland, Utkal University Library, Bhubaneswar and Indian Council of Philosophical Research, Lucknow and they were of immense help to me.

I also express my indebtedness to Dr. Tuism A. Shishak, Principal, Patkai Christian College for granting me necessary leave for my research work as well as for his encouragement.

My thanks are also due to Prof. B. Kar, Dr. Tandra Patnaik, Utkal University, Prof. N. Malla, North Eastern Hill University, Dr. A. K. Mukhopadhyaya, Programme Officer (Indian Council of Philosophical Research), Late Dr. Ibotombi Singh, Nagaland University and my family members for their generous help, constant co-operation and hearty encouragement.

Finally I have to thank Digital Analog, Guwahati for typing out the thesis with great care.

Above all, I thank the almighty who has been with me, enabling to complete this work with His infinite grace.

Date : 7/4/27

Place : Gauhati University


(R.K. BEHERA)

CONTENTS

| | Page no. |
|---|----------|
| PREFACE | i - v |
| CHAPTER I | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION | |
| CHAPTER II | 30 |
| GEOMETRY, THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY | |
| CHAPTER III | 49 |
| DESCARTES' PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD | |
| THE CAUSAL ARGUMENT | |
| CHAPTER IV | 65 |
| THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT | |
| CHAPTER V | 98 |
| THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT | |
| CHAPTER VI | 127 |
| ROLE OF GOD IN CARTESIAN PHILOSOPHY | |
| CHAPTER VII | 156 |
| CONCLUSION | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 172 |

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental aim of Descartes was to attain philosophical truth by the use of reason, to give an account of the nature of things which would be perfectly general, intelligible to anyone and absolutely certain. But what he was seeking was not to discover a multiplicity of isolated truths but to develop a system of true propositions, in which nothing would be presupposed which was not self-evident and indubitable. There would then be an organic connection between all the parts of the system, and the whole edifice would rest on a sure foundation. Descartes charged the Aristotelians not only with relying on Aristotle's authority but also with failing to understand him properly and with pretending to find in his writings solutions to problems of which he said nothing and of which he possibly had not thought at all. Descartes resolved to rely on his reason, not on authority.¹

He wished to find and apply the right method in the search for truth, a method which would enable him to demonstrate truths in a rational and systematic order,

1. Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Volume 4, pp. 66-67

irrespective of whether these truths had been previously acknowledged or not. His primary aim was to produce a certain and well-ordered philosophy. His ideal of philosophy was that of an organically connected system of scientifically established truths, that is to say, of truths so ordered that the mind passes from fundamental self-evident truths to other evident truths implied by the former. This ideal was suggested in large part by mathematics. Both in the 'Regulae' (Rules for the Direction of the Mind) and in 'The Discourse on Method' he speaks explicitly about the influence exercised by mathematics on his mind.

All sciences are similar in the sense that the method which is applicable in mathematics is applicable elsewhere. And this is, indeed, what Descartes thought. All the sciences taken together are identical with human wisdom which always remains one and the same, however applied to different subjects. There is only one kind of knowledge, certain and evident knowledge. And ultimately there is only one science, though it possesses interconnected branches. Hence, there can be only one scientific method. This notion that all sciences are ultimately one science, or rather, organically connected branches of one science, which is identified with human wisdom or understanding, constitutes a major assumption. He recognised a distinction between the sciences, which depended entirely on the mind's cognitive

activity, and the arts which depend on the exercise and disposition of the body. We can say perhaps that he admitted a distinction between science and skill, between knowing that and knowing how. But there is only one kind of science, and it does not become differentiated into diverse types through differences of subject matter. Therefore, Descartes ideal aim was to construct this comprehensive scientific philosophy.²

In "The Principles of Philosophy" Descartes wrote, ".... the whole of philosophy is like a tree, whose roots are metaphysics, whose trunk is physics and whose branches are all the other sciences, which may be reduced to three principal sciences: medicine, mechanics and morals".³ Like Bacon, Descartes wanted to cultivate this tree, not for its own sake alone but also for the sake of the fruit which might be gathered from its branches, for the mastery of nature which a more accurate understanding of nature would yield. Thus, Descartes wanted a system of knowledge which was not only comprehensive and intelligible but also absolutely certain.

The method of Descartes adopted in his

2. Ibid., P.70

3. E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.), Philosophical works of Descartes, Vol. 1, P.211

philosophical investigations is that which he borrows from Mathematics. Following the Geometrician, he mentions two steps in his method-intuition and deduction, which, he thinks, are the only two ways open to man for attaining truth. Like the Geometrician who starts with a small number of self-evident axioms and definitions and reaches wonderful results by means of deduction from them, he begins, first of all by searching for some fundamental certainty and then proposes to derive from it other certainties. By intuition, therefore, he means the immediate self-evident certainty which forces itself upon us, i.e., "the conception of an attentive mind so distinct and so clear that no doubt remains to it with regard to that which we comprehend".⁴

Most of our ideas are confused and obscure, because we try to take in too much at once. One, bent on taking in too many things at one look, sees nothing distinctly, and one, attending to too many objects in one act of thought, ends on confusion. Hence, the first thing required is to analyse out from habitual thinking those clear and axiomatic principles, the intuitions, whose certainty cannot be doubted. This intuition, again, is to be followed by deduction, by which he means the process, by

4. Ibid., P.7

which, through a series of steps each intuitively certain, we can reach our conclusions, carrying the same degree of certainty as each preceding intuition.

Descartes was very much worried by the uncertain state of philosophy in his times. He saw that philosophy was cultivated for many centuries by the best minds that had ever lived and there was yet not a single proposition in it which was not under dispute. However, Descartes did not despair of knowledge and knowledge for him must attain a certitude equal to that of the demonstrations of Arithmetic and Geometry. This knowledge, he thought, could be attained if we use an appropriate method of enquiry. Seeing that knowledge proper has already been attained in Arithmetic and Geometry he was surprised to find that philosophers had not reared a lofty edifice on such a firm and solid foundation. However, it was the method and not the subject-matter so much which had enabled mathematics to attain certitude. So Descartes attempted to understand the method of mathematics which could be utilised for advancing knowledge in any subject. He called his own enquiry as universal mathematics in Rule 4 of his *Regulae*. This will be called meta-mathematics today. Such a science according to Descartes, should contain the primary rudiments of human reason and its provience ought to extend

to the eliciting of true results in every subject.

Descartes has noted that deduction alone could yield certain results and experimental inference could not yield errorless results. But he did not see that these methods dealt with two different kinds of propositions. Further, only now we are beginning to realise that philosophy does not deal with cognitive but with non-cognitive propositions concerning self realisation. Such distinctions would show that the criterion of mathematics cannot be applied to the understanding of philosophical problems.

Descartes, therefore, was very much concerned with the enquiry into the method of philosophising. The object of Cartesian methodology was to apply mathematical method to philosophy with a view to obtaining certitude in knowledge. In part II of the Discourse on method, Descartes gave an account of 4 rules which he found adequate in explaining his method.

The first rule was never to accept anything as true unless Descartes recognized it to be certainly and evidently such, that is, carefully to avoid all precipitation and prejudgement, and include nothing in my conclusions unless it presented itself so clearly and

distinctly to my mind that there was no reason or occasion to doubt it. The Second was to divide each of the difficulties which Descartes encountered into as many parts as possible and as might be required for an easier solution. The third was to think in an orderly fashion when concerned with the search for truth, beginning with the things which were simplest and easiest to understand and gradually and by degrees reaching toward more complex knowledge.

The last was both in the process of searching and in reviewing when in difficulty, always to make enumerations so complete and reviews so general that Descartes would be certain that nothing was omitted.⁵ The complex thing can be understood when we know its several constituent factors separately, clearly and distinctly and when we know the order or system in which they are found. These four methodical rules are, Descartes thinks, sufficient for him, provided he observes them strictly. In the 1st of these rules, we mark the philosophical attitude of Descartes, as, in it, he expresses dis-satisfaction with any conclusion that lacks full certainty and remaining three correspond, respectively, to the 3 recognized

5. Laurence J.Lafleur (tr.), Rene Descartes Discourse on method and meditations, P.15

processes, called analysis, synthesis and verification.⁶

It is immediately obvious that, taken by themselves, all these four rules are so general and several of their key terms so vague, that they provide little positive guidance. Thus, there is some justice in a famous sneer of Leibnitz that Descartes' celebrated rules add up by saying 'Take what you need and do what you should and you will get what you want'. To some extent, Descartes was probably willing to admit that the rules, regarded merely as abstract prescriptions, had no great content, for it is a repeated emphasis of his work that it is only in the actual application of the mind to specific problems that a man will come to recognize what it is to see something clearly and distinctly, will realize that his ideas have been insufficiently analyzed and so forth. The problem of the meaning of clear and distinct perception is really the central issue of the interpretation of the method and it will be seen that it rescues the heart of Descartes philosophy.

Whatever the difficulties of interpreting the rules, there are two features of Descartes method that stand out clearly. One is that the method is intended as an analytical or heuristic method, it applies to the situation

6. Calkin, Persistent Problems of Philosophy, P. 20

of one who is confronted with a problem and proceeds to answer it by resolving the situation into a number of constituent elements or ideas. Descartes method is not only of Scientific enquiry, nor only of philosophical inquiry, but of any rational inquiry whatsoever. In any such rational enquiry the intellectual power of the mind that the method is supposed to guide is the same and Descartes indeed had a vision of the unity of all knowledge, philosophical and scientific, that he expressed in an image of the tree of knowledge, whose roots were metaphysics, whose trunk was physics and whose branches were the other sciences (including medicine and morality). Descartes proceeds to apply the method of doubt by suspending his belief in anything in which he can find or indeed imagine, the slightest ground of doubt. In this way, he succeeds in suspending belief in the entire physical universe, including his own body, in God, in the past and in the truth of simple propositions of mathematics.⁷

By method Descartes says, "I mean a set of certain and easy rules such that any one, who obeys them exactly, will first never take anything false for true and secondly, will advance by an orderly effort, step by step, without waste of mental effort, until he has achieved the knowledge of everything which does not surpass his capacity

7. The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.2, PP.345-346

of understanding if we do not in fact understand things which we are capable of understanding then the fault must be laid at the door of want of method and misuse of our natural powers of reason".⁸ Two points in this definition should be noted, the need to apply strictly the rules of evidence, the criterion of clear and distinct ideas which can only be apprehended by the pure use of the *vis cogoscene* and the need to advance from this original apprehension in an orderly manner. Descartes made it clear that no real knowledge can be acquired except by intellectual intuition and deduction, the primary and simpler operations of the mind. Consequently he adds, unless our mind is able to employ them, it would not be able to understand any of the precepts of the method itself, not even the simplest of them.⁹

The rules of method are in fact the description of the proper working of the mind in its operations of intuiting, deducing and enumerating. It is not enough to have a good mind, one must learn to use it properly. The method will help to cultivate the primary seeds of useful thought which are to be found in all human minds. And the author of the rules of method is so much impressed with the prospect of possible result of their use

8. L.J. Beck, *The Method of Descartes*, P. 152

9. *Ibid.*, P. 153

and their unique value as an instrument of scientific and philosophical research that he was prepared to believe that the greater minds had some knowledge of this method. They were led to it by nature alone. We are not here concerned with tracing in the history of philosophy any unconscious anticipations of the rules of cartesian method.

In the 5th of the rules for the direction of mind, Descartes gives a summary of his method. The method consists wholly in the ordering and disposing of those objects to which the attention of the mind must be directed if we are to discover any truth.¹⁰ We shall observe this method exactly if we reduce involved and obscure propositions step by step to those which are simpler, and if we then start with the intuitive apprehension of the simplest propositions and try by retracing our path through the same steps to ascend to the knowledge of all the others.

The 1st part of the method is that we should reduce involved and obscure propositions step by step to those which are simpler. And this injunction is said to correspond to the second precept of the discourse on method. The second was to divide up each to the difficulties which he was to examine into as many parts as -----
10. Ralph M. Eaton (ed.), Descartes selections, P.56

possible and as seemed requisite. This is the method which Descartes later calls the method of analysis or resolution. It can hardly be said that he always used the term analysis in precisely the same sense but, as here described, it consists in breaking down, as it were, the multiple data of knowledge into their simplest elements or element.¹¹ Therefore, in Rule 4, Descartes says method is necessary for the investigation of Truth. It is better, never to think of investigating the truth of any thing at all, than to do it without method.¹²

Let us go where the doubt leads us. As Perry puts it, the investigator must be both incredulous and credulous, believing nothing and prepared to believe anything.¹³ Let not a single proposition be readmitted before undergoing a thorough check up by this doubt, nothing is too sacred to be doubted. And Descartes finds a number of principles which enjoyed high status in the field of knowledge-especially philosophy where no two persons agree that melt away at the magic touch of this doubt. Once Descartes takes up the axe of doubt he hacks away at every sapling of accepted truth till he reaches that portion too

-
11. F.Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol.4, P.75
 12. T.V. Smith & M.Greene (ed.), *From Descartes to Locke*, P.23
 13. R.B. Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, P.8

hard for the axe to cut.¹⁴ Descartes wanted his philosophical thinking to be objective and practical, therefore, he adopted the method of doubt.

↳In the first meditation, Descartes set forth the reasons for which we may, generally speaking, doubt about all things, and especially about material things, at least so long as we have no other foundations for the sciences than those which we have hitherto possessed. But although the utility of a doubt which is so general does not at first appear, it is at the same time very great, in as much as it delivers us from every kind of prejudice, and sets out for us a very simple way by which the mind may detach itself from the senses and finally it makes it impossible for us ever to doubt those things which we have once discovered to be true.¹⁵

The doubt of Descartes should not be confused with scepticism. Descartes is not asserting that whatever can be doubted is false, but he is only supposing it to be false. Again, the scepticism is the finished conclusion about knowledge which professes the denial of any certain knowledge whatsoever. However, the cartesian doubt is only a starting point to find out that which can not be further

14. S.S. Barlingay & P.B. Kulkarni, A Critical Survey of Western Philosophy, P.48

15. T.V. Smith & M.Greene (ed.), op. cit., P.23

doubted.¹⁶ Scepticism as Keeling points out, is essentially a conclusion about knowledge, the conclusion either that there is none or that there can be none. Methodical doubt, however, is not a conclusion about knowledge, it is an injunction to be obeyed in the hope of attaining knowledge. Although not the same as scepticism its adoption might easily lead us in to scepticism, for we may fail forever to find a proposition that can not be doubted.¹⁷

The doubt recommended and practised by Descartes is universal in the sense that it is applied universally to all that can be doubted, that is, to every proposition about whose truth doubt is possible. It is methodic in the sense that it is practised not for the sake of doubting but as a preliminary stage in the attainment of certainty and in shifting the true from the false, the certain from the probable, the indubitable from the doubtful. Thus, it is also provisional not only in the sense that it is a preliminary stage in the attainment of certainty but also in the sense that Descartes does not necessarily aim at substituting new propositions for those in which he formerly believed. The doubt is also theoretical in the sense that we should not make us of it in conduct. For in conduct it frequently happens that we

16. E.S. Haldane & G.R.T.Ross (tr.), Discourse on the method in Philosophical works of Descartes, P.99

17. S.V.Keeling, Descartes, P.88

are obliged to follow opinions which are only probable.¹⁸

How far can doubt be extended ? In the first place, we can doubt all that we have learned through the senses. Descartes said, "All that up to the present time I have accepted as most true and certain, I have learned either from the senses or through the senses, but it is sometimes proved to me that these senses are deceptive and it is wiser not to trust entirely to anything by which we have been deceived".¹⁹ Descartes held that it was possible to doubt all sense experience and consider them illusory like dream experiences. He could not avoid doubting his physical existence when its existence was assured by sense experience. It is possible that when I think that I am sitting in my dressing gown by the fire-side with a paper in hand, I am actually lying fast asleep in bed. So long as we depend upon sense experience for all our knowledge, we have no means of distinguishing truth from falsehood.²⁰

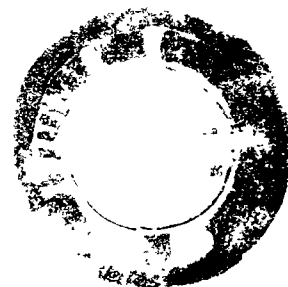
We dream everyday of things which nowhere exist and there is no criterion by which we can distinguish dream-states from the sensations of our waking moments. In

18. F.Copleston, op.cit., Vol.4, P.85

19. R.H. Hutchins, Great Books of the Western World, Vol.31, P.75

20. Laurence J.Lafleur (tr.), op.cit., P.76

103170



other words, in the face of the fact that we dream of unreal things, what guarantee have we that we are not always dreaming? It may be that an evil spirit has made us so that this world which we picture to ourselves exists only in our imagination and perhaps has no existence outside our minds. Therefore, we may think that the heavens, the air, the earth, colours, figures, sounds, even our own bodies and actions and all other external objects are nothing but illusions and imposed on our credulity by the evil spirit.

Descartes distinguished the certainty of mathematical knowledge from knowledge derived from sense experience. But he came to the point when he thought that even the mathematical proposition of $2+2$ making 4 could be conceived differently as making 5. Now, it is possible that as human beings we make mistakes in calculations. However, for all the mistakes we commit in calculations and deductions we never think of condemning mathematical knowledge as illusory.

Therefore, even mathematics, in spite of the apparent certainty of its axioms and demonstrations, may be doubted, for controversy and error are also found in it, men sometimes falling into error in their calculations. Hence, Descartes was willing to set aside as doubtful or to

treat provisionally as false not only all propositions concerning the existence and nature of material things but also the principles and demonstrations of those mathematical sciences which had appeared to him to be models of clarity and certainty. In this sense, his doubt was universal, not, as we shall see, that he found it possible in fact to doubt every truth without exception, but in the sense that no proposition, however evident its truth might appear to be, was to be excepted from the test.²¹ God who is all powerful may have so created us that we are always deceived even in those things which, we think, we know best. For "how do we know that He has not caused that there should be no earth, no heavens, no extended body, no figure, no size and no place and that nevertheless we should have perceptions of all these things?" .²²

Descartes' doubt is directed, not against the possibility of knowledge, but simply against the certainty of the knowledge already attained. In other words, he denies, not that knowledge can be attained but that it has already been attained.

Cogito ergo sum is the formula enunciating an

21. F.Copleston, Op.Cit., P.87

22. R.H. Hutchins (ed.), op.cit., P.77

apprehension, an intuition, an act of the understanding, in which are connected, as of necessity, consciousness or knowledge of self and existence of self. No doubt Descartes at times appears to lay stress on the interpretation of this formula merely as the identification of consciousness with existence.²³

Having thus doubted everything Descartes then tries to see if there is anything that cannot be doubted at all, and as a result of this inquiry, he comes to the conclusion that there is only one thing which cannot be questioned, that is, the very fact of doubting itself. Therefore, he says, I can doubt everything except that I doubt. However much I doubt I must exist, otherwise I could not doubt. Descartes thought that it was possible to doubt whether he had a body or not in the way he doubted the existence of all physical objects. It did not occur to him that he could not talk about himself without referring to his embodied existence. However, in moments of concentrated thought, when one is totally engaged in some thinking, we remain oblivious of our physical existence.

But Descartes doubted his physical existence on the ground that he could doubt the existence of physical objects. Since our bodies form as much a part of the

23. Robert Adamson, The Development of Modern Philosophy, P.11

physical worlds as all other material objects, it is governed by the same mechanical laws, and subject to the same scepticism. The methodic doubt could not proceed ad infinitum, it came to a stop with himself, the sceptic who continued to doubt everything that could possibly be doubted. The reality of doubt is the reality of thinking.²⁴

Now, if there is doubt, there must be a doubter. In other words, where there is thought, there must be a thinker. Therefore, the existence of the doubting thinker is proved by the existence of doubt itself and hence it is beyond doubt. This is put in the form-Cogito ergo sum-I think, therefore, I exist. "Doubtless than, I exist, since I am deceived, and let him deceive me as he may, he can never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I shall be conscious that I am something".²⁵

'I exist' does not require any external verification. It verifies itself. It is from the performance of an act of thinking, Cogito that the conclusion regarding his existence becomes self-evident. Cogito refers to the performance (to the act of thinking) through which the sentence I exist may be said to verify

24. F.Copleston, Op.Cit., P.90

25. Meditations II, in R.M. Eaton (ed.), Descartes selections, P.97

itself.²⁶ In discourse part IV he further said, " I notice that while I thus wished to think everything false, it was necessarily true that I who thought so was some-thing. Since this truth, I think, therefore I am, was so firm and assured that all the most extravagant suppositions of the sceptics were unable to shake it. I judged that I could safely accept it as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking".²⁷ Everything may be a mistake, yet the being mistaken, the thinking, is not a mistake. Everything is denied, yet the denier must remain.

Descartes next question was, what than am I ? A thing which thinks. What is a thing which thinks ? It is a thing which doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels. Everytime he is conscious, he is one particular mental state or another. And the states of consciousness are those that belong truly to his nature. This Cogito ergo sum is the first final certainty and as such we have to be careful in its interpretation as well as in deciding its position in the cartesian philosophy.

First descartes tried to establish a simple fact of primitive knowledge or a self-evident axiom. Had it

26. J.Hintikka, "Cogito ergo sum Inference or Performance?" in W.Doney (ed.), Descartes, A collection of critical Essays, P.131

27. Laurence J.Lafleur (tr.), op.cit., P.24

been an inference, then it would be merely dependent on premises for its certainty and then again these premises on other premises for their certainty. Of course, the use of the term 'therefore' was unfortunate for it led to the interpretation of the Cogito as an inference.

Descartes, by saying Cogito, ergo sum does not logically (syllogistically) deduce sum from cogito but rather perceives intuitively (by a simple act of mental vision) the self-evidence of sum.²⁸ Similarly, he occasionally says that one's own existence is intuitively obvious without bringing in cogito as a premise. Sometimes he intimates that his 'first principle' is really the existence of his mind and not the principle cogito, ergo sum by means of which this existence is apparently deduced.

As Hintikka says, " The function of the word cogito in Descartes' dictum is to refer to the thought- act through which the existential self-verifiability of 'I exist' manifests itself. Hence the indubitability of this sentence is not strictly speaking perceived by means of thinking (in the way the indubitability of a demonstrable truth may be said to be), rather, it is indubitable because and in so far as it is actively thought of. In Descartes' argument the relation of cogito to sum is not that of a premise to a conclusion. Their relation is rather

28. E.S. Haldane & G.R.T. Ross (tr.) , op.cit., vol.II,
P.38

comparable with that of a process to its product. The indubitability of my own existence results from my thinking of it almost as the sound of music results from playing it or (to use Descartes' own metaphor) light in the sense of illumination (lux) results from the presence of source of light (lumen)".²⁹ Hintikka points out the peculiarity of the relation which the particle, ergo serves to express in Descartes' sentence. He observes, "Martial Gueroult has located the source of trouble by calling our attention to the peculiarities of this relation. He has realized that Descartes' dictum does not (merely) express a logical relation between thinking and existing but that it is concerned with an additional 'fact' or 'act' which is just what is needed to show the certainty of my existence. However, his explanations leave the status of this fact or act (which cannot be an ordinary fact given to us by our senses or by introspection) rather vague. Nor does Gueroult realize that the logical aspect of Descartes' insight is in principle completely dispensable".³⁰

Hintikka thinks that viewed as an inference, the cogito is not a very good argument and hence

29. Jakko Hintikka, 'Cogito, Ergo Sum: Inference or Performance?' in Wills Doney (ed.), Descartes, a collection of critical essays, P.122
 30. Ibid., fn.

he prefers to emphasize what he calls its performatory aspect. Descartes should be seen as recognizing the absurdity or impossibility of performing a certain kind of action, namely, denying his own existence. The sentence " I don't exist", though formally consistent is "existentially inconsistent". Anyone who understands the language in which it is uttered and the rules for the use of the first person pronoun in that language must also understand that whoever utters such a sentence utters falsely. So it is impossible to believe the sentence. And its contradictory " I exist" is therefore self-verifying. Hintikka aptly observes, "The reason why Descartes could not doubt his own existence is in principle exactly the same as the reason why he could not hope to mislead anybody by saying 'I do not exist'. The one does not presuppose introspection any more than the other. What the philosophers who have spoken of introspection here are likely to have had in mind is often performativeness rather than introspectiveness".³¹

However, in Descartes' argument 'therefore' primarily means a step in inference but secondarily it means a relation of necessary connection. Descartes uses the term 'therefore' in the secondary sense. Again 'I think therefore I am' should not be emphasized to hold that thinking alone guarantees self-existence. The important

31. Ibid., P.125

thing is to show that it is my consciousness which carries with it the existence of myself. No other function apart from conscious function can guarantee the existence of the self. Therefore, it would be wrong to say because 'I walk therefore I am', for walking without being conscious cannot imply self-existence.³² We can say that which thinks is a substance. It is certain that thinking cannot exist without a thing which thinks or generally that any accident or activity cannot be without a substance of which it is the activity. Cogito supplies its own evidence of clearness and distinctness which serves as the criterion of all other truths not deduced, but is intuitively induced from a single instance.

Antony flew emphasized Descartes' intuitive apprehension in comprehending the first proposition of his philosophy. He observed, certainly it is intended primarily as expression of his immediate and indubitable awareness of his present consciousness. Thus, it is equivalent to the expression of subjective experience.³³ Descartes' cogito ergo sum has for its characteristic difference the fact that he, unlike St. Augustine, makes it the ground of a philosophical system and deduces from it important consequences regarding the universe as a whole for erecting

32. Y. Masih, A Critical History of Modern Philosophy, Part-I, P.37

33. Antony Flew, Introduction to Western Philosophy, P.281

a constructive system of philosophy.³⁴

The similarity between Descartes' cogito ergo sum and St. Augustine's argument was pointed out for the first time by Arnauld and Messenne. The way in which St. Augustine proceeds may be put in the words of Prof. Weber as follows : You are in doubt about your existence, are you?

But to doubt means to think, does not ? And in to think is to exist, is it not ?³⁵ From this the resemblance between the two philosophers is obvious. As John Veitch puts it, the speciality of Descartes is that he reached this principle of self-consciousness as the last limit of doubt, and made it then the starting point of his system. There is all the difference in his case between the man who by chance stumbles on a fact and leaves it isolated as he found it, and the man who reaches it by a method and with a full consciousness of its importance, develops it through the ramifications of a philosophical system.³⁶

In Meditation II and Discourse part II, Descartes referred to the self-evident character of 'I think' without explaining its nature in relation to its thinking, understanding, imagining or willing states. It is not explained whether his self or I undergoes any change or

34. F.Copleston, Op.Cit., P.53

35. A.Weber, History of Philosophy, P.192

36. John Veitch(tr.), Discourse on Method and Meditations, P.24

modification in thinking, imagining or willing objects or it continues to remain what it is, despite the different mental states which it undergoes or suffers, when shifting from one mental state to another. The point does not concern him except that thinking alone characterizes his true nature. Descartes said, " Thinking is another attribute of the soul and here I discover what properly belongs to myself. this alone is inseparable from me. I am, I exist : this is certain but how often ? As often as I think, for perhaps it would even happen, if I should wholly cease to think that I should at the same time cease to be".³⁷

God occupies an important place in Descartes' philosophy. Like any other moderners, Descartes could not change the entire legacies, particularly the mental legacy. As a result of this, God remained to be a central problem for him. However, his concept of God was quite different from that of the ancient and medieval thinkers. He did not accept the idea of God as many did in the past. With the down of modern philosophy, we have seen a shift or emphasis from faith to reason. Descartes was the first rationalist philosopher who sought to free philosophy from the shackles of religious dogmatism. He attempted to construct a system of philosophy purely on the foundation of reason. Pure

37. S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.) , op.cit., vol.I, P.151

reason can yield indubitable conclusion without the aid of sense-experience and such operation can be found in mathematics. Therefore, Descartes sought to model his philosophy on the pattern of mathematics. The indubitable truths which mathematics contains are of two kinds : the self-evident truths and the demonstrable truths. Descartes believed that the existence of God could not be regarded as a self-evident truth, but only as demonstrable truth. Thus, to establish the existence of God as a demonstrable certainty, Descartes had to start with certain self-evident truths. It was not difficult for Descartes to discover such self-evident truths to start with. By applying the method of doubt, he discovered the self-evident truth and it was his 'cogito ergo sum'.

By the method of doubt Descartes reaches the conclusion that one cannot doubt the existence of doubt. Doubt is the function of thinking and for it to occur there must be a thinker. Thus, I doubt therefore, I am but because I doubt I am a unique existence. Descartes is of the opinion that because man finds many faults with himself and finds himself limited he possesses the idea of infinite in him. Having established the existence of soul, Descartes concerns himself with proving the reality of God.

In the absence of knowledge of God there is

no possibility of actual knowledge of any object because it is only by accepting the existence of God that it can be proved that what we believe to be true is not an illusion. *In trying to prove the existence of God, Descartes examines the process where by the notion of God came to man. There is no knowing the source or the proofs of the concepts that exist in the mind but that they do exist in the mind is certain because we are conscious of them.*

Falckenberg holds that Descartes brings in the idea of God in order to escape solipsism. So long as the self-consciousness of the ego remained the only certainty, there was no conclusive basis for the assumption that everything exists beyond self, that the idea which apparently came from without are really occasioned by external things and do not spring from the mind itself. It is only through the idea of God, and by help of the principle that the cause must contain as much reality as the effect.³⁸ With this criterion of truth Descartes advances to the consideration of ideas. Descartes divides the ideas of our mind into three categories.

1. **Adventitious** : These ideas are accidental and do not depend on our will or volition. They are created by outside forces.³⁹

38. R. Falckenberg, *History of modern philosophy*, P. 93

39. E.Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.) , *op.cit.*, Vol.I, P.161

2. **Factitious** : These ideas are imaginary and are not accidental. They depend on our will. The elements of these ideas are taken from perception and memory.

3. **Innate** : The innate ideas are neither accidental nor dependent. we perceive these types of ideas in our mind only. We inherit them with our nature. The highest and distinct idea among innate ideas is an idea of a supreme and infinite reality. Thus, innate ideas had an intrinsic validity of their own and their truths was as indubitable as the existence of the self itself.

Descartes conceived God as infinite, independent, omnipotent, omniscient and creative substance. In his philosophy, God became the criterion of all truth, all knowledge and all human understanding. He tried to make God the ultimate ground of all knowledge.

CHAPTER - II

GEOMETRY, THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Geometry is a branch of mathematics which deals with the properties of space and of objects in space. In other words it is a science of properties and relations of magnitudes in space. The discipline arose in response to such practical problems as those found in surveying and derives its name from the Greek words meaning earth measurement. Later, it was realised that geometry need not be limited to the classical study of flat surfaces (plane geometry) and rigid three-dimensional objects (solid geometry) but that even the most abstract thoughts and imaginations of people might be represented and developed in geometric terms. Thus, the study of geometry can be most fascinating, whether it leads immediately to practical applications or not. Geometry is encountered in the first written records of mankind. Fundamental formulae of measurement were known in ancient Egypt and Babylonia, and knowledge of the pythagorean theorem is shown in clay tablets dating from the end of the third millennium B.C. There is, however, no evidence for the conjecture, mentioned as fact in many books, that the Egyptians knew the theorem. In Babylonia, the language of algebra was often borrowed from geometry.

The most prominent mathematician of antiquity, Euclid is best known for elements of geometry. Almost from the time of its writing and lasting almost to the present, this treatise on geometry has exerted a continuous and major influence on human affairs even through almost nothing is known of its author's life. It is sometimes said that next to the Bible, the elements may be the most translated, published and studied of all the books produced in the western world. Euclid compiled his Elements from a number of works of earlier men. Among these are Hippocrates of Chios (5th century B.C) not to be confused with the physician Hippocrates (flourished in 400 B.C). The last compiler before Euclid was Theudius, whose text book was used in the Academy and was probably used by Aristotle.¹ Euclidean Geometry deals with the metrical properties of space. The propositions of geometry were put in order by listing first those that counted as premises in the demonstrations of propositions that were put later. This systematization of geometry was begun by Pythagoras and continued by his successors. It culminated in the Elements of Euclid (300 B.C) in which all geometrical propositions were arranged in order, beginning with Axioms, definitions and postulates and continuing with theorems deduced from the initial propositions.

1. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.8, P.810

Euclid begins his geometry with definitions of some of the terms used in its development. For example, a definition—a point is that which has no parts, defines the term point only. The word used in this definition, such as 'parts' is not defined but is among the undefined terms of the system for Euclid. For example, a straight line is that which lies evenly between its extreme points. It makes use not only of undefined terms as 'evenly' and 'between' but also the previously defined terms 'point' and line. As more new terms are introduced, their definitions make use of previously defined terms as well as the original undefined one. Similarly the definition, a line is length without breadth, defines the term line only. But the words used in this definition, such as length and breadth are not defined but are undefined terms for Euclid.

Euclid divided this unproved propositions in two groups, one called 'axioms' and other 'postulates'. He gave no reason for making this division and there seems to be no very clear basis for distinguishing between them. He felt that some were more general than others or psychologically more obvious. The old conception of Euclidean geometry held that all of its theorems followed logically from its axioms and were just as true as the axioms. Euclidean geometry also held that the axioms were self-evident. It is in this tradition that any statement

was regarded as 'axiomatic' when its truth is beyond all doubt, since it was self-evident and did not require any proof.²

Euclid based his work upon 5 postulates and 5 common notions that were considered to be applicable to all Sciences. His common notions were :

1. Things that are equal to the same things are equal to each other
2. If equals are added to equals, the sums are equal.
3. If equals are subtracted from equals, the remainders are equal.
4. Things that coincide are equal.
5. The whole is greater than the part.

Notice that the first 3 common notions are properties of the relation 'equal'. The 4th common notion has raised philosophical questions as to whether two distinct things may coincide and has caused logical difficulties from the use of the converse.

'Things that are equal may be made to coincide'

2. Irving M.Copi, Symbolic Logic, PP.180-181

The 5th common notion has caused difficulties, since it holds only for finite sets. For example, there are as many positive even integers as there are positive integers. Euclid's first 3 postulates were :

1. Any two points may be joined by a line segment.
2. Any line segment may be extended to form a line.
3. A circle may be drawn with any given centre and distance.³

Euclid probably thought of his geometry as describing the physical universe. Modern Euclidean geometry is based upon modifications of Euclid's postulates and appears to provide a good model for the physical universe. However, we actually do not know whether Euclidean geometry is true in the physical universe or not. We suspect that Euclidean geometry does not hold when very large distances are considered ,as in astronomy. Eucliden geometry is the geometry of isometries,that is ,the geometry in which distances are uncharged (invarint).Many people think of isometries in which figures may be moved without changing their size and shape.Tringles are often introduced as rigid figures,that is,figures whose size and shape cannot be changed without changing the length of at least one of the

3. Bruce E. Meseive & Max A. Sobel, Introduction to Mathematics, P.323

sides.⁴ There can be no doubt at all that Descartes himself attached that greatest importance to those rules of method. It is also clear that, in his view, the whole of his scientific and philosophical doctrine was based on his use of the methodological principles. His method cannot be appreciated from a consideration of its general and abstract formulations. Thus, Descartes himself insisted that we should study, say, his *Geometrie*, which is an exercise in this method, not primarily for the sake of acquiring mathematical knowledge, but in order to understand and appreciate what he regarded as the method of all science, and of which this work was an illustration. The *Geometrie* reproduces clearly the fundamental characteristic of the analytical method and illustrates the reduction of a problem to its most general and most simple form.

whether or not it was a new idea to apply algebra to the solution of geometrical problems, it does affect the value of the illustration. Descartes expressed desire to reform geometry by the use of algebraic methods. It was certainly governed by a wider consideration, namely, his desire to extend his method to a more general science. The *Geometrie* is a good illustration of what Descartes means by the simplified by relating it, by putting it into proportion with the lengths of two straight lines, than

4. Ibid., pp. 325-26

which, says Descartes, we can find, in the field of contiguous magnitudes, on other objects more capable of being distinctly represented, since straightness is a simple nature or absolute. Descartes saw that curved lines can be expressed algebraically in terms of an equation involving the perpendicular distance of a point to two perpendicular lines of reference.⁵

The co-ordinate systems is called Cartesian co-ordinate systems in recognition of the work of the Rene Descartes in the seventeenth century. He applied algebraic notion to the study of curves and visualized all algebraic expressions as representing numbers instead of geometric objects. Previously, linear terms such as X or $2y$ had been considered as line segments, quadratic terms such as X^2 or X^2Y had been considered as areas, and cubic terms such as X^3 or X^2Y had been considered as volumes. The old interpretations were restricted in that only like quantities could be added. For example, it was permissible to add X^2 and X (that is, an area and a line segment). Descartes interpretation of all algebraic expression as number and therefore as line segments made it possible to consider sums such as $X^2 + X$. This new point of view provided a basis for representation of curves by equations. The application of new ideas to geometry

5. L.J.Beck, The method of Descartes; A study of the Regulae, P.185

typifies the 17th century.⁶ Descartes considered that Euclidean geometry, for example, has a serious draw back, namely, that the axioms and first principles are not 'justified'. That is to say, the goemeter does not show how his first principles are reached. The method of analysis are resolution, however, 'justifies' the first principles of a science by making it clear in a systematic manner how they are reached and why they are asserted.

Theology is a study and refinement of the use of certain words, as the etymology of the term itself suggests : 'theos - logos'- words or speech about God. Everyone who speaks English learns the word 'God' along with all the other words which go to make-up his vocabulary. The Oxford English Dictionary gives the primary meaning of God as follows-'A super human person...She is worshipped as having power over nature and the fortunes of mankind', since for most english usage this general meaning has become qualified by specially christian and monotheistic notions, one must add that 'God' is generally conceived as 'the one object of supreme adoration, the creator and ruler of the universe'.⁷ Therefore, theology (meaning literally the study of God) is a discipline of religious thought that is restricted in its narrower sense,

6. Bruce E.Meseive and Max A Sobel, op. cit., P.321

7. Gordon D. Kaufrian, Systematic theology : A historicist perspective, PP. 5-6.

because of origination and format, to christianity, but in its broader sense, because of its themes, to other religions. The themes of theology are God, man the world, salvation and eschatology.⁸ Theology was used by the Greeks to designate the history of their Gods, applied by early christian writers to the nature of God and in the 12th century used for scientific instruction concerning God and the divine life.⁹ When no 'doctrine of God' exists in the strict sense of the term, as in the case of what are sometimes called 'atheistic' religions (e.g. certain areas of Hinduism and Buddhism) man and the world are understood in the context of finality and therefore have religious aspect. The inclusion of the world in theological discussion implies that behavior in the world, that is, ethics is included in theology in some areas (e.g. confucianism). It gains a dominating position. Ethical concepts in the broad meaning of theology are developed in contradictory forms; they can lead to ascetic world denial but also to a definite world formation.¹⁰ Theology in christianity, the systematic study of the nature of God and His relationship with man and with the world.

Theology Descartes honoured, but he realized

8. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.18, 15th edition, P.274

9. Worlds' Popular Encyclopaedia, Vol.10,P.5

10. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.18, 15th edition, P.275

that it can be practised by those who have little formal education. In theology, he felt, the learned and the ignorant are on the same plane. To be successful in theology, it is necessary to have supernatural inspiration, almost superhuman powers, he maintained, and he doubted if he had this inspiration.¹¹ The relationship of theology to philosophy is much more difficult to determine, because it is much more complicated. The problem can here only be mentioned. If one does not adhere to the narrow concept of philosophy that reduces it positivistically to logic or epistemology but rather understands philosophy as the discipline that attempts to explicate the totality of being, the difference between this latter interpretation of philosophy in relation to theology becomes apparent. If theology is responsible to an authority that initiates its thinking, speaking and witnessing-e.g., a document containing revealed truth, as well as the spiritual testimony related to it, philosophy bases its arguments on the ground of timeless evidence, an evidence with which autonomous reason understands itself to be confronted. Since on the other hand theology also uses reason and systematically develops its events, however much its critical reflections are based on religious convictions- there are many common areas that have partly complementary

11. Fedrick Mayer, A History of Modern Philosophy, P.108

significance and also lead to polemical tensions.¹²

Many have considered philosophy as primarily an activity or a process, secondarily as a subject-matter for teaching and learning. As Levison says, "Philosophy is first of all an activity of a certain kind and only secondarily a subject matter consisting of a definite body of literature".¹³

Philosophy is derived from two Greek words, one 'Philo' meaning love and the other 'sophia' meaning knowledge. So, philosophy laterally implies Love of wisdom, or knowledge. The ancient Greeks believed that a person becomes wise by knowledge or understanding. There is an observation by Plato in his Republic which reflects the belief that philosophy is that love of knowledge which makes a man wise and to live wisely was the ideal of human life in those times. He who has a taste for every sort of knowledge and who is curious to learn and is never satisfied may be justly termed a philosopher.¹⁴ A philosopher is most of the time and at most of the places preoccupied to the conclusions he reaches in course of his

12. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.18, 15th edition, P.274

13. A.B.Levison, 'The Uses of Philosophy and the Problems of Educators' in Selected Readings in the Philosophy of Education, P.26

14. Plato, The Dialogues of Plato, tr. by Benjamin Jowett in Great Books of the Western World, Vol.7, P.370

search. His search is endless because the truth is infinite. He wants to keep himself always engaged in the pursuit of truth rather than its possession.

The discovery of what is true and the practice of that which is good are the two most important objects of philosophy. Philosophy according to Plato, makes use of a method, peculiar to it, which he calls 'dialectic'. The exact nature of the platonic dialectic is obscure, but this much is clear, philosophy proceeds by criticizing received opinions.¹⁵

The term philosophy originally meant love of wisdom and took its origin from a famous retort which Pythagoras made when he was called wise. He said that his wisdom only consisted in knowing that he was ignorant and that he should therefore not be called wise but a lover of wisdom. Wisdom here is not restricted to any particular part of thought, and philosophy used to be understood as including, what we now call the sciences.¹⁶ Philosophy is the logical study of the foundations of sciences. All the special sciences are based on certain basis concepts which are more or less assumed to be true without any thorough examination. These concepts are those of space, time, substance, etc. It is the business of philosophy to

15. The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.5&6, P.216

16. A.C. Ewing, The Fundamental Questions of Philosophy, P.9

critically examine the validity of these concepts by the method of logical analysis.

Therefore, philosophy is a mental activity, thinking about the problems of mankind. It is a mental activity, thinking about life, its nature and purposes, the mind and its occupations, birth, death and other phenomena of world, feelings, ideas, values of social life, etc. This activity must not be limited to a study and discussion among a few persons but be able to stimulate the interest of humanity at large. As Russell puts it, "philosophy proper deals with matters of interest to the general educated public and loses much of its value if only a few professionals can understand it". Henderson says, "philosophy is a religious, disciplined, guarded analysis of some of the most difficult problems which man has ever faced".¹⁷ Philosophy gives a synoptic view of universe. It gives a picture, a synthetic understanding, a synoptic vision and a integrated view.¹⁸

It can be conceived of as an activity of criticism, clarification and interpretation of life. D.J.O corner has defined, Philosophy as an activity of criticism

17. S.V.P. Henderson, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education, P.4

18. Ibid., P.5

or clarification.¹⁹ It directs life and gets refined on the basis of experiences of life. When man is caught in ambiguous situations, he thinks about morality, duty, justice, right, goodness, etc. and reaches his own conclusions. Philosophy is created out of life's experiences and life is thought the light of such philosophy. According to Arnold, Philosophy is, in the end, about life, and not about reported statements concerning life and that one must live richly in order to think and talk sense.²⁰

A non-philosophical person may raise a question as to why philosophers so much disagree regarding the conclusions of philosophical problems? Will the philosophical thinking always be inconclusive? Can all the philosophical conclusions not arrive at any final truths? Now, while we find differences in the views of different philosophers we also notice that the same philosopher presents widely different views at different times. But this is not the case with the philosophers alone. As William E. Hocking has said, "Everybody has a philosophy and the differences between man and man are chiefly philosophical differences. I will say more than that; the difference between a man and himself is a philosophical

19. Ibid., P.1

20. L.A. Reid, Philosophy and the Theory and Practice of Education, P. 23

difference by which I mean that people frequently fall into a philosophy which does not belong to them, and leads them away from themselves because they borrow a philosophy from somebody else".²¹ The truth of this statement can be ascertained by any one who looks to his own experience and thinking.

In fact the diversity of philosophical conclusions is not a weakness of philosophy. Different philosophers have thought over philosophical problems from different perspective and however wide, intergral and comprehensive a perspective. might be, it always remains one-sided. The philosophical conclusions, therefore, are workable and limited. As a philosopher develops in his thinking, his philosophical conclusions are also modified and even changed. This does not mean that he is changing his position but only that he is visualizing new truths, which show the one-sidedness and limitations of the truths known earlier. In fact the philosophical curiosity is never completely satisfied because if this is done then philosophical thinking will stop. The aim of the philosopher is not so much to arrive at certain final conclusions regarding the philosophical problems at to sustain philosophical thinking. His effort should not be evaluated on the basis of definite conclusion but by his philosophical

21. W.E.Hocking, 'Philosophy: The buisness of everyone', Journal of American Association of University Women, June, 1937, P.212

insight, maturity and constant thinking. To Glaucon who asked, who are the true philosophers? Socrates replied, those who are lovers of the vision of truth. ²²

The main function of the philosopher is to raise philosophical questions and constantly meditate on them through appropriate methods. Hence it cannot be said that philosophy raises certain questions and leaves them unanswered. Philosophy, according to Bergson, must take into account not only sensory but also mental and intuitive experiences. It must be based on real experience.²³ He shows a true insight into the problem when he points out that the difference between various schools of philosophy is because of various kind of intellectual interpretation and elaboration. He suggests that by mutual comparison and elimination of peculiarities, philosophers may grasp the universal character of basic reality.²⁴ Philosophy can only be an effort to dissolve again into the whole, the ocean of life in which we are immersed, whence we draw the very force to labour and to live and from which both matter and intellect originate.

Again , philosophy according to Bergson ,

22. B.Jowett (tr.), Plato's The Republic, Book-vi-485, P.215

23. H.Bergson, Creative evolution, P.202

24. Ibid., P.252

does not only facilitate speculation, it gives us also more power to act and live. For with it we feel ourselves no longer isolated in humanity, humanity no longer seems isolated in the nature that it dominates.²⁵ Finally, Bergson is an anti-intellectualist only when by intellect he means the faculty in its usual capacity in practical life, intellect working on data supplied by sense perception. Otherwise, the intellect may co-operate with intuition by assembling the data of intuition and forming fluid concepts.²⁶

What did Descartes understand by philosophy ? Philosophy means the study of wisdom, and by wisdom we understand not only prudence in affairs but also a perfect knowledge of all things which man can know both for the conduct of his life and for the conservation of this health and the invention of all the arts. Under the general heading of philosophy, therefore, Descartes included not only metaphysics but also physics or natural philosophy, the latter standing to the former as trunk to roots. And the branches issuing from this trunk are the other sciences, which may be reduced to three principal sciences—medicine, mechanics and morals.²⁷ By morals he means the

25. Ibid., P.285

26. Ibid., P.251

27. E.S. Haldene and G.R.T.Ross (tr.), The Philosophical works of Descartes, Vol.1, P.211

highest and most perfect moral science which, presupposing a complete knowledge of the other sciences, is the last degree of wisdom. It is not surprising that from time to time Descartes insisted on the practical value of philosophy. The civilization of any nation, he says, is proportionate to the superiority of its philosophy, and a state can have no greater good than the possession of true philosophy. Again, he speaks of opening to each one the road by which he can find in himself, and without borrowing from any other, the whole knowledge which is essential to him for the direction of his life. This practical value of philosophy is seen most clearly in the part which comes last in the order of development, especially in ethics. For just as it is not from the roots or the trunks of trees that one gathers the fruit but only from the extremities of their branches, so the main use of philosophy is dependent on those of its parts which we cannot learn until the end.²⁸

One of the features which distinguishes Descartes' thought from that of his scholastic predecessors is the emphasis he places on self and God. As he wrote in one of his letters to Mersenne, "I think that all those to whom God has given the use ofreason are obliged to use it mainly to try to know him and to know themselves. It is

28. Fredrick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol.IV, P.67

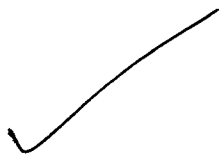
in this way that I have tried to begin my studies, and I will tell you that I would never have been able to find the foundations of physics if I had not searched for them in this way".²⁹

29. A. Kenny (ed.) Descartes, Philosophical Letters, P.10

CHAPTER - III

THE CASUAL ARGUMENT

The question of God's existence is a fundamental problem for the believers in God. Philo—sophers have tried to prove His existence by various arguments. In general, there are four traditional arguments about the existence of God, viz, the cosmological, teleological, ontological and the moral argument. But according to Descartes, there are three arguments to prove the existence of God, all of which purport to answer affirmatively the question 'Does God exist ?' They are

- a. The casual argument
 - b. The cosmological argument
 - c. The ontological argument
- 

These arguments are stated and restated by different philosophers at different times. But none of these arguments are found to be satisfactory to all the philosophers. Naturally there were criticisms of these arguments also. These arguments are developed and modified during the long course of the history of christian theology. In the following chapters we propose to examine these arguments in detail.

The casual argument for God is concerned with the First Cause : there must be something which originates motion, and this something must itself be unmoved, and must be eternal, substance, and actuality. The object of desire and the object of thought, Aristotle says, cause movement in this way, without themselves being in motion. So God produces motion by being loved, whereas every other cause of motion works by being itself in motion (like a billiard ball). God is pure thought, for thought is what is best. "Life also belongs to God, for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality ; and God's self-dependent actuality is life most good and eternal. We say therefore that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continues and eternal belong to God ; for this is God".¹ According to Plato, only living beings, beings with souls can originate movement. He argues that all motion in the world is ultimately due to the activity of soul. Scientific studies (particularly astronomy) detect orderly movement in the cosmos, and it is inferred that the cosmos-controlling soul must be perfectly wise and good.

To Aristotle, everything that happens has a cause, and this cause in turn has a cause, and so on in a

1. Bertrnd Russell, A History of Western Philosophy,
P.180

series that must be infinite. Thought cannot remain content with an infinite regression. So thought has to postulate an ultimate cause at the beginning of the series. That infinite cause known as first cause, which has no other cause than himself, is known as God. According to Aristotle the first cause of creation is "First-Mover" or the "Prime Mover" . It states that everything has a cause and if this is accepted, then the universe itself must have a cause which is called God. Therefore, God exist.

Descartes made an attempt to construct a system of philosophy, purely on the foundations of reason. Sense-experience is often found deceptive and no indubitable conclusion can be based upon it. Pure reason, on the other hand, can function independent of sense-experience and can yield indubitable conclusions. Such operation of reason can be found in mathematics, which is hence regarded as an 'exact' science. Descartes therefore sought to model his philosophy on the pattern of mathematics. Descartes believed that the existence of God could not be regarded as a self-evident truth, but only as a demonstrable truth. A demonstrable truth must be based upon proof and the proof must be of a mathematical nature; it must be shown to be a conclusion ,logically deducible from a self-evident truth or axiomatic proposition. Thus, to establish the existence of God as a

demonstrable certainty, Descartes had to start with certain self-evident truths, regarded as 'clear' and 'distinct' in themselves and not requiring any other proof for their own veracity. It was not difficult for Descartes to discover such self-evident truths to start with.

The first self-evident truth which he could easily discover was the existence of the 'self' itself. For, the existence of the self as the 'doubter' could not be doubted while the existence of anything else like God or the world could be doubted. The existence of the self is, in this sense, an indubitable certainty, since any attempt to doubt its existence would involve us in obvious self-contradiction. This self-evident truth was expressed by Descartes in his well-known statement, 'Cogito Ergo Sum'.

But the self is not 'empty', it contains ideas within itself. Of these, some ideas are 'adventitious' coming from the external material objects; their validity is as dubitable as the existence of the material objects from which they seem to be coming; some other ideas are 'innate' to the self, not coming from the external world; these ideas have an intrinsic validity of their own and their truth is as indubitable as the existence of the self itself. Descartes mentions two such 'innate' ideas which are relevant to his proof for the

existence of God.

One such 'innate idea' is the idea of a perfect Being. Descartes argues that this idea logically implies the actual existence of God or a perfect Being, since without the implication of actual existence, the idea of perfection would be 'inconceivable'.² This is known as the ontological proof for the existence of God which was later criticised by Kant.

Another 'innate idea' equally 'clear' and 'distinct' is the idea of causality. Descartes rejects the view that the idea of causality is generated out of our experience in the world. He maintains, on the other hand, that the idea of causality is already and always present in the self since its birth, and it is only 'applied' by the self to the occurrence of events in the world for purposes of understanding them.³ Descartes says, "One certainly ought not to find it strange that God in creating me and placed this idea within me to be like the mark of the workman imprinted on his work".⁴ The idea of causality should however be applied not only to the external events in the world, but also to the ideas within the self. Most of these

2. Meditation V, in E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.), op.cit., P.182

3. Meditation III, in R.M. Eaton (ed.), Descartes selections, PP. 107-8

4. E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.), Philosophical works of Descartes, Vol. 1, P.170

ideas, being adventitious in character, can be supposed to have been produced by the external objects whose existence is yet to be proved. But the idea of a perfect Being is not an adventitious idea; it is an 'innate idea'; it must have been implanted in the self right from its birth; it must have a cause in this sense. For, nothing can come into existence either in the self or outside, without a cause. That everything must have a cause, is thus another innate idea discovered in the self along with the innate idea of God, and it is as 'clear' and 'distinct' as the idea of God. If so, what could be the cause of the idea of God? Here we are dealing with an idea which is 'unique': the idea of God is the idea of a 'perfect Being' which has the highest possible meaning and reality in it. Therefore it cannot be supposed to have been produced by anything finite or less potential.

For, according to Descartes the idea of causality not only means that everything must have a cause, but also that the cause must have at least as much potentiality or reality in itself as the effect.⁵ "Whatever exists must have an efficient and total cause which possesses at least as much formal reality as the effect

5. Meditation III of Descartes, in L.J.Lafleur (tr.), Discourse on Method and Meditations, P.105

does".⁶ For, it rules out the possibility of regarding the finite entities of the world as the cause of the idea of God. The only possibility logically left over is the affirmation of God as the cause of the idea of God in the self. For, none but the infinite can cause the idea of the infinite and this is known as the causal argument for the existence of God.

Descartes argues in the following manner: Every idea must have a first and principal cause which possesses at least as much formal reality, that is, being or perfection, as the idea represents its object as having. I have an idea of God as an actually infinite eternal, immutable independent omniscient and omnipotent substance by whom I (and anything else which may exist) have been created. I myself do not actually have all the perfections which my idea of God represents God as actually having. I am not the first and principal cause of my idea of God. The first and principal cause of my idea of God is, therefore, some being other than myself who possesses at least as much formal reality as my idea of God represents God as having. Hence God exist.⁷

6. E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.), *Philosophical works of Descartes*, Vol. 1, P.162

7. *Ibid.*, PP. 163-166

Descartes tries to prove the existence of God, from the existence of a concept of Him, since only God's existence can cause the concept. Descartes concerns himself with proving the reality of God. For, only self-consciousness cannot give actual knowledge of an object. The existence of the external world does not depend on our mind or soul. At first Descartes observed all things from the point of doubt except mind or soul. So he was far from the truth that the objects of our perception really exist in external world. Later on, with the help of God he proved the existence of external world. So long as the self-consciousness of the ego remained the only certainty, there was no conclusive basis for the assumption that anything exists beyond self, that the ideas which apparently come from without are really occasioned by external things and do not spring from the mind itself. It is only through the idea of God, and by help of the principle that the cause must contain at least as much reality as the effect. As Descartes said, " I have not drawn my argument from the fact that I saw, in sensible things, an order or a certain succession of efficient causespartly because I thought the existence of God was much more evident than that of any sensible thing I preferred to use as the foundation of my argument my own existence which is so well-known to me that nothing can be better known".⁸

8. Ibid., Vol.II,PP.12-13

The ontological argument is an apriori argument. But the causal argument is an aposteriori argument, because it depends on some empirical principles. The first principle is causal every effect must have a cause as ex nihilo nihil fit. Descartes holds that the causal principle is as distinct and certain as the entity of self. so it is free from all doubt. Secondly, cause must be more than or equally objective as the effect. Thirdly, Descartes believes that we are conscious about our finiteness and imperfection.

By this causal argument Descartes wants to prove the existence of God as the creator of human soul.

"I exist" is an uncontradicted truth, but every effect must have a cause, I cannot by myself be the cause of my existence; for I have an idea about perfect being. If I am the creator of myself then I shall create myself as a perfect being and shall be able to preserve myself. But I am conscious about my imperfection and finiteness and unable to preserve myself. So, I cannot be the cause of my existence ; my ^aparents also are unfit to be the cause of my creation as they cannot protect me from the jaws of death. So, there must exist God as the cause of my soul. God creates us and implants His idea in our mind. Thus, the idea of God points to the infinite, independent,

omnipotent, omniscient, and creative substance and perfect Being.⁹

Descartes' arguments for the existence of God proceed, as his system demands, only from the contents of his own consciousness and indeed from one item that he claims to find in his consciousness- an idea of God, of a perfect and infinite Being. It is essential for Descartes' outlook that an idea does not necessarily take the form of an image : he intends, rather, the purely intellectual and rational comprehension of the nature of a thing. Such is his idea of God.

Descartes' first argument proceeds by applying to this idea a version of a traditional causal principle that Descartes holds to be self-evident to the effect that the cause of anything must contain at least as much reality or perfection as the effect. In the degenerate scholastic terminology that Descartes employs, the cause of any idea must possess at least as much reality as the idea possesses, not only formally (intrinsically, qua idea) but also objectively. If the cause has just as much reality as the effect, the reality of the effect is said to be present in it formally; if the cause has a greater degree of reality, it is said to contain the effect eminently. The

9. R.Falckenberg, History of Modern Philosophy, P.92

argument then proceeds that alone among the ideas that Descartes has, the idea of God possesses objectively a supreme degree of reality, because it is the idea of a perfect Being. Hence its cause must possess formally a similar degree of reality. But this cause is evidently not Descartes himself: among other things, he is in a state of doubt and ignorance, which he clearly recognizes to be imperfect. Hence, there must exist a Being independent of Descartes who is indeed perfect : God.

The causal argument formulated by Plato had been challenged in various ways. The assumption that motion and rest are not equally natural or original, that the existence of motion needs explanation in a way that the existence of rest does not, was questioned. The atomist Democritus denied Plato's comment that motion was derivation from soul or from anything else. According to him, motion was eternal.

We find some difficulties in Aristotle's arguments also. God of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* neither makes nor sustains the being of the world. He only elicits motion in it. The material and the efficient cause are necessary for the production of things. According to Aristotle, the potter is the efficient and the earth is the material cause in the case of pot. If we say that God is

the efficient cause of the universe then it would have been impossible for Him to create without the help of the material cause or matter. If the material cause be meant by the First Cause, then He must have gone through all the changes of evolution like the finite things of the world. So, the causal argument cannot prove the existence of God.

Kant would find it easier still to criticise the causal arguments for the existence of God. For according to him, causality is a category of understanding which would validly operate within the realm of sensations; hence it would be an unwarranted and unjustifiable application of that category if we regard God as the cause of sensations and the world of objects. According to Kant, the principle of causality has no meaning and no criterion for its application save only in the sensible world. The principle of causality is not applicable to God, an idea of Reason. It is applicable to phenomena only.¹⁰

Descartes intended to arrive at absolute certainty in respect of knowledge and further he desired to establish philosophy on the solid foundation of certainty. With this aim in view he suggested us not to accept anything unless we knew it. But Descartes dogmatically assumed the principle of causation and he tried to prove

10. I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, tr. by N.K. Smith, P.288

the existence of God with this principle. Some may criticise that though actually I am finite being, potentially I may be an infinite being. So there should have been no hindrance to be the cause of an infinite or a perfect idea. But this argument is not acceptable. For, if I am a potentially infinite being the idea for which I regard myself as the cause also must be an idea of a potentially infinite being. But actually my idea of God is an idea of an infinite and perfect being. So ,potentially infinite being or myself cannot be the cause of such infinite being.

The objections against the argument are :

- (1) The defining characteristics of God such as power, knowledge, goodness etc., are positive. But the quantitative words of these characteristics are not positive. For example, "imperfect", "perfect".
- (2) The causal principle is a factual relation not a relation of ideas. So, it is wrong to think it as self-evident.
- (3) Thirdly, the degree of realities is also unacceptable. For any object cannot be partly existent and partly non-existent. It must be existent or non-existent. An object cannot be of

two opposite qualities.

There is a distinction between order of representation and order of existence. Descartes paid less attention to this. It is not possible to produce a more powerful effect by a less powerful cause in the actual world, but possible in idea. Though we are finite in nature, we can think about infinite object, for example, the idea of space-time. So we can imagine a perfect being. But it will be unjustifiable if we try to prove that such idea really exist.

Other objections against the argument are as follows :

1. There is difficulty in relating God with the causal chain of causality. If God is taken as above and beyond the law of causality, it is impossible to find any relation between Him and His creation.¹¹
2. God is the first cause of creation. God must be distinct from his creation. All the problems faced in accepting the deism will be faced in accepting the causal argument.

11. P.Edwards and A.Pap, Modern Introduction to Philosophy, P.380

3. According to causality, there is no object which can exist without having been first caused. If the same law is applied to God, it becomes necessary to find some cause of God to satisfy the requirements of this law. And if this law is not applicable to God, it cannot be used to prove His existence.

4. Hume holds that both the cause and effect are limited, if it is true, then God is also limited. But we shall not accept it.¹²

There are criticism of these arguments. Descartes himself tries to anticipate them. The first is that he might have formed the idea of the infinitely perfect being merely by considering his own imperfect state and thinking away its limitations. To this Descartes replies that his idea of God is not that of a being merely negatively infinite-one such that we cannot conceive of limits to his excellence-but of a being actually infinite-such that we know that there are no limits to his excellence. The other criticism is that the various perfections of God might actually exist but in different subjects, so that, infact, there would be no perfect Being

12. John Hick , The Existence of God, P.93

containing them all. Descartes replies that "the unity, similitude or the inseparability of all God's attributes, is itself one of the chief perfections that I conceive him to have" (meditation III).¹³

According to Descartes, everything has a cause. There cannot be anything without a cause. At least the cause must be equal to the effect. The idea of perfect being is itself an effect and it must have a cause. Then what is the cause of this idea of perfect Being? Descartes says that he cannot be the cause of idea of perfect Being for he knows himself to be a finite being. Hence Descartes thinks that the idea must have been caused by an equally perfect cause, namely, the Infinite being, i.e. God. So, Descartes tries to prove the existence of God as the creator of human soul. But this causal argument cannot prove the existence of God. Thus, in conclusion we can say that causal argument is not an acceptable argument for proving the existence of God. This point will be further explained in cosmological argument.

13. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.II, P.349

CHAPTER - IV

THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The cosmological argument is the name given to a group of interrelated arguments that claim to prove the existence of God from premises asserting some highly general fact about the world, such as that it exists contingently.¹ This argument begins with the idea of the world as an effect. Then it postulates God as its first cause. In the broad sense of the term, any theistic argument that proceeds from the world to God can be described as cosmological. Cosmology is derived from the greek word 'Kosmos', which means world.² In its primary form the cosmological argument was first formulated by Plato (428/7 B.C. to 348/7 B.C.).³ Later on, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) stated it quite clearly. St. Thomas Aquinas (1224/5-1274) regarded it as the central argument for proving the existence of God. Many modern theologians have restated or reinterpreted this argument in their own ways.⁴

This argument is very ancient. It comes to this : The world exist, therefore, God must exist. As we

-
1. The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol.II, P.232
 2. W.J. Marshall, Philosophy and the Christian faith, P.23
 3. J.Hick, The Existence of God, P.71
 4. Ibid., P.80

cannot help admitting the existence of the effect, the world, we are forced to reason to the existence of a sufficient cause for its existence and this sufficient and powerful cause is God, the almighty creator and the ruler of the universe. This is called the cosmological argument because it begins with existence of the world around us, which we call the cosmos and God is regarded as the first cause of the world. The basis of the cosmological argument is imperfection and contingency of the universe. This universe cannot be self explained and it is intelligible only by non-contingent necessary perfect, absolute and self-explained being which is called God.

In its primary form the cosmological argument was first formulated by Plato. In the Laws (Book X) Plato asks how one can account for the existence of motion in the world. Two kinds of motion are distinguished, motion that is imparted to an entity from other entities, and self-originated motion.⁵ According to Plato, only living beings, beings with souls can originate movement. He argues that all motion in the world is ultimately due to the activity of the soul. Scientific studies (particularly astronomy) detect orderly movement in the cosmos, and it is inferred that the Cosmos - controlling soul must be perfectly wise

5. Plato, Laws, Book-X, Section-898

and good. Plato is aware that in lesser degree disorder also exists in the world, in the theology of the laws this is accounted for by the activity of another soul or souls. Plato directs attention to the fact of motion and in the speech immediately preceding the fact of motion, and in the speech immediately preceding this passage he lists 8 different kinds of motion or change-movement round an axis, movement from place to place, movement which is both from place to place and round an axis, restardation, acceleration, growth, decay and destruction. Plato's argument is now, in essence, that the power to produce movement is logically prior to the power to receive it and pass it on. In order for these to be causes undergoing and transmitting change there must first be an uncaused cause to originate the movement. And the only kind of reality with the power of spontaneous movement is soul. Therefore, the ultimate cause of the universe must be a living soul, belonging to a higher order than the human soul. This (apart from an earlier anticipation of it in Plato's PHADRUS, 245, C-E) is the genesis of what has come to be called the cosmological argument.

To Aristotle, the first cause argument is known as cosmological because to him everything that happens has a cause and this cause in turn has a cause and so on in a series that must be infinite. Thought cannot

remain content with an infinite regression so thought has to postulate an ultimate cause at the beginning of the series. That infinite cause known as first cause, which has no other cause than himself, is known as God. The actualization of the world becomes possible through the dynamism and motion released in the matter. Matter in motion takes on various forms and the diversity of objects of the world is due to different proportion of matter and form in various objects. However, the initial push or motion provided to matter is by pure form, that is, God.

In *Metaphysics* (Book XII) Aristotle used a form of the cosmological argument in his attempt to explain motion in the first instance, the eternal circular motion of the heavens. He thought that the only intellectually satisfying explanation would be in terms of a mover that was not itself moved and that was not merely passing on motion derived from some other source. Since that which is moved, as well as moving things, is intermediate, there must be something that moves things without being moved, that will be something eternal, it will be a substance, and it will be an actuality. But the unmoved mover, the deity at whom Aristotle thus arrived, did not move the heavens physically (for physical movement involves mutual contact and the moved reacts upon the mover) but moved them by

being the object of aspiration and desire. Since Aristotle described matter as eternal, his cosmological argument was not an account of its origin or creation. Whereas Plato's supreme deity is represented as purposing, planning and acting vis-a-vis the cosmos. Aristotle's supreme deity enjoys a wholly contemplative (indeed self-contemplative) activity.

Aristotle's concept of God has been criticised by so many historians of philosophy. In fact it is not satisfactory either from the philosophical or from the religious view point. In the words of Frank Thilly, "A God whose thought has no object but its own activity of thought may be likened to a mirror which reflects another mirror and hence reflects nothing. The inadequacies of the Aristotelian conception of God are too patent to require further consideration. God's activity consists in thought, in the contemplation of the essence of things, in the vision of beautiful forms. He has no impressions, no sensations, no appetites, no will in the sense of desire, no feelings in the sense of passions. He is pure intelligence. While our intellect is discursive, our knowledge piecemeal, moving along step-by-step, God's thinking is intuitive. He sees all things at once and sees them whole. He is free from pain and passion and is supremely happy. He is everything that a philosopher longs

to be".⁶

Descartes gives another version of this argument. His argument shows God as the cause of God-idea . The innate idea of God is that of an infinite, independent, omniscient, perfect being. What is the cause of this idea ? The cause must be as real or perfect as the effect itself. Thus, God is there as the cause of the idea of God.⁷ The idea of God which Descartes takes to be objectively valid, could be produced only by something having the same reality formally or eminently is it, we, being inferior creatures, cannot produce it, and it can not come from any other source except God himself Hence, there must be a God. This argument is a version of the so-called cosmological argument. In the 'Third Meditation' Descartes asks from whom could I ... derive my existence where there no God ? The conservation of a substance in each moment of its duration, requires the same power and act that could be necessary to create it... But I am not aware of possessing any power by which to insure that my existence should continue from moment to moment; and therefore I know that I am dependent upon some being different from myself. since a cause must contain as much reality as its effect,

6. F.Thilly, A History of Western Philosophy, P. 110
 7. R.Falckenberg, History of modern Philosophy, P.92

this ultimate cause must be a 'thinking being' and must possess the idea and all the perfection I attribute to Deity. That is it must be God.⁸

The unity, the simplicity or inseparability of all the properties of the Deity, is one of the chief perfections I conceive him to possess, and the idea of this unity of all the perfections of Deity could certainly not be put into my mind any cause from which I did not likewise receive the ideas of all other perfections, for no power could enable me to embrace them in an inseparable unity, without at the same time giving me the knowledge of what they were.⁹ In other words, in addition to the ideas of the different perfections, I possess in my mind the idea of the unity or inseparability of all these perfections; and this unity is itself one of the chief perfections which I attribute to God. Now if it be supposed that the ideas of other perfections have been received by me from several other cause one by one, then the question would be: whence do I get this idea of the unity of all perfections? This cannot be received from a being who does not possess all other perfections together in

-
8. R.Descartes, Meditation III, translated by L.J. Lafleur, in Discourse on Method and Meditations, P.105
9. Meditation III of Descartes edited by R.M. Eaton in Descartes Selections, P.124

himself. Hence, God as the possessor of all the perfections, and therefore, as the giver of my idea of the unity of all perfections, must exist.

This argument takes a new form in Leibnitz. This is how Russell summarises Leibnitz's argument. He argues that every particular thing in the world is 'contingent', that is to say, it would be logically possible for it not to exist, and this is true, not only of each particular things, but of the whole universe even if we suppose the universe to have always existed. But according to Leibintz's philosophy everything has to have sufficient reason therefore, the universe as a whole must have a sufficient reasons which must be outside the universe. This sufficient reason is God.¹⁰ Russell admits that this form of the cosmological argument is better than the straightforward First cause argument . Locke formulated the argument thus: If we know there is some real being, and that non-entity cannot produce and real being, it is evident that from eternity there has been something, since what was not from enternity had a beginning must be produced by something else. Further, certain beings such as ourselves are knowing, intelligent beings. It is impossible that things wholly void of knowledge, should produce a

10. B.Russell, A History of Western Philosophy, P.568

knowing being and so the argument deduces God. Descartes thinks that because the idea of God is the same in every one's mind, and because "we are never aware of its coming to us from anywhere but ourselves, we suppose that it pertains to the nature of our intellect. And indeed this is not wrong, but we neglect something else. Which is the most important consideration, and the one on which the whole force and illumination of this argument depends: that this faculty of having in itself the idea of God could not exist in our intellect if this intellect were only a finite being, as it really is, and did not have God as its cause. That is why I asked further whether I could exist if God did not exist, not so much to bring forward an argument different from the preceding one as to explain it more completely.¹¹

St.Thomas Aquinas in his book 'summa Theologica' gives five ways of cosmological argument: The first way of the argument is derived directly from Aristotle. It is based on the fact of motion or, more generally from the fact of change, to a 'Prime mover' or 'unmoved Mover'. Everything has to be put in motion by something which again is put in motion by some other thing. But this process cannot go on indefinitely. It is necessary

11. E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross(tr.), The philosophical works of Descartes, Vol. II, P.12

to have a first mover who is not moved by any other thing. This is called God. Aquinas' second way is the argument from the nature of efficient cause. His second way is based on the nature of causation. In order to avoid infinite regress in finding efficient causes of things one has to admit a first efficient cause, namely 'God'. In the third way, Aquinas argues for a necessarily existent being. Things in our experience may exist or may not exist, there is no necessity about their existence. They are generated and corrupted. But if everything were like this, 'once there would have been nothing at all ', hence, 'nothing in existence even now'. Therefore, there must be something the existence of which is necessary. Necessary reality is always actual, it is never poised between existence and non-existence. The necessity of necessary beings cannot, in every case, be caused by some other beings, therefore, there must exist some being that has of itself its own necessity, namely, God.

In the fourth way he argues for God as the cause of perfection in anything. There must be something which is to all beings the cause of this being, goodness and every other perfection, and this we call God. In the fifth way the argument is taken from the governance of the world. His argument for God is that there must be an intelligent director or there must be some intelligent

being exists by whom all natural things are directed to the end, and this being called God.¹² This last argument is different from casual argument. In Indian Philosophy Naiyayikas also give the causal Argument for the existence of God. According to Nyaya, the material cause (Upadana Karana) of this univers consist of the eternal atoms of earth, water, fire and air and the efficient cause (Nimitta Karana) is God. He is called the ruler of the universe being regarded as the efficient cause. God creates the world by combining the atoms. Hence, the existence of God as the efficient cause of the world is inferred. Udayana's arguments for the existence of God have become classical for theism. He gives the same causal argument to prove the existence of God. "The world is an effect and hence it must have an efficient cause. This intelligent agent is God. The order, design co-ordination between different phenomena comes from God (Karyat)".¹³ Again, the atoms being essentially inactive cannot form the different combinations unless God gives motion to them. The unseen power, the Adrsta, requires the intelligence of God. Without God it cannot supply motion to the atoms (ayojanat).

-
12. St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica published in Philosophy of Religion, A Book of Reading, Ed. by Abernathy and Langford, PP. 183-5
13. Dr. C.D.Sharma, A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, P.209

Hume demonstrated that the existence of God cannot be proved on the basis of experience. He refuted every argument made in favour of such existence by pointing out that experience does not bear out whatever is contained in God. God in Hume's opinion, is the subject of belief and faith. Belief is nothing but a more vivid, lively, forcible, firm, steady conception of an object, than what the imagination alone is ever able to attain.¹⁴ In the actual world one cannot go on without God and for that reason it becomes necessary to believe in Him, but to attempt to prove his existence on the basis of experience is a futile effort. He says that we cannot demonstrate anything concerning the nature of God, His attributes, decrees, plan or providence.

Hume maintains that if his claims as to what we can not know are legitimate, then we are unable to establish that any particular being, whether it be God, or anything else, must, of necessity, exist. Hume says, " I shall begin with observing that there is an evident absurdity in pretending to demonstrate a matter of fact, or to prove it by any arguments a priori. Nothing is demonstrable unless the contrary implies a contradiction. Nothing that is distinctly conceivable implies a

14. David Hume, Enquiry concerning human understanding, P.42

contradiction. Whatever we conceive as existent, we can also conceive as non-existent, there is no being, therefore, whose non-existent implies a contradiction. Consequently there is no being whose existence is demonstrable".¹⁵ Thus, according to Hume, no valid argument can establish the existence of a supreme Being, or of anything else. Since we can always conceive what it would be like for any describable object to exist, to be part of the temporal and spatial world, or not exist, then no demonstration that a specific entity must exist can be decisive. The denial of the conclusion of the demonstration can not be disproven and hence, nothing has actually been established by any reasoning that purports to establish that some particular being must exist.¹⁶

According to Kant, the cosmological argument argues from the existence of contingent being to the existence of an absolutely necessary being. The cosmological proof refers to experience, though not to any particular experience, and is not completely a priori. It proceeds in this way : if anything exists, then there must also exist an absolutely necessary being. Now I at least exist, therefore, the absolutely necessary being also

15. David Hume, Dialogues concerning natural religion, Part-IX, PP. 57-8

16. Richard H. Popkin and Avrum Strool, Philosophy, P.107

exists. The argument does not refer to any specific experience but any experience or the experience of anything will serve its purpose. Since the object of all possible experiences is called the world, the argument is described as cosmological. The necessary being according to Kant must be the *ens realissimum*, the Being that includes all reality, for such a being alone rests on itself or has all the conditions of its existence in itself. According to Kant, "the principle of causality has no meaning and no criterion for its application save only in the sensible world. But in the cosmological proof it is precisely in order to enable us to advance beyond the sensible world that it is employed".¹⁷ According to Kant, cause is one of the categories of understanding and categories can be applied only to phenomena, and not to noumena or things in themselves. Therefore, he argues that cause being a category of understanding cannot be applied to God who is a noumenon or thing-in-itself. Kant writes that from contingent events we can infer that there must be a necessary cause of their existence. The principle of causality, "that every event must have a cause, applies, as far as we can tell, only to the world of sense experience".¹⁸ But, in the cosmological argument, this

17. I.Kant, Critique of Pure Reason tr. by N.K.Smith (abridged edition) P.288

18. Kant's Critique of Pure Reason trans by J.M.D. Meklejohn, P.79

principle about empirical knowledge is used to carry us beyond the world of sense experience to something that is supposed to transcend it. This extension, Kant insisted, is unjustified and illegitimate. We have no basis for assuming that the principles we employ in the analysis of our experience can be made to apply to anything beyond experience. Further, Kant points out, we have no justification for inferring that there must be a first cause.

The principles which we follow with regard to the use of reason do not support the argument in question, since we have no rational means for arriving at the end of our quest for cause and explanations, nor have we any way of determining when the series of cause and explanations have been completed. Therefore, we can never be justified in claiming that we have found the first cause. Basically, what Kant considered to be at fault in the cosmological argument for the existence of a supreme Being is that it attempts to reason beyond all possible experience, as well as beyond the limits for which we have any guarantee that our rational faculties are reliable. But by illegitimately extending principles whose only known application and warrant is the realm of actual experience—to questions that transcend all possible experience, one creates these proofs and comes to conclusions about the necessary

existence of some of our concepts. But once one has left the limits of the application of reason, all sorts of arguments can be constructed and things proved, and all sorts of paradoxes and dilemmas created. In this realm we have no standards as to what is valid argumentation and hence no way of determining when we have successfully established anything at all.

All that we can do is to recognize that all arguments that transcend possible experience, whether they be about God, or anything else, are entirely speculative, and fruitless, and prove nothing of which we can be certain.¹⁹ The cosmological argument is usually expressed in two forms, namely :

1. Cosmological argument in the form of causal argument
2. Cosmological argument in the form of contingency.

COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT IN THE FORM OF CAUSAL ARGUMENT

In our experience world effects are always preceded by causes, and these in turn are the effects of causes. So the chain of causality runs back step by step. But an infinite line of causes is impossible, and there must come a point in the series at which we arrive at a

19. Richard H. Popkin and Avrum Stroll. Op.Cit., P.108

first or un-caused cause. The first cause of all the different series of causes is God.²⁰ If we discuss the causal form of the cosmological we get the following steps:

- (a) Every event has a cause and no event in the world can be without a cause
- (b) Events keep on happening. The present event A is caused by the previous event B, and B in term by C, and C in term by D and so on.
- (c) It is completely manifest that the causal series is interminable. But to understand the whole series of cause and effect, we have to posit a first cause which in its turn does no imply its further cause.
- (d) This first cause which produces the whole series of causes and effects is the Mover only and cannot be in turn moved by anything also. This prime mover may be called God. The same point was raised by Aristotle. According to him, 'the first cause of creation is the first mover or the prime mover'.

Hence, the world of causal series requires God to explain it. Thus, God exists as its own cause and in

20. George Galloway, The Philosophy of Religion, P.387

turn as the cause the world. This argument really depends on the question : can the world exist by itself as an accidental self-regulating system? In the first argument, Aquinas supposes that movement or change is dependent on a 'mover' acting here and now, and that in the second argument he supposes that there are efficient causes in the world which even in their causal activity are here and now dependent on the causal activity of other causes. That is why Copleston has spoken of a 'hierarchy' rather than of a series.²¹ Ordinarily, people search for the Maker of the world, because they think that the world cannot be a self-regulative system. In ancient times, people looked upon the whole world as governed and controlled by a personal Being. Later on, with the development of scientific thinking much demythologising did take place. Yet in the background it is sustained by the scientific postulate itself, namely, all events are intelligible and causal. So the theist thought that the scientific postulate permitted him to deny the possibility of the world being a self-regulative system. But as a matter of fact as against the theologian, the causal postulate would allow that the world is a self-regulating system. Consequently, there is no logical need for assuming a first cause. And even when we are to search for the cause of the world, hardly anybody today would hold

21. F.C.Copleston, Thomas Aquinas (1955), P.117

that the cause is the personal God of theism. The world is impersonal and its cause, if any, can be impersonal only.

Again a procedural assumption of Science is 'every event must have a cause'. This proposal has been designed to explain the series of particular events of the world. At the present time even this proposal has been dropped with regard to sub-atomic events. So this proposal cannot be accepted universally. Further, can the world be regarded as an event ? It would be called an event if there is the possibility of recording the coming into and going out of being of this world. Quite obviously so far as the human beings are concerned they have not witnessed the coming into being of this world. They cannot regard the world as an ordinary event, rather the world is sum of all actual and possible events. Hence, the world is not an event, so causal postulate is not applicable to the universe as a whole.

Causality with regard to specific events and causality concerning the universe as a totality of events, belong to two different types of statements. Prof. G.Ryle would call this a "category mistake"²², which consists in using a category in one context when it actually belongs to

22. G.Ryle, The concept of Mind, P.16 f.

another range of facts. Hence, the category of causality can not be meaningfully applied to the totality of events. Our knowledge of causes lies, entirely within the realm of spatio temporal things, processes and events. Beyond that, we have no reasons to speak of cause at all, for experiences tell us nothing about any such causality. To extend the principle into some transemprical realm is to desert the empirical evidence in which the principle is grounded. Indeed, one might well ask what meaning the word 'cause' has apart from any references to events and processes going on in the universe. As Kant pointed out, "the principle of causality has no meaning and no criterion for its application save only in the sensible world. But in the cosmological proof it is precisely in order to enable us to advance beyond the sensible world that it is employed".³³

The causal argument is not merely invalid but self-contradictory. Therefore, the conclusion, which says that something (God) does not have a cause, contradicts the premise, which says that everything does have a cause. If that premise is true, the conclusion cannot be true, and if the conclusion is true, the premise cannot be. Many people do not at once see this because they use the argument to

23. I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason (tr. by N.K. Smith), P.511

get to God, and then, having arrived where they want to go, they forget all about the argument. As Schopenhauer pointed out, they use the argument as they would a taxicab they use it to get to their desired destination, and then dismiss it without thinking any further about its fate. But consistency requires us to think further. If the conclusion contradicts its own premise, we have the most damning indictment of an argument that we could possibly have; that it is self-contradictory.²⁴

Why need there be a first cause, or a God, who preceded the First cause and set the series going from a point earlier in time? Why may not the series of events go back infinitely? This has, in fact, often been suggested, there need not have been a first event, we can imagine that every event was preceded by an earlier event, and that time has no beginning. The infinity of time, in both directions, offers no difficulties to the understanding. We know that the series of numbers has no need, that for every number there is a larger number. If we include the negative numbers, the number series has no beginning neither, for every number there is a smaller number. Infinite series without a beginning and an end have been successfully treated in mathematics, there is nothing

24. John Hospers, An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis , P.431

paradoxical in them. To object that there must have been a first event, a beginning of time, is the attitude of an untrained mind. Logic does not tell us anything about the structure of time . Logic offers the means of dealing with infinite series without an beginning as well as with series that have a beginning. In scientific evidence is an favour an infinite time, coming from infinity and going to infinity, logic has no objection.²⁵

COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT IN THE FORM OF CONTINGENCY

That existence is prior to essence or idea is the main assumption of the cosmological argument from contingency. Here essence and existence are taken as identical. According to Aquinas, the existence of God is not implied by God's essence, but that God's essence is the same as his existence.²⁶ Hence, according to this way, there must not be a perfect Being because we have an idea of Him, on the contrary we would say that we have an idea of Him because he exists. Such a Being has actuality and not bare possibility. According to Aquinas, things continuously come into being and pass away. Hence there are some contingent things in the world . A thing is said to be contingent when it does not have the ground of its own

25. Hans Reichenbach, The Rise of Scientific Philosophy, P.207-8

26. F.Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol.2, P.338

existence, which is therefore capable of non-existing, and at the same time does not exist. Now the fact is, there are some contingent things in the world.

"But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at sometime is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now, if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist, and thus even now nothing would be in existence, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary".²⁷

Aquinas adds that this necessary being is called God, which is not dependent on any other being but one itself. The similarity of this view to that of Plato's view can be easily seen here. According to him, there is a self-moved motion called soul which is the ground of every other motion but is itself its ground. However, Aquinas took the help of Aristotle's notion of the Prime Mover

27. St. Thomas Aquinas, 'How God may be known through natural reason' in Approaches to the Philosophy of Religion, ed. by D.J. Bronstein and H.M. Schulweis, P.135

which is its own ground and reason. Aquinas' argument can be simply put in the following steps:

1. All the things of the world are contingent, that in one by one each of them at one time can pass away.
2. All things one by one, in one time should have ceased to exist in the infinite series of time. Hence there should have been a complete void already by this time.
3. If at any one time, there were a complete blank then even now there should have been a blank, because out of nothing, nothing comes, which to use the words of Bain 'Ex-nihilo nihil fit'.
4. But there is something which is not contingent, i.e., it is a being which at no time can cease to be in the infinite series of time.
5. This something is a necessary Being which contains the ground of its own existence. This necessary Being is the basis of all contingent things (some of which exist at one time or the other)
6. This necessary Being is called God.

The concluding part of the argument by Aquinas runs thus :

"Therefore one cannot but postulate the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God".²⁸

The whole argument may be expressed thus : if anything exist, an absolutely necessary Being exists, something exists, therefore, an absolutely, necessary Being exists. The cosmological argument is not merely causal. It is not merely concerned with an infinite temporal regress and in order to escape from it, it is not uncommon for us to accept a First cause. The argument starts with the assumption that all things are dependent and the whole world consisting of contingent things may be compared to a chain of an infinite number of entities. But this chain requires as much explaining as finite things do. And this has to be explained in terms of something beyond and other than itself.

The cosmological argument holds that the contingent things imply the existence of a necessary Being. Usually the term 'necessary' is used with regard to analytic necessity only. However, Aquinas assumes the

28. Ibid., P.136

priority of Being over essence or idea. So, according to him, it is the absolute Being which is necessary. In other words, this necessity is not logical but factual.²⁹ The cosmological argument has appealed to men of all times. For example, Plato said :

" In the place, the earth and the sun, and stars and the universe, and the fair order of the reasons, and the division of them into years and months, furnish proofs of their (the God's) existence, and also there is the fact that all Hellenes and Barbarians believe in them".³⁰

The supporters of the cosmological argument consider it a sufficient argument to convince human mind of God's existence. The Bible says, "the heavens show forth the glory of God" (Psalm 18.2). The heavens, and indeed the whole universe, cry out for a maker, a cause, a sufficient reason for existence and reason affirms that this maker of all things, this first cause of the universe is God. even the so called atheist in his unguarded moments will express the same thought. For example, a celebrated atheist, out on a pleasure trip, came one day to the top of Mount Tamalpais

29. John Hospers, op.cit., P.437

30. Plato, Lawes, 10,886, in the Dialogues of Plato, tr. by B.Jowett, Vol.2, P.628

in California, spread out before him were seen mountains and land, down in the valleys were blooming orchards and ripening fields. As he beheld all this an involuntary cry escaped him, surely there must have been a God to create all this.³¹ If man's reason is not dead, then it would unerringly lead him to acknowledge his Maker. It will lead him to agree with Holy scripture when it says, "the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God (Psalm 13.1)"

The cosmological argument first formulated by Plato had been challenged in various ways. The assumption that motion and rest are not equally natural or original, that the existence of motion needs explanation in a way that the existence of rest does not was questioned. That there never was a beginning of motion tells against a formidable number of cosmological arguments. The atomist Democritus denied in Plato's day that motion was derivation from soul or from anything else. According to him, motion was eternal. We find some difficulties in Aristotle's cosmology and conception of the unmoved mover, both are so far from current science or metaphysics because God of Aristotle's metaphysics neither makes nor sustains the being of the world. He only elicits motion in it. He has no

31. James V. Linden and W.T. Costello, *The Fundamentals of Religion*, P.45

knowledge of the world and cannot be said how to act upon it. So Aristotle's importance in the development of the cosmological argument comes chiefly through the Christian reconstructions of Thomas Aquinas.

The path of argument for First cause or necessary Being, to a Christian personal God must be a complex and problematic one. Later proponents of the cosmological argument have sometimes improperly shortened it, as Descartes and Locke had done. Descartes wrote, "there must at least be as much reality in the cause as in its effect".³² In response to the suggestion that a person might have received the idea of God from reading or from the conversation of friends, Descartes replies that it has no force, because, "the argument will proceed in the same way if I ask about those others, from whom I am said to have received it, whether they have it from themselves or from another, as if I were to ask this about myself, and I shall always conclude that he from whom it first proceeded is God".³³ Descartes plainly thinks that the proposed explanation would involve infinite regress. Locke writes that it is impossible that things wholly void of knowledge should produce a knowing being. For a rejoinder we can turn

32. Meditation III of Descartes, tr. by L.J. Lafleur in Discourse on Method and Meditations, P.105

33. E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (tr.), Philosophical works of Descartes, Vol.II, P.35

to Mill. Where is the proof that nothing can have caused a mind except another mind ? asked Mill in his article 'Theism', in "Three Essays on Religion". From what except from experience, can we know what can produce what-what causes are adequate to what effects ? Mill argues against the assumption that no causes can give rise to products of a more precious or elevated kind than themselves. Our knowledge of nature bears out the opposite view-that higher organisms can emerge from lower. Since Mill's day our thinking about nature has become progressively less mechanistic and anthropocentric and more deeply evolutionary. Other limitations of the cosmological argument can be stated as follows :

- a. Hume presumably meant that the cosmological argument is relatively a priori in comparison with the design argument with which he has mainly concerned in the "Dialogues concerning natural religion". For whilst the latter depends upon specific characteristics of the world, the cosmological proof rests upon the bare fact that anything exists which is not manifestly uncaused and self-explanatory. In part IX, Hume formulates a basic and very important objection to the idea demonstrative proof of an existential proposition (i.e.any proposition of the form X exists,

including God Exists).³⁴

- b. Both the material and efficient cause are necessary for the production of things. According to Aristotle, the potter is the efficient and the earth is the material cause of the pot. If we say that God is the efficient cause of the universe, then it would have been impossible for Him to create without the help of the material cause or matter. If the material cause be meant by first cause, then He must have gone through all the changes of evolution like the finite things of the world. Besides this, the cosmological or causal argument cannot prove the existence of God. In our experience, we have only a plurality in the series of causes. And from this plurality of causes, we can have only a plurality of first cause, and not one first cause, i.e, God. Even if we suppose it as possible then it will merely be as possible, then it will merely be an 'idea' and not a being and so the problem of reaching the being of God from the idea of God is not solved by this argument.

The word contingent means dependent or

34. John Hick, The Existence of God, PP.93-4

caused, one thing or event being contingent upon another. The word necessary means not dependent on any other. Propositions are only contingent. Hence the argument from contingent world that the necessary being is God is uncertain.³⁵ The solution in terms of a necessary being is equally unsatisfactory. The solution in terms of a necessary being is equally unsatisfactory because the expression necessary being is self-contradictory. Traditional notion of existence is also not spared. To quote Russell, "when you take any propositional function and assert of it that it is possible, that it is sometimes true, that gives you the fundamental meaning of existence... existence is essentially a property of propositional function".³⁶ Restricting existence to the truth of propositional functions we are prevented from speaking anything about existence of things of the universe or of God. Can the explanation of the world as a whole be said to be an intelligible notion? Both Russell and A.J. Ayer deny that the question concerning the universe as a whole is meaningful. According to them, phenomena just happen.³⁷ Russell tells us that the universe is just there, and

35. B.Russell, *Why I am not a Christian*, P. 146ff

36. J.Hick & A.Mc-Gill (ed.), *The many faced argument*, P.223

37. A.J.Ayer & F.C.Copleston, *Logical Positivism* (1949), in *Readings in Religious Philosophy*, ed. by Mac Gregor/Robb, P.336

that's all.³⁸ Hence according to them, the very assumption that the world stands in need of being explained is meaningless. Copleston would not accept this. He would maintain that the question is not scientific or empirical but is metaphysical.³⁹

Few theologians would explain the cosmological argument through the chain of infinite causes. Even Copleston holds that the argument does not propose to give any scientific explanation. Similarly, Terence Penelhum who wants to defend the religious force of the cosmological argument tells us that causal explanation leaves unanswered the several questions of why anything exists at all. Further, he adds, even if one could show the whole chain of causes, one could just ask why it was that we had the sort of world which however naturally gave rise to this or that feature. As causal explanation cannot be self explanatory, total and all sufficient, so this kind of explanation cannot be considered adequate.⁴⁰

There could be a specific criticism of the cosmological causal argument propounded by Descartes.

38. B.Russell & F.C. Copleston, A Debate on the existence of God in The Existence of God by John Hicks, P.175

39. A.J.Ayer & F.C.Copleston, op.cit., P.332

40. Terence Penelhum, Divine Necessity, Mind, Vol. LXIX, No.274,1960, P.176.

Descartes argues to the existence of God from our idea of perfection. Descartes thinks our idea of a perfection can be explained only by assuming a perfect being who is nothing but God. But we can show that our idea of perfection could be explained as due to our possible infinity or perfection . Absolutism and pantheism accept one reality only. Hence, all finite existence are manifestations of this one reality. Hence, it is natural to suppose that we have an element of infinity in us. Hence, the idea of perfection we have could be explained as due to our infinity. If this is accepted then we need not accept a creator God to explain our idea of perfection.

There is another objection also to the cosmological argument. In the cosmological argument we proceed from the world to its cause and to avoid an infinite regress we assume an ultimate cause which we call as God. But this idea of God is only an idea of reason. The fact that we have an idea does not mean that a reality corresponding to it exists. For this we have to depend upon, as Kant has conclusively shown, the ontological argument.

CHAPTER - V

THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The Ontological argument is one of the traditional arguments for the existence of God. The argument says that the reality of God is involved in the idea of God or the existence of God can be deduced from the idea of God. In other words, this argument is an argument from the concept of God as a perfect being to His existence. It is an inference from God's nature to His being.¹ According to this argument, existence is the very essence (ontos) of idea of God. From the mere analysis of God-idea or the idea of a perfect Being we can deduce God's existence. This argument is called 'a priori' argument. An a priori argument operates from a basis which is logically prior and achieves the kind of certainty exhibited by mathematical truths. In point of fact only one strictly a priori theistic proof has been offered the Ontological argument. This claims on a priori grounds that the idea of the most perfect and real conceivable being is the idea of a being which must and therefore, does exist; for a non-existent could never be the most perfect and real conceivable being.

The ontological argument is very ancient in

1. H.J.Paton, The modern predicament, P. 176

the history of religion and at different times different thinkers have given different versions of this argument. The root of this argument is found in Plato.

For Plato, The 'ideas' were considered to be more important more valuable and fundamental than the existing things and 'essence' was more valuable than 'existence'. In this sense Plato maintains the spirit of the Ontological argument.² In the Laws, Plato clearly states, how by reasoning one can establish the existence of God. He observed that all things either move or are at rest. "There is one kind of motion which is only able to move other things, there is another which can move itself as well".³ That which is self-moved and moves others is the mightiest and is named as soul. The soul directs all things by her movements, which we call will, attention, joy and sorrow. The soul is prior and superior to body. The soul according to Plato 'truly receiving the divine mind controls heaven and earth and the whole world'.⁴ Plato reasons that, everyone sees the sun, but no one sees the soul. And this soul of the sun which is better than the sun, 'ought every man to be deemed a God'.⁵ The souls are

2. F. Copleston. A History of philosophy, vol. 1, p. 168

3. B. Jowett (tr.) The Dialogues of Plato. vol. 4. p. 142

4. Ibid., p. 467

5. Ibid., p. 469

called 'Gods' if there are many and God if there is one. Burnet thinks that Plato brought the idea of God into his philosophy strictly through 'Scientific reasoning'. Stace also emphasizes the importance of reason in Plato's philosophy. "The imperishable one, the absolute reality, is apprehended not by intuition, or in any kind of mystic ecstasy, but only by rational cognition and laborious thought".⁶

The ideas are arranged in a logical order and in the hierarchy of ideas, the highest idea is the idea of God. As Radhakrishnan writes, "for Plato, the Good which is the true and the real shines everlastingly like the sun in the high heaven".⁷ Plato speaks of the Idea of Good and God with equal emphasis in his various writings, still both the ideas cannot be identified. The Good of Plato is a 'form' not a soul, whereas, the 'God' of Plato is a 'living soul'. Plato sometimes speaks of God as a Demiurge, the world architect who fashions the world after the pattern of the ideal world guided by the idea of Good. But this description of God by Plato as a Demiurge, the world architect does not tally with the conception of God of a modern theist. The God of a modern theist is a supreme Being. But the God of Plato is not supreme. As Burnet says,

6. W.T. Stace, A Critical History of Greek Philosophy, P. 191

7. S. Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life, P. 31

Plato's God is certainly a 'Personal' God, as we should put it, for he is Mind existing in a livingsoul, but it does not follow that he is the 'supreme Being'.⁸

The ontological argument later on, more or less in an explicit form is found in the writings of St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.). He had accepted Plato's argument. According to him, doubt implies the knowledge of truth, since only for the shake of attaining truth does one doubt. Further, it belongs to the essence of truth that it is or exists. Again the being or existence of all universal truths lies in God alone in the form of ideas .⁹

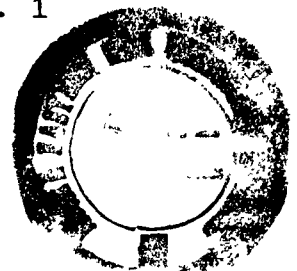
St. Anselm (1033-1109) the medieval theologian could be taken to be the first propounder of the ontological argument to prove the existence of God, because this argument was very clearly stated by him. In the Proslogion, Anselm claims the discovery of " a single formula which needs no other to prove itself but itself alone, and which by itself suffices to establish that God truly is, and that he is the greatest good needing no other, and that which everything needs if it is to be and be well, and whatever else we believe about divine being".¹⁰

8. J. Burnet, Greek Philosophy, P.273

9. The Confession of St. Augustine, Cardinel Edition, P.120

10. Janathan Barnes, The Ontological Argument, P. 1

103170



" I began to ask myself whether there might be found a single argument which would require no other for its proof than itself alone; and alone would suffice to demonstrate that there is a supreme good requiring nothing else, which all other things require for their existence and well-being and whatever we believe regarding the Divine Being"¹¹ According to Anselm, we have an idea of perfect being, and this we mean by God. This argument shows that God's existence is proved by the fact of His perfection. Because if He does not exist then He will become imperfect. So the idea of God without existence is self-contradictory.

This argument proceeds with the concept of God " as something than which nothing greater can be conceived". Since we have the idea, it has to be accepted that it is our mind as an object of thought. But existence is necessary to the concept of such a being. By definition He is the greatest being that can be conceived. Therefore, such a being exists. Hence, 'something than which nothing greater can be conceived' must exist in reality. The argument thus proceeds : God is generally conceived to be the highest or supreme existent, perfect. If it is inferred that God does not exist, then God will not be perfection. So for God to be perfect, it is necessary that He should

11. St. Anselm, 'Proslogion', tr. by Sidney Norton Deane, PP.1-2, 6-9

possess the quality of existence.¹² Anselm explains that by a being which cannot be conceived not to exist he means one that is eternal in the sense of having no beginning or end and always existing as a whole, that is, not successive phases. According to Anselm, if such a being can be conceived, it must also exist. For the idea of an eternal being, which has either ceased to exist or has not yet come into existence is self-contradictory, the notion of eternal existence excludes both of those possibilities. By 'greater, Anselm means more perfect, the highest and the supreme. He describes God as the being who is so perfect that nothing more perfect can ever be conceived.¹³

Anselm argument ' that than which a greater cannot be conceived cannot stand only in relation to the understanding. For if it stands at least in relation to the understanding, it can be conceived to be also in reality, and this is something greater'. Therefore, if 'that than which a greater cannot be conceived only stood in relation to the understanding,' than 'that than which a greater cannot be conceived' would be something than which a greater can be conceived. But this is certainly impossible. Therefore, God, than whom nothing greater can be thought of, both stands in relation to the understanding as well as

12. St. Anselm's Ontological Argument by Richard H. Popkin and Avrum Stroll in PHILOSOPHY, P.109

13. J.Hick, The Existence of God, P.23

exists in reality. It is not even possible to conceive that God does not exist.¹⁴

Gaunilo criticised Anselm which is summed up in the analogy of the Island. Gaunilo sets up a parallel ontological argument for the existence of an island more perfect than any known Island: such an island must exist¹⁵, since otherwise it would be less perfect than any known Island, and this would be a contradiction. Gaunilo argues that if God, the greatest conceivable something, must exist, then the best conceivable Island also must exist. But in reply to Gaunilo, Anselm develops the reasoning of Proslogion. His argument is that whereas the best conceivable Island can be conceived not to exist, so God cannot be so conceived. God's existence in reality is inferred by necessity.¹⁶ That is, only God's existence is necessary existence, not the existence of others. Necessary existence is the divine essence.¹⁷ This point of necessary existence has been much stressed by Norman Malcolm while discussing Anselm's ontological Arguments.¹⁸ Anselm's argument cannot be applied to Islands or to anything else whose non-existence is conceivable. Because whatever can be conceived not to exist is less than 'something than which

14. Hick and A.McGill (ed.), *The Many faced Argument*, PP.5-6

15. *Ibid.*, P.22

16. *Ibid.*, P.31

17. *Ibid.*, P.32

18. *Ibid.*, P.301 ff.

nothing greater can be conceived'. According to Anselm only from this latter notion can we conclude that there must be something similar to it in reality.

Anselm represents that God is the most adequate conceivable object of worship, there is no possibility of another reality beyond Him which would be an even more valuable recipient of man's devotion. He took recourse to the proof with a view to strengthening his faith and justifying one's belief in God. Faith, for him is a necessary precondition of understanding God. Anselm's Ontological arguments are these :

First, God is an object of worship. God must be the highest or greater than whom nothing can be conceived.

Secondly, existence is a state of the highest perfection or excellence, Hence , in the same sense, existence can be conceived as a predicate or quality like omnipotence, omniscience.

Thirdly, a distinction has to be made between a contingent existence and necessary existence. God is necessary existence. Hence, the non-existence of God cannot be thought. Therefore, the necessary existence of God is contained in the very notion of a Being greater than whom nothing can be conceived. It would be self-

contradictory to deny existence of God.¹⁹

God is a being than whom nothing greater can be conceived. A Being which exist, both in fact and in mind is greater than a Being which exists in mind only. Therefore, God not only exists in mind but also in fact. So God exists. The most perfect conceivable being must exist in reality as well as in the mind, God is a necessary existence, so it is impossible to conceive Him as not existing. For something should be thought to exist that cannot be thought not to exist.

The rationalistic trend in the 17th century was pioneered by Descartes. For Descartes, it is reason alone that can explain all philosophical truths. But what about the idea of God ? Is it a pure construction of the mind or has it some other source ? Descartes tries to give a rationalistic explanation of the idea of God avoiding both the extremes. He says that the idea of God is the idea of an infinite, eternal, immutable, self-subsistent, omniscient and omnipotent being. This idea is 'clear and distinct'. Some have urged that the idea of God is a pure construction of the human mind, put together by raising arbitrarily to infinity such excellences as humanity possesses. But Descartes doesnot agree with them. He says

19. Y. Masih, Introduction to Religious Philosophy, P.176

that, the lesser excellence cannot be the cause of the greater, 'that the more cannot come from the less'.²⁰ With regard to this formula and its application, it must be noted, firstly, that 'more' and 'less' mean respectively 'of greater value' and 'of lesser value', secondly, that the argument is stated strictly in terms of efficient cause, and implies, not that the less valuable is less logically grounded in the more valuable, but that it has of necessity been actually produced by it, and thirdly, that one of the terms, the idea of God, though of superior value, is as yet only ideal, whereas the other, the self, though of inferior value, is an unchallengeable reality.

Descartes at the end of the IIIrd Meditation clearly states that the idea of God is 'innate in me' and that 'it comes from no other source than myself'. What Descartes meant by this, is that we could form the idea of God out of the potentialities which are innate and which have been implanted in the mind by God who is existent. He admits that "we could form this very idea, though we did not know that a supreme being existed, but not that we could do so if it were in fact non-existent".²¹ What Descartes meant is that the capacity to construct the idea could not exist if there were no God to create us together

20. A.B.Gibson, The Philosophy of Descartes, P.110

21. E.S.Haldane and G.R.T.Ross(tr.)The philosophical works of Descartes, vol.II, p 33

with the potentialities. Hence, it is said that it is neither a pure construction of the mind, in the sense of being independent of God nor does it have any other source, in the sense of an originator of a full-fledged idea of God. The idea of God is innate no doubt, but is not innate in the sense that it is present in the child's mind as a full-fledged idea.

Now, if children are not conscious of the idea of God in spite of being innate, when do they become conscious? Descartes replies: when they develop the capacity to think or reason. How does Descartes reason? He first starts with what he calls the indubitable truth 'the cogito ergo sum'. He says, "I think" hence I am or I exist. This intuitive knowledge of ourselves is beyond question. Then he says that in thinking we have within us an idea of extreme perfection and infinity. This idea is, however, not an idea which we have derived from ourselves, for we are all imperfect beings. There must, therefore, be a most perfect or infinite being to originate this idea. Descartes made it clear that the existence of God is logically prior to the existence of the self. Firstly, there is God who is existent, then there is the intuitive self followed by the intuition of the idea of God. Here, intuition means a purely intellectual vision

which is so clear and distinct that it leaves no room for doubt.

In Descartes "Principles of Philosophy" the Ontological Argument is the first of the proofs to be offered and therefore does not seem to presuppose any of the others and that in Meditation V he says, "Although all that I concluded in the preceding 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 mathematics(which concern only numbers and figures) to be", Descartes definition of God differs from Anselm's. Instead of 'that than which no greater can be conceived', Descartes speaks of 'a supremely perfect being', but his main contribution to the discussion of the argument is that existence is a quality or attribute or predicate. He asserts explicitly that 'existence is a perfection'.²² Descartes said that God must be the cause of this idea of an all perfect Being. Perfection means to him the attributes of power, goodness, knowledge and also existence. Hence, anything less than God cannot be the cause of such an idea, which according to Descartes, is an innate idea. The idea of God is that which is only very clearly and distinctly in our mind. The idea is the idea of a perfect being. This idea cannot be produced by us. Hence,

22. Ibid., Meditation V, P.182

it is an innate idea. Descartes argument is called a priori. In other words, Descartes formulation goes roughly as follows :

1. The idea of God is that of a perfect being.
2. A perfect being lacks no positive qualities.
3. Existence is a positive quality.
4. Therefore, God does not lack existence, God exists.

When confronted with this proof, some people are inclined to ask :Where did Descartes get that definition of God ?The defender could say :`It's a standard definition ' or `I just made it up'.When one wonders about the existence of something, the source of the idea is not generally at issue. One could invent the concept of a 'drog' (a doglike creature that hops like a frog) and ask whether such a thing exists. There would seem to be nothing ^equestionable about such an inquiry.

According to Descartes, while the ideas of all other things imply only the possibility of their existence, necessary existence is inseparable from the concept of the most perfect being. Without existence we cannot think of God, he has the ground of his existence in

himself, he is a se or causa sui,²³ Descartes tried to hold that existence follows from the idea of an infinite, independent, all knowing, all powerful Being. He gives an example of a triangle. Just as the conclusion that all the angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles follows from the definition of a triangle, so the existence of God follows from the very idea of Him.²⁴ According to Descartes we cannot conceive God without existence. It follows that existence is inseparable from Him. Hence, God really exists.

It would be impossible to separate the essence of God from His existence. He said, "But nevertheless, when I think of it more attentively, it appears that the existence can no more be separated from the essence of God, than the idea of mountain from that of a valley or the equality of three angles to two right angles, from the essence of a triangle".²⁵

But Descartes observed, his idea of a necessarily existent God does not impose any compulsion

23. Thomas D. Davis, *Ontological Argument of Descartes in philosophy: an Introduction through original fiction and discussion*, p.85

24. E. Anscombe and P.T. Geach (tr.), *Descartes : Philosophical writings*, P.103

25. T.V. Smith and Marjorie Green (ed.), *Descartes meditation V. From Descartes to Locke*, P.93

that God should exist actually in the nature of things, in the way his imagination of 'Winged horses' does not indicate that there are actually existent winged horses. All the same he observed that the essence of God could not be conceived apart from His existence.²⁶ According to Descartes, the existence of God, reality of God and unchangeability of God etc., can arise from the idea of God. To him "what is clearly and distinctly conceived as essential is true, existence is clearly and distinctly conceived as essential in God, therefore, it is true that God exists. His argument is clearly a priori, and in effect he says so when he claims to base it on a 'clear and distinct idea' of God. It is tempting to find a crude aspiration to a priori status in Anselm's premise to produce a principle which needs nothing else but itself alone to prove itself".²⁷

Descartes is fully convinced that all possess the idea of God which is the clearest of all ideas. But could Descartes share his conviction with every one? Is the idea of God a necessary experience of anyone who reflects on his own condition? Descartes thinks so. The true idea of God being innate in all men, a little reflection or contemplation of the self would at least give an inkling of the Divine.

26. Ralph M. Eaton (ed.) Descartes selections, P.140

27. Jonathan Barnes, op.cit., P.22

It may be pointed out to Descartes that if the idea of God arises as a result of thinking or reflecting what could be said about savages and children ? Do they have the capacity to reflect ? Can they form the idea out of the inherent potentialities ? Surely not in the sense in which Descartes has, that is, through reasoning. Reasoning cannot explain the origin of the idea of God in all men. Reasoning may make us fully aware of the developed idea of God, but in reasoning, the idea of God is already presupposed. The ontological argument ignores the proper distinction between thought and existence. The existence of a thing does not depend upon our thinking. Kant says that from the idea or thinking of one hundred thalers in our mind we cannot prove their existence in our pocket. In the same way, we have the idea of God in our mind, it does not follow that, therefore, God really exists. Because, there is a difference between thought or idea and existence.²⁸ God's existence must be granted, if God is most perfect and if existence is a 'perfection'. But existence is not an attribute or quality. In order to have an attribute a thing must exist first. But His existence cannot be proved from his perfection. ²⁹

28. Geddes Mac Gregor, Introduction to religious philosophy, P.106

29. John Hospers, An Introduction to philosophical Analysis, P.428

Descartes says that existence is inseparable from the concept of the most perfect being. It might be conceded that one cannot think of a hill without a valley, but certainly from this it does not follow that there is any hill in the world. Similarly it appears, not to follow, says Descartes, from his thinking of God as existent, that God does exist. Descartes rejects this objection. He tells us that one can think of a hill not to exist, but one cannot even think of God as non-existent. Descartes said, "I am not free to think of God apart from existence, in the way that I can freely imagine a horse either with or without wings,"³⁰ But why? By 'God' is meant a substance infinite, all powerful and so on. "But these properties are so great and excellent that the more attentively I consider them the less I feel persuaded that the idea I have of them owes its origin to myself alone."³¹ And thus, it is absolutely necessary to conclude that God exists. It is the power of the symbol in the form of the Christian God that would not allow Descartes to think that essence and existence can be separated in God. A supremely perfect Being cannot be imagined to be devoid of existence.

Without existence anything cannot be perfect.

So existence depends upon perfection. Hence, God's

30 E. Anscomb & P. T. Geach (tr.), *op. cit.*, Meditation V, P. 104

31. *Ibid.*, P. 105

existence depends on his perfection. Kant criticised it. In the proposition, 'A perfect being exists' without contradiction we cannot affirm the subject and reject the predicate. But, he points out, we can without contradiction elect not to affirm the subject together with its predicate. We can reject as a whole the complex concept of an existing all perfect being. Pierre Gassendi, one of the contemporaries of Descartes has challenged this assumption. He declared that existence is a perfection neither in God nor in anything else. It is rather that in the absence of which there is no perfection. That which does not exist has neither perfection nor imperfection and that which exists and has various perfection, does not have its existence as a particular perfection and as one of the number of its perfections, but as that by means of which the thing itself equally with its perfection is in existence, without which neither can it be said to be possessed by it. Hence, neither is existence held to exist in a thing in the way that perfection does, nor if the thing lacks existence is it said to be imperfect (or deprived of a perfection). We say, rather, that it is nothing. Descartes' immediate reaction on was one of puzzlement. He said, "I do not see what sort of thing you think existence is, nor why it cannot be called a property, just as omnipotence, is taking the term 'property' for any sort of attribute, or for whatever can be predicated of a thing, as it surely must be

taken here."³² Calkins says Descartes does not analyse the idea of God in order to see what it implies, but simply starts with what he is clearly conscious of within himself. We may state this argument after Calkins thus:"That of which I have a consciousness as clear as my consciousness of myself, must exist. But I am as clearly conscious of God as of myself, hence God exists."³³

Kant has criticised most thoroughly the ontological argument. He says that we cannot deduce the reality of any thing from a mere idea of it. But if a thing is to exist it must be given in experience. The most important point of his criticism is that existence is not a predicate. Kant defines real predicate as something which is added to the concept the subject and enlarges it. He argues that if 'exists' were a real predicate then in asserting that something exists we would be altering our concept of that something there by ending up with a different concept from the one we started with. But, since we have a new concept we will have failed to assert existence of the original subject. Thus, if 'exist' were a real predicate, we could not therefore say that the exact object of the concept exists. But since we can say that, we cannot

32. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, Op.Cit., Vol. II, P.288

33. Calkins, persistent problems of philosophy, P.26

be adding anything to the concept of the subject when we say that the subject exist, and therefore, 'exists' cannot be a real predicate. Thus, Kant shows that the logical function of 'exists' is not to add a further predicate to a concept but to assert that the concept applies to something in the world. This argument supports a false assumption that existence is a quality. For example, if we say that a horse has a mane, tail, four legs and hoofs, then we are attributing properties to the horse; but if we say that horse exists, we are not adding another property: we are saying that the thing we conceived as having these properties also exists. We are not adding to our concept of the thing : we are asserting a relation between the concept and the world. ³⁴

The ontological argument treats 'existence' as a property or predicate. Red or green, good or bad are real qualities or properties of things .We can say that so-and-so has this or that property or quality. But can we say that this boy has existence as its property or predicate? Can we classify boys into existing and non-existing boys? If non-existing things do not form new species of things, then it shows that existence does not add anything to the meaning of a concept. Kant says that existence is not a

34. John Hospers, Op.cit., P.429

real predicate, that is, it is not a concept of some thing which would be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the positing of a thing, or of certain determinations, as existing in themselves. Existence is more a matter of grammar and logic than of metaphysics. The logical positivists have taken cue from Kant to hold that existence is not a predicate. As A.J. Ayer asserts, "...if existence were itself an attribute it would follow that all positive existential propositions were tautologies, and all negative existential propositions self-contradictory; and this is not the case".³⁵ We are to distinguish between logical or grammatical predicate and a real predicate. Logically positing of a thing is merely the copula of a judgement. The proposition 'God is omnipotent' contains two concepts. God and omnipotence, which are added together by the small word 'is', does not add any new predicate to the subject.³⁶ So 'God exists' is not proper sentence, for 'being or existence' is not a predicate. As a matter of fact 'God is' is an incomplete sentence. It requires a proper predicate, e.g, 'God is omniscient or loving'. On the other hand, if we accept that existence is a real property as 'loving', 'kind' etc. Then like all other properties it would be contingent. Just as we can think of a cow as not being either black or ferocious, so we can also think of God as

35. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and logic, P.58

36. Kant's critique of pure Reason, translated by N.K. Smith, P.282

not having property of 'existence'. All contingent properties can be given by experience alone and sentences containing them can be synthetic only.³⁷

As Hospers observes, "The difference between saying that X has certain properties and saying that X exists can be illustrated as follows : 'Unicorns have one horn' means 'If there is (exists) anything that is a unicorn, then it has one horn'. And so on for any other property of unicorns. According to the same analysis, 'Unicorns exist' would mean 'If there is (exists) anything that if a unicorn, then 'it exists' and this flat tautology is certainly not what we would mean if we said that unicorns exist. Worst still, 'Unicorns do not exist' would become, 'if Unicorns exist, then they do not exist'- which is self-contradictory. But the proposition that Unicorns do not exist is certainly not self-contradictory. In this way we see that 'Unicorns have one horn' and 'Unicorn exist', though they are grammatically similar, are very different in type : the analysis that works for the first will not work for the second. Having one horn is a property, having four legs is a property, being white is a property, and so on, but existing is not a property. To say that something exists is to say that there is a something that has the properties. We can safely say that if there is a greatest

37. Ibid., P. 281

conceivable being, then he exists but this is a tautology and it in no way proves that there is such a being. "38 The ontological argument seems to depend upon confusion of two different concepts of necessary being. These two concepts are those of logical necessity and ontological or factual necessity. In modern philosophy logical necessity is logically necessary, if it is a true in the meaning of the terms compositing it. The basic empiricist principle is that existential propositions cannot be logically necessary. In this view, the notion of logically necessary being is not allowable, because it would mean that the existential proposition 'God exists' is logically true or true by definition. However, Anselm's principle, was not that God is a logically necessary being, (in this modern sense) but that God is an ontologically or factually necessary being, because, Anselm was clear that by a being whose non-existence is inconceivable he meant a being who exists without beginning or end and always as a whole.

Russell has analysed the word 'exist'. He has shown that although 'exist' is grammatically a predicate, logically it performs a different function, which can be brought out by the following translation. Cows exist means, there are X's such that X is a cow is true. This translation makes it clear that to say that cows exist is

38. J. Hospers, Op.cit., P.429

not to attribute a certain quality (namely existence) to cows, but is to assert that there are objects in the world to which the description summarized in the word 'cow' applies. Russell holds that when we say, for example, 'Cows exist' or 'Unicorns do not exist' we are not speaking about cows and saying of them that they have the attribute of existence, or of Unicorns and affirming that they lack this same attribute. We are talking instead about propositional functions. That cows exist means that the propositional function 'x is a cow' is sometime true, that, in other words, the concept of cow has an instance. And that Unicorns do not exist mean that the propositional function 'x is a unicorn' is never true, i.e., the concept of a unicorn is never instantiated. To put it in Russell's own language; "Existence is essentially a property of propositional function. It means that the propositional function is true in at least one instance.... Therefore you clearly can know existence proposition without knowing any individual that makes them true. Existence- propositions do not say anything about the actual individual but only about the class or function" .³⁹

Therefore, the ontological argument has failed to prove the existence of God. The criticism is applicable

39. B. Russell, 'The philosophy of logical Atomism', section v, as reprinted in The Many Faced Argument ed. Hick and McGill, P. 223

to the form of the argument given by Anselm. The defect of the argument is that while it establishes what the concept of God involves, the idea of God's existence, and God's necessary existence, it cannot take the step of establishing that this concept of an eternally existing being is exemplified in reality. Jerome Suffer says, "A famous example of an argument which purports to prove the existence of something by showing that its non-existence implies a contradiction is the Ontological Argument, which purports to show that it follows from a particular concept of God that such a being exists, and therefore that the assertion of the non-existence of God is self-contradictory".⁴⁰ To this kind of objection a Cartesian would reply that though in ordinary cases it is not possible to show that something X exists in reality by analysing the concept of X in the understanding, the concept of God is to be treated as an exceptionally unique case where this is possible. As William P. Alston observes, "We cannot cross the border without a passport (of experience) which has been approved on the other side, but a rocket can burst into outer space on the strength of energy developed within the earth's atmosphere. And so it goes."⁴¹

40. J. Shaffer, 'Existence, predication and the ontological Argument' in *Mind*, Vol. LXXI, N.S. No. 283, July 1962

41. William P. Alston, 'The ontological Argument Revisited' in the *Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXIX, No. 4, 1960
Reprinted in W. Doney (ed.), *Descartes - A collection of critical Essays*, P. 290

Alston maintains that we cannot understand why existence is not a property unless we are able to give some account of what is involved in predicating a property of a subject. He begins from the position that one essential element in predication is a presupposition that the subject of predication exist. If we accept the principle of presupposition, there is good reason to deny that existence is a property. For if the principle is true and if existence is a property, then any positive statement predicating existence of a subject will be trivially true and any negative statement denying the existence of a subject will be false. Thus we could never make a false positive existential statement or a true negative one. But this is absurd. We do not make such statements. Hence when we say that something exists, we cannot attribute a property to a subject. Alston thinks that no statement 'about' something which exists in a nonreal mode of existence can have implications with respect to real things. Except in so far as it implies that there are legends or stories or dreams or thoughts which have a certain content. So if 'God exists' is about something which exists in the understanding or in any other nonreal mode of existence, it cannot have the implication, the religious significance, it is usually thought to have.

Alston finds faults in the way in which

criticisms were made against Descartes' ontological argument. The critics have failed to consider the basic features of the concept of existence. Alston therefore seeks to establish his argument so as to show that existence is not a predicate and ultimately to show also that the ontological argument is refutable. Alston finds some problem in predicating real existence of a perfect being which exists in the mind. As he says, "We can say of this being that it is infinite, wise, just, merciful, all knowing, and so forth. But when we add "and really exists", something jars us; we are seized with logical vertigo. This we want to say, is different. Well, in all the other cases, we remained within the sphere of ideas or concept, but when real existence is asserted we step outside that sphere, and this cannot be done solely from an examination of its contents. We must look outside and see what is there. Dissection of what is in the understanding can never tell us what is in the real world....".⁴²

Thus for Alston the ontological argument is nothing more than a metaphor, "Here the nature of the being in the understanding is of such ontological richness as to burst its bonds; its inherent expansive power impels it across the boundary into real existence".⁴³ These metaphors

42. Ibid., P.289-90

43. Ibid., P.290

do not help us at all."Whether or not the statement 'That ghost is in the house again'implies that abnormal phenomena are to be expected in the house in the immediate future depend on whether the assumption on which that statement rests is that a certain ghost exists in your imagination,or that a certain ghost really exists".⁴⁴ In doing so,in general the logical status of the predication is delimited and not the possible predicates themselves.While discussing the non-real mode of existence Alston brings forth two defining features.They are 'the real correlate of a non-real existent' and 'the real archetype of the non-real existent'. As he remarks, "whenever something exists in my dreams, there must be a real conscious dream state;.... whenever something exists in my understanding there are real thoughts, ideas, images, and so forth,in my mind which would ordinarily be said to be about this thing, perhaps real dispositions to behave in certain ways toward things of this kind and so forth.It is this entailment which lends plausibility to the project of reducing all othermodes of existence to real existence. Let us call such a real existent the real correlate of a non real existent.Second, we can specify something which really exists and has all the characteristics (excluding existence,if that exclusion is necessary)of the nonreal existent.Let us call this the real archetype of the nonreal existent.Thus the real

44. Ibid.,P.292

archetype of a mountain in my dream would be a real mountain of the same size, shape and so forth ."⁴⁵ The ontological argument only proves the real correlate of a non-real existent."Now it seems to be a defining feature of all nonreal modes of existence that any statement about something which exists in such a mode will have no implications with respect to real things, except for its real correlate and any implications that might have. In particular it has no implications concerning the real archetype".⁴⁶

45. Ibid., PP.294-95

46. Ibid., P.295

CHAPTER - VI

ROLE OF GOD IN CARTESIAN PHILOSOPHY

The concept of God is not a positive but a negative one. Descartes points out that the realization of an infinite and powerful God is more definite than and prior to the realisation of man as a limited creature. Therefore, the concept of infinity cannot be said to be a negative one. In case of the external world, God became the decisive principle. Descartes proved the existence of the external world upon the veracity of God. As Frank Thilly observes, "We have feelings of pleasure, pain, appetites and sensations, which we refer instinctively to bodily causes. But since our sensations often deceive us, and, since desires and appetites are often misleading, we cannot prove the existence of bodies from the existence of such experiences. Yet, if God induced in us a deeply rooted conviction of the existence of an external world, when no such world existed, he could not be depended against the charge of being a deceiver. The existence in my mind of illusions of sense and even hallucinations and dreams is, however, compatible with the divine goodness, since God has endowed me with the power of intellect to dispel and correct such delusions. Thus, God is not a deceiver, but a truthful being, and our sensations must, therefore, be caused by real bodies."¹

1. F.Thilly, History of Philosophy, P.307

Descartes conceived God as the absolute substance, substance is that which has an independent existence and need not depend upon any other thing. Therefore, substance does not require anything else to create its existence. A supreme substance of this kind can be only one, and that is God. Besides God, Descartes believed in two other relative substances—mind and body. Both of them are independent of each other but they depend upon God for their existence. According to Descartes, God is the efficient cause of matter. The movement of the physical world owes its origin to God. Thus, Descartes' God is the unmoved mover of this world. God is also in a different relationship with mind. God is the goal, the end, the ultimate purpose towards which our finite intellects strive. God's relationship to the mind is teleological. In this way, the role of God occupied an important place in the cartesian philosophy.

But Descartes seems to be vague and indefinite in his use of the term God. His God is partly the Absolute of metaphysics on which everything depends, but which depends on nothing. Partly He is the personal creative Being of christian theology. The idea of God cannot be produced by human beings, because finite human beings cannot produce the idea of God who is an infinite being.

On the basis of the clear and distinct idea of God -that the perfect Being cannot be a deceiver, Descartes believes that God is not, and cannot be the evil demon he had envisaged earlier. If God is not that, then a great deal of the information that had earlier been considered suspect, can now be considered reliable. all that is needed is to find out what God, the non-Deceiver, wants and makes us believe is true. Since God cannot deceive us, we can place complete faith in the knowledge He gives us. ²

From an analysis of our rational faculties, Descartes finds that the only judgments we are forced to make are those regarding clear and distinct ideas. We are compelled to assert any clear and distinct ideas and to believe that whatever is clear and distinct is true. Since all-powerful God forces this upon us, we cannot be mistaken when we believe that something that we clearly and distinctly conceive is true, because God cannot be a deceiver. On the other hand, we can withhold our judgment with regard to matters that are unclear and indistinct. God does not force us to come to any conclusions in this area; if we do, it is our responsibility, not His. Therefore, with respect to such ideas, we have no guarantee that what we believe is true. The faculty of judgment functions

2. R.H.Popkin & A.Stroll, Philosophy, P.127

reliably in relation to the clear and distinct innate ideas that God has implanted in us. But since we are imperfect creatures, we insist on using our faculties beyond this range, and judge matters about which we have no assurance. Therefore, we make mistakes when we misuse our faculties. But, we cannot make mistakes when we use them as God intends and forces us to do.

Some examples may help here. Descartes says, God has given us clear and distinct mathematical ideas. When we examine our ideas of "2" and "3" and "5" we find that it is clear and distinct that $2+3=5$. Since God has given us the ideas and the judging faculty, and has forced this belief upon us, and since He cannot be a deceiver, then $2+3=5$ must be true. But when we see a group of colour patches that look like some people walking, it is not clear and distinct that these are people, that this may not be part of a dream-hence we are not forced to judge that what we see is "some people". If we judge in this case, it is at our own risk, since we have no Divine guarantee.

In the fourth Meditation Descartes says, "I have found the source of falsity and error. And certainly there cannot be any other than that which I have explained, since as long as I restrain my will within the limits of my knowledge that it makes no judgement on any matters except

those which are clearly and distinctly conceived by the understanding , I can never be deceived. Every clear and distinct conception is certainly something, and therefore cannot come from nothing, but must necessarily come from God-God, I say, who is supremely perfect and cannot be the cause of any error. Thus, we must conclude that such a conception or judgment is true".³ Descartes says that human error consists in a privation of knowledge. In so far as man is created by God, there is nothing within him which can cause him to be deceived. Yet, since he is not God, he does not have all of His perfections. According to this view, the will through which we are endowed with the idea of God can make correct judgments about an unlimited range of ideas. However, since the will makes correct judgments only about those ideas which are perceived by the intellect, the will sometimes chooses to judge ideas which the intellect does not clearly and distinctly understand. Thus, human error is not, properly speaking, caused by the imperfections of the will, but instead by the fact that will's domain extends further than that of the intellect, which is the immediate source of ideas to be judged.

There is a property of God that is central to the further construction of Descartes' epistemology : God

3. E.Haldane & G.R.T.Ross(tr.), The Philosophical works of Descartes, Vol. I,P.178

is liable to no errors or defects. From this it is manifest that He cannot be a deceiver, since the light of nature teaches us that fraud and deception necessarily proceed from some defect. ⁴ Descartes is also on occasion disposed to connect with God's benevolence that he would not wish to lead us, his creatures, into error. It is central to Descartes' system because he founds on it the possibility of knowledge of the external world and of the past. In Descartes system, the knowledge of God comes in between the knowledge of the self, on the one hand, and that of the external world, on the other, and serves as a via-media through which we get at the certainty of the latter.

Besides the idea of God and self we experience many ideas of colour, taste, smell, extension, etc. We believe that they are caused by bodies external to us. However, in general we know that our ideas about the external world are caused by bodies outside of us. In general it appears quite clear and distinct that really there is an external world of material bodies. The perceptions or ideas are not created by us and they do not depend on our will. ⁵ Sometimes we have to accept them without will and sometimes we have will to accept them but

4. Meditation III, Descartes selections, edited by R.M.Eaton, P.126

5. Ibid., P.112

cannot. On the other hand, God also cannot be the the cause of our ideas of eternal objects. If these ideas be caused by God then God would be deceiver, for we clearly, distinctly perceive them to originate from external bodies.⁶

Thus , corresponding to this clear perception there must be an external world for the varacious God cannot allow us to have a strong inclination to believe in delusion.

Descartes is a naive realist in practice for he believes that there are bodies existing in their own rights like tables or chairs. They will continue to exist even if there be no human mind to preceive them. By bodies he means substances. Substance means that which so exists that it needs no other things in order to exist.⁷ In absolute sense, substance is one namely God for only God's existence is not determined by other thing. He is self caused or causa-sui, other things are relative and dependent on God. Other things exist because God exists. Besides God, there are two relative substances, namely, mind and body. Both of them are independent of each other. But both of them depend on God for their existence. Descartes, however, applies the term to mind and matter by calling them relative substances on the ground that they need nothing but the concourse of God for their existence.

6 Meditation III, Op.Cit., P. 109

7. Principles of Philosophy, Parts-I,LI

A relative substance according to him, is that which derives its existence from God and depends for its existence on nothing else except God. Hence , mind is the thinking substance and matter the bodily substance and thus, Descartes uses the term 'substance' in a less restricted sense, i.e., in the sense of that which requires for its existence only and solely the aid of God .

A substance, however, is known, not simply from its being a thing which exists independently, but also from any of its attributes, and although any attribute is sufficient to lead us to the knowledge of substance, yet there is in every substance one principal property which constitutes its essence or nature and upon which all other properties depend.⁸ Attribute means the essential characteristic of the substance.⁹ Consciousness is the attribute of mind and extension is the attribute of body. The attribute manifests itself in many ways. This modification of the attribute is known as the mode.¹⁰ Figure or motion is the mode of extension, as sensation and imagination are the modes of thought. The mode cannot exist without the substance and its attribute but substance and attribute can exist without the mode.

8. Principles of Philosophy, Parts-I, LIII

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.,LVI

Material bodies are substances. Their extensions are attributes. But things are perceived to have the other qualities also, viz, colour, taste, smell, etc. Descartes points out that there are two kinds of qualities- Primary and secondary.¹¹ Extension, figure, motion, rest, duration, number, etc. are the primary qualities, and heat, cold, colour, sound, taste, etc. are the secondary qualities. Primary qualities are perceived clearly and distinctly. But secondary qualities are not perceived clearly and distinctly. Primary qualities belong to object but secondary qualities belong to our mind.

We cannot conceive of matter except as being extended, and there can be no extension without body. Hence, there can be no such things as an empty space or vacuum. This conception of matter differs, therefore, from the common conception of it. The common conception is that matter consists of individual particles, called atoms, which are separated from one another and move in empty space. According to Descartes, however, matter is something continuous. Hence, from his standpoint there is everywhere a plenum, and nowhere a vacuum, as such a thing is 'repugnant to reason'.¹² This then differs from the atomic theory of Democritus, which regards the atoms as

11. Meditation III, Op.Cit., P.116

12. Principles of Philosophy, Part-II,XX

indivisible, assumes the existence of vacuum or empty space, and attributes to bodies gravity.¹³

Descartes' view is that the atoms, however small they may be, can never be indivisible, as what indivisible must always be unextended and must therefore, cease to exist as a particle of matter. Hence, so long as there is matter, there must be extension and divisibility.¹⁴

There is no such thing as an absolute atom, because a limit to divisibility is inconceivable. The world of corporeal substance is illimitable, is extended without limit. For extension cannot be conceived as having limits.¹⁵

Descartes here contradicts Aristotle and agrees with Giordano Bruno. For according to the former, space is limited and it is nonsensical to speak of an actually infinite space.¹⁶ But according to the latter, space has no limits and Aristotle's spheres and divisions of the world are purely imaginary. Extension is the primary or fundamental property of which divisibility, figurability and mobility are modifications. Even the smallest particles of bodies are capable of still further division, as space or extension is infinitely divisible. Hence, there is no such thing as an absolute atom. This divisibility consists

13. Ibid., Part-IV, CCII

14. Principles of Philosophy, Part-II, XX

15. Ibid., XXI

16. A.Weber, History of Philosophy, P.119

in movements of separation and union. The endless divisibility of space or extension gives rise to the different forms of matter and the consequent separation and union of its different parts. Hence the different properties of extension, and, therefore, all forms of matter depend on motion.

"Motion", says Descartes, "is the transporting of one part of matter of one body from the vicinity of those bodies that are in immediate contact with it or which we regard as at rest, to the vicinity of other bodies." ¹⁷ Motion in the ordinary sense of the term, is but the action by which a body passes from one place to another. But such a view is without any foundation. For if there can be no motion without action of force, then rest means a cessation of this action. Then in that case a person seated in a moving vessel would more properly be said 'to be at rest than in motion' as in that state he is not conscious of being in action. ¹⁸

Therefore, Descartes says that motion, strictly speaking, lies not in the force or action which transports one body from one place to another, but in the very transporting itself. Hence, according to him, motion

17. Principles of Philosophy, Part-II, XIII-XIV

18. Ibid., XIIV

is always in the movable thing, not in that which moves. ¹⁹
Hence, motion like rest is but a state of matter, a mode of
movable thing. As there is no empty space and all matter is
continuous, it follows that there cannot be such a thing as
the action of one body upon another at a distance. All
occurrence is due to the transference of motion from one
part of space to another, to pressure and impact. Each
motion, therefore, influences the whole circle of bodies :
'A force B out of its place, B drives out C and so on,
until Z takes up the position which A has left. ²⁰

For Descartes, extension alone is the essence
of matter. Hence, energy, force of motion will not be
essential to its nature. In other words, matter conceived
as mere extension, is essentially passive and cannot,
therefore, move itself. To put the same thing in the words
of prof. Weber, "Motion cannot originate in the bodies
themselves, they cannot be said to move themselves, to set
themselves in motion and to persist in it of themselves,
for bodies are extended, extended only, even in their
smallest parts and absolutely devoid of the inner
principle, the centre of action and impulsion which we call
soul or ego. They are entirely passive; they do not move
themselves at all, but are moved by external causes. We
cannot even say that they are heavy, if we understand by

19 Ibid., XXV

20. R.Falkenberg, History of Modern Philosophy, P.99

weight a tendency of the body to fall towards the centre of the earth, i.e., a kind of spontaneous activity in matter."²¹

How does, then, Descartes explain motion in bodies ? What, in other words, is the source or cause from which bodies get motion ? Descartes says that God is the first or primary cause of motion in the bodies. Originally, God created matter along with motion and rest. He at the beginning imposed rectilinear motion upon matter and as a result of this the particles of matter were distributed in vortices and thereby formed stars, the planets and many other heavenly bodies. ²²

By the side of God as the primary or universal cause of motion, the laws of motion appear as the secondary or particular causes of it. The first of these is what is called the law of inertia, which runs thus : everybody continues of itself in the state (that of motion or rest) in which it is, and changes its state only as a result of some extraneous cause. The second is stated thus; every position of matter tends to continue a motion which has been begun in the same direction, hence, in a straight line, and changes its direction only under the influence of another body. The third law which relates to the

21. A.Weber, History of Philosophy, P.314

22. Principles of Philosophy, Part-II, 36

communication of motion is given by Descartes as follows : if a body in motion meets another body, and its power is less than the resistance of the other on which it has impinged, it rebounds in the opposite direction. If, on the contrary, its force is greater it carries the other body along with it, and loses so much of its own motion as it imparts to the latter. ²³

The law of motion is based on the unchangeableness of God. Since God is immutable, all changes in the world of bodies must follow according to constant rules or laws of nature, and all laws of nature are laws of motion. This view of the prime mover was common in Descartes' time and afterwards Galileo and Newton accepted it. This is also the same as the old Aristotelian conception, as Aristotel himself had resorted to it in his philosophy. Why, then, is it the Descartes adopted this view ? According to Frank Thilly, " To hinder divine interference with the world, however, which would mean the abandonment of the mechanical theory and a relapse into scholasticism, our philosopher holds that God has given the world a constant amount of motion : motion is constant. Also as Thilly puts it, in this conception, the theory of conservation of energy, in germ. Bodies cannot produce motion of themselves or stop it; consequently they can

23. Principles of Philosophy, Part-V, 37,39,43

neither increase nor decrease it, and hence the quantity of motion and rest must remain the same." 24

The activity of motion in material things is due to their mechanical impact, God imparted the first motion and hence it is being continued. Much of Descartes physics is ancient but in certain observation he is delightfully modern. Specially his observation of motion as purely relative reminds us of the theory of relativity of Einstein. Descartes reduces the whole world to mechanism. The so-called living organisms are really machines, only they are mere complex and refined. This doctrine led to the dissection of the animals and to the discovery of the reflexes. The automation theory, however, furnished mixed blessing for it led to cruelty to the animals as well as a powerful tendency towards materialism. In his doctrine of the universe as a vast machine he anticipates the 19th century materialism and his insistence on reflexes is an anticipation of Behaviourism.

Descartes' theory of the universe evinces all the difficulties of any dualistic theory. On the one hand, Descartes believes God and nature to be distinct and independent entities and on the other he strives to relate the two. Naturally if they are related they can hardly be -----
24. Frank Thilly, Op.Cit., P.309

treated as independent. If they are two, it is essential to explain the relation between them. If God and nature are independent then God cannot possibly imprint conceptions upon man's mind just as much as man can have no way of knowing God. Another difficulty in Descartes cosmological theory concerns motion. God is pure soul and all qualities He possessed are different from those of material substance. So it is difficult to understand how He grants the quality of motion to substance.

Most of the philosophers following Descartes do not accept his theory of interaction between mind and body, instead postulate that the interaction is a matter of God's volition. This theory is known as occasionalism and its main proponents are Arnold Geulincx and Malebranche.

Geulincx argued that since the essence of the mind is to think, all our unconscious and involuntary activity takes place, not in the mind, but in the body, and therefore is to be identified with physical motion. The activity, however, of a purely thinking substance cannot be reduced to physical movement and therefore cannot interact with it. Nevertheless such interaction seems to take place. Feeling and volition seem to cause movements of the body. The only way out of this dilemma is to suppose that conscious states are simply the occasions of these

movements and that God is their real cause. ²⁵

God knows what I am going to will, although my will is free, and the entire universe has been arranged in accordance with that knowledge."He bound together there most diverse things (the motion of matter and the choice of my will) so that when my will wills, such a motion as it wills occurs and on the other hand when the motion occurs, the will wills ~~it~~, without any causality or influence of the one upon the other; as in the case of two clocks which are carefully adjusted together to the daily course of the sun, as often as the one strikes and tells us the hours, the other strikes in the same way and indicates the same hours, and that apart from any causality,... but solely on account of the connection which comes from the fact that both are made by the same art and with the same workmanship."²⁶

In the above passage Geulincx employs the famous simile of the two clocks to illustrate his occasionalism, a simile which Leibnitz later borrowed from Geulincx to elucidate his own closely allied theory of pre-established harmony. Occasionalism and pre-established

25. B.A.G.Fuller, History of Philosophy, P.68

26. Arnold Geulincx, Ethics, Tract-I, ed.by J.P.N.Land, Vol.III, P.211

harmony are both attempts to avoid the difficulties of Descartes' theory of causal interaction between soul and body. Geulincx also deviates from cartesianism in his conception of knowledge: I cannot know things as they are in themselves; God alone has knowledge of them, whereas I know only my own ego. 27

Nicolas Malebranche looks at the problem presented by Descartes from another angle. He asks, if thought is something utterly distinct from motion, how can motion produce sensation, and how can mind perceive real extension if such there be? The thing seems impossible. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned only like knows like. What we see is not the real world or extension, but a world of ideas, an intelligible world in ideal place. The ideas are in God and God is spirit with spiritual attributes only. A real body, or created space cannot affect mind; nothing but an ideal body, the idea of a body, can do so. We see all things in God, not in an extended God, but in a thinking God, and the things we see are ideas, not the extended material objects themselves. 28

All human experience, all human striving, all human longing are determined by God. Malebranche bases his

27. Frank Thilly, Op.Cit., P.316

28. Ibid., P.317

pantheism on the axiom that just as religion proves there is only one God, so philosophy proves there is only one cause. ²⁹ Occasionalism has been elaborated by Geulincx and Malebranche according to their individual reason. In its pure form the theory implies that the volition of the mind is an occasion for God's causing variation in the external world. In the same manner, occurrences in the external world are occasions for God's causing ideas in our minds. Thus, There is no direct relationship between the mind and body, both function on parallel lines since God makes them do so. In his Discourse on method, Descartes outlined some of the moral axioms which he followed in his philosophical studies. The first was contained in his desire to follow faithfully the laws and customs of his country. In other words, he would adhere to orthodox religion and also be moderate in his conduct and avoid all excesses:

" And amongst many opinions all equally received, I chose only the most moderate, both because there are always most suited for putting into practice, and probably the best (for all excess has a tendency to be bad), and also because I should have in a less degree turned aside from the right path, supposing that I was wrong, than if, having chosen an extreme course, I found

29. F.Mayer, A History of Modern Philosophy, P.123

that I had chosen amiss. I also made a point of counting as excess all engagements by means of which we limit some degree our liberty." 30

Descartes tried to show that by controlling our desires with inner fortitude and by making ourselves independent of the world, we can live really a philosophical life. We must not be diverted from our goal by sensuous longings. The great ideal which he had before him was spiritual freedom. He considered the intellectual love for God to be ultimately the greatest moral virtue. Yet this view did not make a mystic out of Descartes, he remained a scientist to the end of his life. 31

In his classification of emotions and passions, Decartes' explained that passions represent passive state of the soul. He named six primary passions- wonder, love, hate, desire, joy and sorrow. 32 All other passions are derived from the primary states. Our deliverance occurs when we realise the importance of that which lies in our own power and within our own control. The aim of ethics, according to Descartes, is to give a feeling of independence, but man can never be completely

30. Discourse on Method, Part-III tr.by L.J.Lafleur in Discourse on Method and Meditations, P.19

31. F. Mayer, Op.Cit., P.119

32. Descartes Selections (ed.) by R.M.Eaton, P.148

autonomous, for he realizes his destiny only by recognizing the majesty of God.

Two divergent strains can be found in the ethical system of Descartes. Sometimes he explained the so-called virtues of man in terms of bodily modification, almost psychosomatically. For example, in explaining laughter in the passions of the soul, he used psychological principles.³³ About desire, he noted, it agitates "the heart more violently than any of the other passions and furnishes more spirits to the brain."³⁴ In sadness on the otherhand, Descartes described the soul as feeble and slow.³⁵

We feel, as it were, constrictions around. Thus, in Descartes we find a trace of materialism, but this is secondary and subordinate to his spiritual ideal and to his persistent search for God.

Descartes recognises three sources of knowledge corresponding to the three classes of ideas, viz, adventitious, factitious and innate. The source of the first class is external perception, that of the second class, innate preception and that of the three, God himself. In other words, if the external objects are the cause of

33. Passions of the soul, Article-LXIX

34. Ibid., Article-LI

35. Passions of the soul, Article-XLII

adventitious ideas and the self itself of factitious ones, God himself is the cause of the innate ones : external objects produce motions on the extremities of the nerves spreading over the members of the body. These movements are then carried to the other extremities of these nerves which are collected in the brain round the seat of the soul and variously affect the soul or mind according to their diversity. As a result of this diverse affections arise in the mind. These affections are called perceptions of the senses or sensations. ³⁶

How does the mind act on the material world? According to Descartes, the quantity of matter and motion in the world remains constant without any increase or decrease. If mind acts on matter, then it would seem that there would be some addition to the amount of motion which is already there in the world. Then in that case the constancy of motion would be violated. But Descartes avoids this difficulty by supposing that what the will does in acting on matter is not increasing or diminishing the total amount of force or motion, but only changing its direction. The force or energy with which we work is really supplied by the organism, but it, instead of adding to, or diminishing, the total quantity of motion already is to new channels.

36. Principles of Philosophy, Part-IV, CXC

Descartes' account of matter as the substance of space, and space or extension as the essence or primary quality of matter renders impenetrability, resistance and movement unessential to its existence. If, as he holds, matter is passive and inert, then the above dynamical qualities of matter come to be regarded as accidental, as merely put into it from without. Hence, matter becomes conceivable without them. But this goes against the modern physical science which by admitting the existence of empty space, makes or extension unessential to matter, and regards the properties of solidity, impenetrability and motion as essential to it. Thus, Descartes' account of matter excludes many other primary attributes from it. This defect has led Leibnitz to regard force and not extension or space as the essence of matter.

Properly speaking, there cannot be a line of absolute distinction between the absolute substance (God) and the relative or created substances (mind). Still Descartes tries to keep the two kinds of substance distinct from each other by giving the relative substances an independent existence outside the absolute substance. Descartes' position, therefore, is found, on ultimate analysis, to involve a double dualism, i.e, a dualism between the absolute or divine substance and the created or relative substances and a similar dualism between the

relative substances themselves, between mind and matter.

In his proofs for the existence of God Descartes' scholasticism comes to a height. Usually he conceives God as a creator, and when he dispenses with that obscure conception, it is only to fall back upon the equally obscure notion of substance.³⁷ 'God exists' must be true as long as God exists; 'God exists necessarily' may be true as long as God exists. Nevertheless the necessity of God's existence is what, if anything, will guarantee the 'necessity' or the being always true, of the proposition that He exists, and unless this point is understood, argument can only proceed at cross- purposes.³⁸ Regarding the nature and concepts of God, Robert C. Whittemore speaks of twenty one conceptions of God. But the conception of God cannot be limited to only twenty one.³⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas compliments God by saying that "God's permission of evil is a good."⁴⁰

Besides the attributes of omnipotence, omnipreence and omniscience, God has been ascribed with thousand qualifications beacuse it is the only way of

37. N.Smith, Studies in the Cartesian philosophy, P.55

38. P.Hutchings, Necessary and Some Type of Tautology, Philosophy, Vol.XXXIX,Jan. 1964

39. R.C.Whittemore, The 21 conceptions of God in Darsana International, Vol.XXII, April 1982,P.17

40. Ibid., P.18

describing the nature of God. There are some who treat God as non-connotative proper name. But for the religiously conscious person the idea of God devoid of attributes is unintelligible. The description of God with positive characteristics may be inadequate, but it satisfies man's religious consciousness. So there can be no death of God by a thousand qualifications, as held by Anthony Flew. On the contrary, the idea of God comes alive with thousand qualifications.⁴¹

Soren Kierkegaard often called the father of modern existentialism, rejected as irreligious the program, whose value was almost universally taken for granted in his own days of demonstrating the existence of God. He regarded the proofs as a tempting substitute for a living religious faith and commitment. The difficulty of proving God was raised by Kierkegaard in the form of a dilemma. And this dilemma holds still for anybody who wants to prove the existence of God. The idea of demonstrating that this unknown something (God) exists, could scarcely suggest itself to the Reason. For if God does not exist it would of course be impossible to prove it; and if He does exist it would be folly to attempt. ⁴²

-
41. G.C.Nayak, Theistic description of God and 'The death by a thousand qualifications' in the Visva-Bharati Journal of Philosophy, Vol.V, No.2, Feb.1969, P.39
42. Soren Kierkegaard, "The absolute paradox" from Philosophical fragments, tr. by David F. Swenson, Chapter-III, P. 31

The real strength of the dilemma lies in the fact that God exists only for the believer. And for becoming a believer a change in the person is necessary. The unbelieving eye cannot discuss God. Generally speaking, it is difficult matter to prove that anything exists; and what is still worse for the intrepid souls who undertake the venture, the difficulty is such that fame scarcely awaits those who concern themselves with it. The entire demonstration always turns into something very different from what it assumes to be, and becomes an additional development of the consequences that flow from us having assumed that the object in question exists. Thus, we always reason from existence, not toward existence, whether we move in the sphere of palpable sensible fact or in the realm of thought.

Whether we call existence an accessorium or the external prius, it is never subject to demonstration. If it were proposed to prove Napoleon's existence from Napoleon deeds, would it not be a most curious proceeding? His existence does explain his deeds, but the deeds do not prove his existence, unless we understood the word 'his' so as there by to have assumed his existence. But Napoleon is only an individual, and in so far as there exists no absolute relationship between him and his deeds; some other person might have performed the same deeds. Perhaps this is

the reason why we cannot pass from the deeds to existence. If we call these deeds the deeds of Napoleon the proof becomes superfluous, since we have already named him; if we ignore this, we can never prove from the deeds that they are Napoleon's, but only in a purely ideal manner that such deeds are the deeds of a great general, and so forth. But between God and his works there exists an absolute relationship; God is not a name but a concept. Is this perhaps the reason that his essence involve existence? The works of God are such that only God can perform them. The works from which we would deduce his existence are not immediately given. Whoever, therefore, attempts to demonstrate the existence of God finally proves in lieu there of something else; something which at times perhaps does not need a proof, and in any case needs none better, for the fool says in his heart that there is no God. ⁴³

The coincidence of individual momentary existence and God's eternal reality is admittedly paradoxical, but it is paradox which exists only for the speculative intellect and what can be the individual's contact with God is in the tradition of great Christian mystics. Kierkegaard is in the precise and literal sense of the term a mystic- he believed in the possibility of the individual's union with God, a union which does not -----
43. Ibid., P.35

obliterate the individual. The individual, even when he establishes rapport with God, preserved his individuality and God remains an "Absolute other." Kierkegaard was a christian mystic in his conviction that Christ mediates man's self-transcendence: Christ is described as the "invitor" who draws the individual man to God.⁴⁴

Keirkegaard affirmed the majesty of God and considered man as nothingness, tortured by tensions and constant contradictions. This concept of God does not involve an attitude of orthodoxy, for it views the ritual of the church as merely external. It is man's spirit that counts and his feeling of inwardness. Like Luther, Keirkegaard emphasises the personal relationship between man and God, a relationship which cannot be governed by ecclesiastical standards and definite dogmas. Nor, can it be described by the catagories of theology for such a relationship transcends intellectual determinations. It can be grasped only through faith.⁴⁵

One of the important problems posed by Descartes is the problem of justifying our belief in the things that seem most evident to us. He offers a criterion of truth whiuch holds that all our clear and distinct ideas

44. F.Thilly, Op.cit., P.584

45. F.Mayer, Op. cit., P.467

are true. He shows that this criterion of truth is reliable by proving the existence of God who is not a deceiver. Thus, it is said that Descartes commits the fallacy of circular reasoning. It is not easy to see how Descartes can prove God's existence and veracity without assuming the validity of the criterion of truth which he says he needs a knowledge of God's existence and veracity to validate. While he posits God's existence as a necessary presupposition for the removal of doubt, he seeks to prove His existence by going outside the parameters of his methodology. The truthfulness of his innate idea of God is ascertained by the unconfirmed proposition that God guarantees the truthfulness of clear and distinct intuitions. So Descartes is indeed guilty of circularity in reasoning.

In conclusion, it may be said that Descartes seeks to reconcile accepted theological principles with the new discoveries by sciences. Thus while he seeks to prove God's existence, he also enquires into the foundation of certain knowledge. He offers philosophical proofs of God's existence in order to meet the attacks of the atheists. And at the same time he offers an argument that would discredit scepticism. But his efforts have not been successful.

CHAPTER - VII

CONCLUSION

The thesis is a study of the idea of God. The idea of God is the idea of an infinite Being which is universally present in all the finite beings. As there appears to be a gap between the finite and the infinite, to explain the idea of God involves some difficulty. But man, instead of stepping back, went ahead and gave explanations. Explanations may vary, but man never stops in asking how or why ? The concept of God occupies an important place in Descartes' philosophy. Like any other moderners, Descartes could not change the entire legacies, particularly the mental legacy. As a result of this, God remained to be a central problem for him. However, his idea of God was quite different from that of the ancient and medieval thinkers. He did not accept the idea of God as many did in the past.

With the dawn of modern philosophy we have seen a shift of emphasis from faith to reason. Descartes was the first rationalist philosopher who sought to free philosophy from the shackles of Religious Dogmatism. He attempted to construct a system of philosophy purely on the foundation of reason. Pure reason can yield indubitable conclusion without the aid of sense- experience and such operation can be found in Mathematics. Therefore, he sought

to model his philosophy on the pattern of Mathematics. The indubitable truths which mathematics contains is of two kinds of the self-evident truths and the demonstrable truths. Descartes believed that the existence of God could not be regarded as a self-evident truth, but only as a demonstrable truth. Thus, to establish the existence of God as a demonstrable certainty, Descartes had to start with certain self-evident truths. It was not difficult for Descartes to discover such self-evident truths to start with. By applying the method of doubt, he discovered the self-evident truth and it was his "COGITO ERGO SUM".

But the self-evident truth in which Descartes arrived at was a kind of solipsism. He was confined to himself and he had no other way to go beyond himself. So in order to escape this solipsism, Descartes brought the idea of God. For Descartes, the self was not empty; it contains ideas within itself. Of these, some ideas were adventitious coming from the external material objects and some other ideas were innate to the self, not coming from the external world. Thus, innate ideas had an intrinsic validity of their own and their truth was as indubitable as the existence of the self itself. According to Descartes, the idea of God as a perfect Being was one such idea. He seemed to be vague and indefinite in his use of the term God. His God was partly the Absolute of metaphysics on which

everything depends, but which depends on nothing, partly He was the personal creative Being of Christian theology.

Chapter I is introductory of nature and here I have tried to state the importance of Descartes's aim, method and cogito ergo sum. Descartes adopted mathematical method in his philosophy. Later on, it evolved as geometrical method in Spinoza's philosophy. He postulated the free enquiry into the philosophical domain. He tells us to bring everything to the bar of reason. To faith in religion and moral goodness, he supplied the better and more stable ground of reason. He held that knowledge to be obtained must be certain, necessary and universal. He knew that only mathematics could give this model of knowledge. So he established philosophy on the ground of mathematics. This emphasis on mathematics led to the geometrical method of Spinoza and influenced the methodology of Leibnitz and Kant. Even the empiricists like Locke, Berkeley and Hume could not ignore the claim of mathematics to be model of knowledge.

Descartes is the founder of rationalism. He points out that real, universal and necessary knowledge is found in innate ideas only. Sense experience cannot give as universal knowledge. As such, the universal knowledge is supplied by the mind to the sense data. The doctrine of

innate ideas means that mind is not totally receptive but also active. It supplies the active formative principles of knowledge. In this broad and sympathetic interpretation of innate ideas, Descartes seems to be essentially correct. At last, Kant points that general principles and concepts are inherent contribution of the mind to the sense-data. Descartes atleast recognised the dual role of innate ideas.

Since the essence of the mind is consciousness or thought, so there are certain ideas which belong to the mind alone. Innate ideas are clear and distinct. In this sense, Innate ideas means pure and abstract thoughts. colour, taste, etc. are not in objects and therefore, they belong to the physical existence. The external stimulus excites the sense-organs and the soul with the help of pineal gland forms sense-experience. Descartes held that the ideas of sense must be natural to the mind, i.e., innate. Upon the second view, then instead of the innate ideas forming a special class, innateness becomes characteristic of every ideas. This was developed in the philosophy of Leibnitz. Kant developed it as the formative principles of knowledge. These is yet another element in the Cartesian rationalism of modern development. This element consists in showing that certain knowledge is found in the analysis of self-consciousness.

The cogito ergo sum of Descartes led Leibnitz to define the monad in terms of the self. Descartes held that the mind alone can be known with certainty and the matter can be known only indirectly through the veracity of God. Descartes believed in the capacity of reason to know all things. From the cogito he gets the criterion and from the criterion he established the existence and veracity of God. From the veracity of God he establishes the reality of the world, the permanent self and knowledge. Thus, with the proof and veracity of God he closes the circle of his thought. In this he was followed by Leibnitz, Spinoza, Berkeley and Kant.

Thus, many streams of thought have followed from the writings of Descartes. The vision of mathematical philosophy could not explain the world in details. Descartes and his followers were ignorant of this weakness. Mathematics does yield necessary propositions. But the propositions of mathematics as Hume noted, have nothing to do with actual states of affairs. But in philosophy we pick up a notion from a field of factual enquiry and apply it to all other data of all other fields. So mathematical notions are not always very suitable for working out a philosophical system.

In Descartes' system of thought, we can see all the characteristics of modern western philosophy. The ideals that he adopted and the path that he cleared were followed by later thinkers. He was the first to try to look upon philosophy not merely as mental but practical, but he was not the last. Reason and Logic were the final criteria of the truth of any field for him and this tendency was borrowed not only by the rationalists, but also by the empiricists. The dualism of his philosophy can be seen to exist up to the time of Hegel. For all these reasons, Descartes has been accepted as the father of modern western philosophy.

In chapter II, the problem is discussed from the standpoint of geometry, theology and philosophy. The Euclidean geometry has played a very significant role in History of European thought in general and European philosophy in particular. Accordingly attempts were made in the past to evaluate the paradigms set by Euclid as regards all intellectual activities. In short, it was an attempt to set everything GEOMETRICO. Theology was no exception to this. The theologians in the middle ages attempted to provide arguments for the existence of God. The attempt continued even through the works of rationalists and empiricists. In other words, the role that reason play in our ideas of God or the sense-experience gives us the idea

of God ? The purpose of this thesis is to examine the various explanations of the importance and relevance of geometrical method in philosophy in general and theology in particular.

In chapter III, the casual argument for God is concerned with the First cause : there must be something which originates motion, and this something must itself be unmoved, and must be eternal, substance, and actuality, therefore we say that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continues and eternally belong to God. According to Aristotle, God as the First cause of Creation in the "First Mover" or the "Prime Mover" or the "Unmoved Mover". He states that everything has a cause and if this is accepted as the law of causation, then universe itself must have a cause which is called God. Hence God, must be the infinite first cause. According to Descartes, the causal argument holds that everything has a cause, there cannot be anything without a cause. Atleast the cause must be equal to the effect. The idea of perfect Being is itself an effect and it must have a cause. Then what is the cause of this idea of perfect Being ? Descartes says that he cannot be the cause of idea of perfect Being for he knows himself to be a finite being. So Descartes tries to prove the existence of God as the creator of human soul. But this casual argument cannot prove the existence of God.

In chapter IV, the cosmological argument is examined. It is explained that the argument begins with the idea of the world as an effect to God as its first cause. The basis of the existence of God is imperfection and contingency of the universe. The universe cannot be self-explained and intelligible only by non-contingent, necessary, perfect, absolute and self-explained being which is called God. According to Aristotle, God as the first cause of creation is the "First mover" or "Prime mover". It states that everything has a cause and if this is accepted as the law of causation, then universe itself must have a cause which is called God. Hence God must be the infinite first cause of the cosmos. In Indian philosophy, Nayayikas say that 'God is the efficient cause, whereas the universe is the material cause'. According to Udayana, the world is an effect, hence it must have an efficient cause. This intelligent agent is God. Again God gives motion to inactive atoms. So here we note some similarities between Eastern and Western mode of thinking.

St. Thomas Aquinas in his book 'Summa theologiae', gives five ways to prove the existence of God. These are derived from Aristotle's conception of 'Unmoved mover'. It is so far from current science or metaphysics, because God of Aristotle's metaphysics neither made nor sustained the being of the world. He only elicits motion

in it. The cosmological argument has some limitations. According to the law of causation, everything has a cause and if that is true, then God also must have a cause. But if God does not have a cause then it is not true that everything has a cause. To relate God with the finite causal series is difficult. Because if God is the first cause, then He comes under the finite causal series. If He is beyond the causal chain then it is impossible to establish a relation between Him and the world. The cosmological argument is not a satisfactory argument at all for proving the existence of God.

In chapter V, I have examined the Ontological argument. It is one of the most important arguments to prove the existence of God where the existence of God is proved from the idea of God. Existence is the very essence of the idea of God. From the mere analysis of God idea or the idea of perfect Being, we are deducing existence, hence this argument is called a priori argument. St. Anselm was the propounder of the ontological argument. Here God's existence is proved by the fact of His perfection. Because if He does not exist then He will become imperfect. This argument proceeds with the concept of God, as something than which nothing greater can be conceived. God is generally conceived to be the highest or supreme existent. Anselm pointed out that the most perfect conceivable being

must exist in reality as well as in the mind. God is a necessary existence, so it is impossible to conceive of Him as not existing. For something can be thought to exist that cannot be thought not to exist. Hence God must exist. Descartes gives another definition of God which differs from Anselm's. He says that existence is a quality or attribute or predicate. Existence cannot be separated from the essence of God, like having three angles cannot be separated from the essence of a triangle. Existence is clearly and distinctly conceived as essential in God, therefore God exists. The idea of God is the idea of a perfect being which cannot be created by us, it is an innate idea.

Kant has criticised this argument. According to him we cannot deduce the reality of anything from a mere idea of it. Hence God as the greatest conceivable being cannot exist. Existence is not a predicate. Because to say that something exists is to say that there is something that has properties. We can say that 'this being is good'. But to say that 'this pen has existence' is not to state a property. The existence of a thing does not depend on our thinking. Kant says that from the idea or thinking of one hundred dollars in our mind we cannot prove their existence. In the same way we have the idea of God in our mind, but it does not mean that God really exists. Because

there is a difference between thought or idea and existence. Hence, we can say that the ontological argument cannot prove the existence of God. Here Kant's criticism of the ontological argument can be supported as a valid one. The definition of God describes one's concept of God, but we cannot prove the actual existence of God.

After going through these three philosophical arguments for the existence of God, we may state our conclusion that these arguments fail to prove the existence of God. However, a new interpretation of the ontological argument would appear to be a better argument for the existence of God. The starting point of the ontological argument is the idea of God as a perfect Being. If we examine the idea of God we find that the basic element in the idea of God is 'Infinity'. If we try to explain this idea of infinity we will realise that this could not be explained from sense-experience or thinking the two important means of knowing. In other words, our idea of God cannot be explained from sense-experience or thinking. If we enquire into the problem of the origin of our idea of God, we may find that the idea of God can be explained only by accepting intuitive awareness of infinity. If our idea of God is derived from intuitive experience of infinity then the idea of God carries with it intuitive existence. In other words, if we examine our idea of God we find in it

intuitive existence.

In our version, we have tried to explain our idea of God from intuition. Hence, the analysis of the idea of God reveals thought existence as well as intuitive existence. Religious man always want a real God. We cannot prove the reality of God in the same way in which we prove the existence of a chair or a table. God is not an object like other objects in nature. God is distinct from everything in the experienced world. The fundamental mistake of the earlier arguments is due to the fact that the argument did not make a clear distinction between thought existence, intuitive and empirical existence. The arguments for the existence of God failed because the supporters of the version arguments conceive of God as having existence like ordinary things in the world.

But this is not correct. God's existence is intuitive existence which is apprehended through intuition only. Intuition is the direct experience while other experiences are in some sense mediated. In direct experience or intuition, we have an apprehension of infinity which when apprehended by our thought we get the idea of God. In other words our idea of God is based on an experience and in this experience the infinite reality is given. This shows that the idea of God involves the idea

of existence also. In this case the existence is intuitive existence and not empirical existence.

The VIth chapter is 'Role of God in Cartesian Philosophy'. Like other moderners, Descartes could not change the entire legacies. As a result of this, God remained to be a central problem for him. However, his concept of God is quite different from that of the ancient and medieval thinkers. Descartes conceived God as infinite, independent, omnipotent, omniscient and creative substance. God is *Ens entium*; an *Unum*, He can be said to be endlessly rich in the variety of His attributes; as *verum*, He is omniscient, and there is nothing that escapes his knowledge; as *Bonum*, he is unchanging in the constancy of His benevolence. He is *ens summum*, the supreme Being and *ens originarium* the primeval Being.

In Descartes philosophy, God became the criterion of all truth, all knowledge and all understanding. He tried to make God the ultimate ground of all knowledge. Descartes conceived God as the absolute substance. The movement of the physical world owes its origin to God. Thus, His God is the unmoved mover of this world. He points out that the realisation of an infinite and powerful God is more definite than and prior to the realisation of man as a limited creature.

The essential feature of the Cartesian philosophy which serves to set it off from other modes and styles of philosophising, is its emphasis upon the primacy of consciousness. For Descartes, Philosophical reflection requires a stand-point or a starting point which would have the clearness and distinctness of a simple intuition or of an immediately evident insight which he believed could only be consciousness itself. In this sense what is unfolded in the cogito is not an ontological truth, i.e, the substantial existence of the subject or self, but rather the simple luminous presence of consciousness to itself. It is ofcourse true that Descartes clothes this in the conceptual terms of substance and accident or of the distinction between thinking things and extended things.

Scientific methodology cannot capture God. God and the religious consciousness stand beyond empirical understanding which claims to be distinctly scientific. In fact, the application of scientific methods in proving or disproving God's existence and religious consciousness (trans-consciousness) is liable to methodological defect. God is to spiritometry, what point is to Geometry. The first principle of geometry is that 'A point has position but no magnitude'. Likewise the first principle of spiritometry is that God is. Descartes was the first rationalist philosopher who sought to free philosophy from

the shackles of religious Dogmatism.

So far, it is seen that the different thinkers have accepted an idea of God, i.e, an infinite Being. But the question still remains how the idea of an infinite Being could arise in a finite being ? The whole problem would be solved if we only accept finite being as part of the infinite Being. The problem would remain as a problem only for those who think the God is entirely different from man. Rudlof Otto, Kart Barth and other theologians who think that God is 'wholly other' to man has to face this problem. Only some kind of identity between the finite and infinite can bridge the gap between the two.

All finite beings-believers as well as non-believers are a part of God - a spark of the Divine fire. The only difference between the believer and the non-believer is that, the non-believer, though aware of the idea of God, try to 'nip in the bud' this awareness, whereas the believer allows it to bloom further. In this process, the degree of intensity of awareness of God increases. And finally, when it blooms fully, that is, when the person reaches the highest state of awareness, he is known as saint or seer. The saints come so near the Divine fire that he almost turneth into Fire. That is to say, the awareness become so intense, that the saints almost feel

one with God. So the capacity to go near the Divine Fire is present in all men, it only, requires some effort on the part of man.

It can be concluded by saying that the secret behind the universality of the idea of God is man himself, being of the Divine origin-a part of God. If each man would realise that he is a part of God, and whole-heartedly seek to reach that Divine reality -God, then instead of strife and discord among men, there would be only peace and accord.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abernathy, G.L
Longford, T.A (Eds.) - Philosophy of Religion (a book
of readings) Macmillan Co, New
York, 2nd edition, 1968
- Adamson, R - The Development of Modern
Philosophy, Blackwood & sons,
London, 1930
- Alston, W.P (ed.) - Religious belief and
Philosophical thought, Harcourt
Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New
York, 1963
- Anscombe, G
Gach, P.T (tr.) - Descartes: Philosophical
writings, Edinbergh, Thomas
Nelson & sons Ltd., 1954
- Augustine, St - The Confession, tr. by John
K. Ryan, Image books, New
York, 1960
- - City of God, tr. by G.G.
Walsh (et al), ed. with an
Introduction by Vernon J.

Bourke, Dumbleday, New York,
1958

Aquins, St. Thomas

- Summa Theologica, tr. by the
fathers of the English
Dominican Province, Benziger
Bros, Inc., New York, 1947

Ayer, A.J

- Language, Truth & Logic, 2nd
ed., 17th impression, Victor
Gollanz Ltd., 1967

Balz, A.G.A

- Cartesian Studies, Columbia
University Press, New York,
1951

- Descartes and the Modern
Mind, Yale University press,
New Heaven, 1952 Barlingay, S.S

Barlingay, S.S
Kulkarni, P.B

- A critical survey of Western
Philosophy : Bacon to Kant,
Macmillan, 1980

Barnes, J

- The Ontological Argument,
Macmillan Co, London, 1972

Beck, L.J

- The Method of Descartes, a
study of the Regulae,
Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1952

- Burnet, J - Greek Philosophy,
Macmillann & Co Ltd., New
York, 1968
- Caird, E - The Critical Philosophy of
I. Kant, 2nd ed., London, 1909
- Caird, J - The Philosophy of Religion,
Chucherverty, Chatterjee & Co
Ltd., calcutta, 1956
- Calkins, M.W - Persistent Problems of
Philosophy, Macmillan & Co
Ltd., New York, 1929
- Carr, H.W - Leibnitz, Oxford University
Press, London, 1st pub., 1929
- Charlesworth, M.J (tr.) - St. Anselm's Proslogion,
Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1965
- - Philosophy of Religion :The
Historic Approaches, Macmillan
& Company, New York : Herder &
Herder, Inc., 1972
- Chomsky, N - Cartesin Linguistics,
Harper & Row, New York, 1966

- Collins, J - God in Modern Philosophy,
Routledge & Kegan Paul,
London, 1st Pub., 1960
- Copi, I.M - Symbolic Logic, Macmillan
Publication, 3rd. edition ,
1967
- Copleston, F - Thomas Aquinas (1955),
Penguia Books, Baltimore, 1955
- - A History of Philosophy,
Image Books edition, New York,
1963
- Cottingham, J
Strothoff, R
Murdock, D (tr.) - Philosophical writings of
Descartes, Cambridge
University Press, London, 1985
- Danto, A.C - What Philosophy is, Harper
& Row, New York 1968
- Davis, D. Thomas - Philosophy : An Introduction
through original fiction and
discussion, Random House, New
York, 1979
- Doney, Wills (ed.) - Descartes, A Collection of
Critical Essays, Macmillan &

- Co Ltd., London, 1968
- Ducabe, C.J - A philosophical Scrutiny of Religion, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1953
- Durant, W - The Story of Philosophy, pocket Books , New York, 1968
- Eaton, R.M (ed.) - Descartes, Charles Scribners, New York, 1955
- Ebenstein, W - Great Political thinkers, Plato to the Present, 3rd edition, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co, Calcutta, 1966
- Edward , P
Pop, A (ed.) - A Modern Introduction to Philosophy, Free Press, New York, 1965
- Elwes, R.H.M (tr.) - The Chief Works of Benedict Spinoza, Dover Publications, New York, Vol-I, 1951, Vol-II, 1955
- England, E.B (ed.) - The Laws of Plato, 2 volumns, Manchester, 1921

- England, F.E - Kant's conception of God,
George Allen and Unwin Ltd.,
London, 1st Pub., 1929
- Ewing, A.c - The Fundamental Questions
of Philosophy, Allied
Publishers, New Delhi, 1951
- Falckenberg, R - History of Modern
Philosophy, Progressive
Publishers, Calcutta, 1977
- Feldman, Fred - Cartesian Introduction to
Philosophy, Mcgrew Hill, New
York, 1986
- Flew, Antony - Introduction to Western
Philosophy, Bonns Marrill Co,
New York, 1971
- Flew , A
Macintyre, A (ed.) - New essays in Philosophical
Theology, The Macmillan Co,
New York, 1955
- Fuller, B.A.G - A History of Philosophy,
Henry Holt & Company, New
York, 1958

- Galoway, G - The Philosophy of Religion,
T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1960
- Gibson, A.B - The Philosophy of
Descartes, London , Methuen &
Co Ltd., 1932
- Guthrie, W.K - The Greek Philosophy,
Methuen & Co , London, 1950
- Haldane, E.S - Descartes, his life and
times , E.P Dutton & Co, New
York, 1905
- Haldane, E. S
Ross, G.R.T (tr.) - The Philosophical works
of Descartes, Vol.I & II,
University Press, Cambridge,
1911 & 1931
- Hampshire, S - Spinoza, Faber & Faber,
Pelican ed., London, 1956
- Hartshorne, C
Reese, W.L - Philosophers Speak of God,
University of Chicago Press,
Chicago, 1953
- Hazelton, R - On Proving God : an handbook
in Christian conversation, New
York, Harper, 1950

- Henderson, S.V.P - Introduction to the philosophy of Education, The University of Chacago Press, Chacago, 1957
- Hick, J - Arguments for the Existence of God, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1964
-
- Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Religion, 2nd edition, Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentic Hall, Inc., 1970
- Hick, J
Mcgill, A.C - The many faced Argument, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967
- Hick, J - Philosophy of Religion, 3rd edition , prentice Hall, Inc., London, 1988
- Horton, W.M - Christian Theology : An ecumenical approach, New York, Harper, 1955

-
- treatise of human nature 1740
- Joachim, H.H
- Descartes rules for the direction of the mind , ed. by Errol E.Harris, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1957
- Jowett, B (tr.)
- Plato's Republic, Section - 475,VOL.II, Oxford Clarendon Press, London, 1953
-
- Plato's The Republic, Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 1961
-
- The Dialogues of Plato, in Great Books of the Western World, in Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, 1952
-
- The Dialogues of Plato , Vol. IV,4th edition, Oxford Clarendon Press, London, 1953
-
- The Works of Plato, Tudor Publishing Company, New York.

- Kaufman, G.D - Systematic Theology, A
historicist Perspective,
Charles Scribner's Sons, New
York, 1969
- Kant, I - Critique of Practical
Reasoning, tr. by Lewis White
Beck, Liberal Arts Press, New
York, 1956
- Keeling, S.V - Descartes, Ernest Benn Ltd.,
London, 1934
- Kenny, A (ed.) - Descartes, Random House, New
York, 1968
- Kierkegaard, S - Philosophical Fragments, tr.
by D.F. Swenson, Princeton
University Press, Princeton,
1936
- Koyre, A - Newton and Descartes,
Chapman & Hall, London, 1965
- Linden, J.V
Costello, W.T. - The Fundamentals of Religion,
Loyola University Press,
Chicago, 1956

- Mac Gregor, G - Introduction to Religious
Philosophy, Macmillan, London,
1968
- Masih, Y - Introduction to Religious
Philosophy, Motilal
Banarasidass, 1st edt., Delhi,
1971
- Matson, Wallace. I - The Existence of God,
Ithaca, Cornell University
Press, New York, 1965
- Mayer, F - A History of Modern
Philosophy, Eurasia Publishing
House (P) Ltd., New Delhi,
1976
- Malcolm, N - Dreaming, Humanities Press,
New York, 1959
- Merryless, W.A -Descartes, an Examination of
some features of his
metaphysics & method,
Melbourne University Press,
Melbourne, 1934

- Messeive, B.M
Sobel, M.A - Introduction to Mathematics,
Prince Hall International
Publication, 2nd Edition, 1969
- Mitchell, B (ed.) - The Philosophy of Religion,
Oxford University Press, New
York, 1987
- Moore, G.E - Some main problems of
Philosophy, Macmillan, New
York, 1953
- Meklejohn, J.M.D (tr.) - Kant's critique of Pure
Reason in Great books of the
western world, Chicago,
Encyclopaedia Britannica,
Inc., 1952, Vol.42
- Morris, M (tr.) - Philosophical Writings of
Leibnitz, J.M. Dent & Sons
Ltd., London, 1951
- Morris, T.V (ed.) - The Concept of God, Oxford
University Press, New York,
1987
- Mukerji, A.C - Self, Thought and Reality,
Allahabad, Juvnile Press, New
Delhi

- Olscamp, P.J (tr.) - Descartes, discourse on method, optics, geometry and meterology, Indian Polis, The Babbs-Moerill Co, Inc., 1965
- Parkinson, G.H.R (ed.) - Leibnitz, Philosophical Writings, tr. by Mary Morris & G.H.R. Parkinson, J.M. Dent & Sons, London, 1975
- Paton, H.J - The modern Predicament, The Macmillan Co, New York, 1955
- Popkin, R.H
Stroll, A - Philosophy, made simple books, Inc., Greystone Press, New York, 1956
- Perry, R.B - Present Philosophical Tendencies, Longman Green, London, 1979
- Popkin, R.H - The History of Scepticism from Drasmus to Descartes, Humanities Press, New York, 1960
- Radhakrishnan, S - An Idealistic View of Life, Unwin paper books, London, 1980

- Riechenbach, H - The rise of Scientific Philosophy, University of California Press, 1951
- Reid, L.A - Philosophy and the Theory and Practice of Education, English Language book society, London, 1973
- Rescher, N - The Philosophy of Leibnitz, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1967
- Roth, L - Spinoza, Descartes & Maimonides, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1924
- - Descarets Discourse on method, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1937
- Royle, J - The conception of God, The Macmillan Company, London, 1909
- Royle, G - The concept of mind, hutchinson's University Library, 1950

- Taylor, R - Metaphysics, Prentice Hall,
New Jersey, 2nd ed., 1974
- Thilly, F.A - History of Philosophy,
Central Book Depot, Allahabad,
1976
- Titus, H. H - Living issues in Philosophy,
American Book Company, New
York, 1968
- Veitch, J (tr.) -Discourse on method, etc., by
R. Descartes, Everyman's
Library, London, J.M. Dent &
Sons, 1949
- Versfeld, M - An essay on the metaphysics
of Descartes, Methuen & Co,
London, 1940
- Vidyarthi, P.B - Early Indian Religious
Thought, 1st ed., Oriental
Publishers & Distributers, New
Delhi, 1976
- Weber, A - History of Philosophy, R.K.
Publishers, Delhi, 1987

Wolfson, H.A

- The Philosophy of Spinoza,
Cambridge Massachusetts,
Harvard University Press, 1934

Wollheoim, R

- Hume on Religion, Fontana,
Fontana Library, 1963

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, William Benton
Publication, 1768

World's popular Encyclopaedia, Rupa Books Pvt. Ltd.,
Jaipur, 1993

The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vols 1 to 8, The Macmillan
Company & Free Press, New
York, 1967

The New Columbia Encyclopaedia, ed. by W.H. Harria & J.S.
Levey , Columbia University
Press, New York, 1975

Concise Encyclopaedia of Western Philosophy and
Philosophers, ed. by J.O.
Urmson, New York, Hawthorn

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, T & T Clark, New
York, 6th impression, 1967

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, 1952

An Encyclopaedia of Religions, (ed.) by M.A. Canney, Nag
Publishers, Delhi , 1976

JOURNALS

- Allen, R. - The Ontological Argument, Philos. Review, LXX,I,Jan., 1961
- Alston, W.P - The Ontological argument revisited, Philosophical Review, LXIX, 4, Oct., 1960
- Anderson, J - The cogito of Descartes, Austral. Journal, XIV, 1, March, 1936
- Ayer, A.J - Cogito ergo sum, Analysis, XIV, 2, Dec., 1953
- Balz, A.G.A - Concerning the Ontological Argument, Rev. Meta., VII, 2, Dec., 1953
- Beck, R.N. - Descartes Cogite re-examined, Philos. Phen. Res., XIV, 2, Dec., 1953
- Brown, T.P - Prof. Malcolm on Anselm's Ontological argument, Analysis, XXII, 1, Oct., 1961
- Carnes, R.D. - Descartes and the Ontological Argument, Philos. Phen. Res., XXIV, 4, June, 1964

- Cobrun, R.C - The hiddennedd of God and some Barmecidal God surrogates, The Journal of Philosophy, Vol. LVII, Nos. 22-23, Oct. 27-Nov.10, 1960
- De Burgh, W.G - Kant's concept of God, Mind, Vol. XXXIX, No. 154, April, 1930
- Grimm, R - Cogito ergo sum, Theoria, XXXI, 3, 1965
- Hardin, C.L. - An empirical refutation of the ontological argument, Analysis, XXII, 1 Oct, 1961
- Hartshorne, C - The logic of the ontological argument, Journ. Philos, LVII, 17, 1961
- Henle, P - Uses of the ontological argument, Philos. Rev, LXX, 1, Jan, 1961
- Henry , D.P - St. Anselm's nonsense, Mind, LXXII, 285, Jan, 1963
- Hintikka, J - Coginto ergo sum as an inference and a performance, Philos. Rev., LXXII, 4, Oct, 1963
- Hocking, W.E - Philosophy the buisness of everyone, Journal of American

- Association of University women,
June, 1937
- Hutchings, P - Necessary and Some type of
Tautology, Philosophy, Vol.
XXXIX, Jan, 1964
- Leyden, W.V - Cogito ergo sum, Arist. Soc.,
LXIII, 1962 to 1963
- Maclver, A.M - A note on the Ontological proof,
Analysis, VIII, 3, Jan, 1948
- Melcolm, N - Anselm's Ontological Argument,
Philos. Rev. , LXIX, 1, Jan,
1960
- Miller, R.G - The Ontological Argument in St.
Anselm's and Descartes, Mod.
Schoolman, XXXII, 4, May, 1955
- Moore, G.E - Is existence a predicate ?
Philos. Papers , 115-116
- Nayak, G.C - Theistic description of God and
'The death by a thousand
qualifications' in the Visva-
Bharati Journal of Philosophy ,
Vol. V, No.2, Feb. 1969

- Nielson , K - God the crisis of Modernity ,
Journals of Indian Philosophical
Research , Vol. X, NO.3,1993
- Peltz, R.W - The Logic of the Cogito, Philos.
Phen. Res., XXIII, 2, Dec, 1962
- Penelhum, T - Divine Necessity, Mind , Vol.
LXIX, No. 274, 1960
- Plantiga, A - A Valid Ontological Argument,
Philos. Rev., LXX, 1, Jan, 1961
- Rescher, N - The Ontological Argument
Revisited, Austral. Journ. ,
XXXVI, 2, Aug, 1959
- Shah, A - Religion, ethics and Science, a
dialogue between Wittgenstein
and Gandhi in Journal of Indian
Council of Philo. Research. ,
Vol. X, No. 2, 1993
- Shaffer, J - Existence, Predication and the
Ontological Argument, in Mind ,
Vol.LXXI, N.S No.283, July 1962
- Sibajiban - Descartes Doubt, Philos. Phen.
Res., XXIV, 1, Sep, 1963

- Siegler, E.A - Descartes doubts, Mind , LXXII, 286, April, 1963
- Weinberg, Jullus.R - Cogito ergo sum, some reflections on Mr. Hintikka's article, Philos. Rev. , LXXI, 4, Oct, 1962
- Whittemore, R.C - The 21 conceptions of God in Darsana International, Vol. XXII, April, 1982
- Wolz, H.G - The Universal doubt in the light of Descartes' conception of truth , Mod. , Schoolmen, XXVII, 4th May, 1950

LIBRARY
 no. 103170
 date 24/3/89
 class by
 sub heading by
 order by
 suggested by