

I. Meditation II

1) The Cogito

--where we are now: 'epistemic vertigo' and the EDH.

--the cogito argument (Readings: third paragraph of Med II) and what it means:

a) as inference: $\square (Ti \rightarrow Ei)$. Not: $\square (Ei)$

b) as performance (J. Hintikka): "I am, I exist."

--the metaphysical rationale for the inference: substance/accident

--your objections?

--a traditional objection: Gassendi's "ambulo" objection: we can infer we exist from the general principle "Whatever acts, exists." RD's reply: only *mental* acts can be known to exist with certainty, thanks to Evil Demon Hypothesis. But even mental acts do not support the generalization "Whatever acts mentally, exists" without Hintikka's strategy (to attempt to doubt that you exist and then recognize that one *cannot possibly form the doubt* when immediately aware of one's attempt such a doubt).

2) The nature of the ego

--clear and distinct grasp of the ego: the thinking thing

--but what does that mean? Essentially: $\square (Ti \leftrightarrow Ei)$. So, he must prove it both ways.

--the obvious objection: not-Ti, then not-Ei. The perils of being unconscious.

--2 responses: a) bite the bullet

b) is it so implausible after all? (Karen Ann Quinlan)

3) The mind and the wax

--how the mind is known better than the body (EDH + cogito)

--how the mind knows better independently of the body: wax

wax: identity under changes

	essence	accidents
	"naked"	"clothed"
	extentional	sensory
	properties	properties
Known by	reason &	senses &
	judgment	imagination



I. Meditation II

The Cogito

1) to refuse sceptic, need only show one belief that is true and indubitable. So RD notes, there is something happening if x is being deceived. If state of being deceived implies (necessarily) thinking, then thinking necessarily implies existence of the thinker.

RD has not shown that RD must have existed. Only that if RD thinks, RD exists when thinking. Many arguments against the cogito are based on taking the claim in the former sense.

The "self-certifying" performance feature of the cogito: if you can perform A, then what A claims is automatically true.

RD is using substance (what x really is) and accident (some inessential property of a substance) distinction to help motivate his claim. A mind is a substance bec. it can exist on its own, whereas all the many occurrences in the mind need not exist, and hence are accidentally related to what really exists, the mind, the substantial thing.

First objection: metaphysics is screwy (why assume where there is an action there must be an actor? Such generalizations are defeasible by the Evil Demon Hypothesis as they apply to actions that are *not mine* and hence I have no direct access to knowledge of. Reply: don't need it to make original argument.

Traditional objection: ok RD, you say if there is activity there must be an agent, and if that is what you are saying, isn't you claim trivial....e.g., "I walk, therefore I am"? Reply: you've forgotten my EDH. Only one thing can exist under the hypothesis: thinking. Also, your case gives me an agent, and hence makes the claim that the agent exists trivially true (but true nonetheless thereby).

RD thinks he has established, with the cogito, what he takes to be a metaphysically fundamental claim: minds & bodies are different substances. Dualism.

(Several students thought that a 'floating utterance' "I think, therefore I am" is a counterexample to the cogito. Doesn't work, since does not meet the EDH--I could doubt the existence of an utterance, even of a thought, unless we assume the "I" that is directly apprehending the utterance)

Hintikka improves on the Cogito-as-Performance: Attempt to doubt one's own existence and notice that, when one is immediately aware of one's thinking, one *cannot successfully doubt* one's existence. RD here is applying *indubitability* as a criterion for true belief. (JP: must be *more than a psychological inability to doubt*).

2) Meditation II: the nature of the ego.

the ego=the substance that thinks.

I=my capacity to think (particularly, to reason)

Thinking & existing are so closely tied that each is both nec. & suff. for the other.

Cogito shows $T_i \rightarrow E_i$.

What shows $Ei \rightarrow Ti$? Well, under the EDH, there can be only one thing which can exist, namely, a thought. So, if anything exists, it must be a thought.

Obvious objection: when $\neg Ti$, seems possible, even necessary that $\neg Ei$. Crazy sounding. RD cannot reply with a dodge about thinking subconsciously, since for him all thought is conscious.¹

RD's reply: bites the bullet, but then gets a better guarantee of existence later--God. But at this stage, he just accepts that he could go out of existence when not thinking (JP--yes, but that is quite different from the claim that you definitely do go out of existence when not thinking).

Also: RD asks if this is not reasonable. Are we existing when we stop thinking entirely? Karen Ann Quinlan (whose brain was no longer functioning due to a drug+alcohol event). Plausibly, if power of thought is gone, you are gone.

3) The Wax

For RD, mind is more readily and better known than body. How the mind knows better independently of the body: the wax example: what stays the same (ess. prop's--idea of its nature; extensional properties [can give a formal math'l acct of these]. How do we know math'l acct? Via mind on its own, by act of understanding, we grasp the underlying, unchanging properties of the wax. Proof: bec we could not think of all the extensional properties of the wax (e.g., mass or shape), since there are infinitely many of these; so, it must be insight (mind), not inspection (senses/imagin.) that gives us idea of ext. properties of wax) and what changes (accid. prop's--sensory properties)?

RD thinks image-making faculty involves both mind & body. So, no body, no image-making.

Can mind know anything without body (imagin./senses)? RD's wax example involves sense/imagin. info. RD can reply: well, sceptical hypothesis gives us images & sense info w/out a body. Objector can come back: well, but can there be knowledge w/out any images or sensory content? RD can reply: look, I didn't say knowl. w/out images/sense info is possible. I said images/sense content are necessary, but not sufficient for a priori knowledge.

¹ JP Reply: I don't think RD, in advancing the evil genius hypothesis, is committed to any ontological claim about what exists in doing so. In fact, RD presumes thinking is going on. On that assumption, since all other possible existents have been doubted away, if you exist you must be a thinking thing. But to claim that this part of the cogito biconditional, $\square (Ei \rightarrow Ti)$, commits RD, when nothing is thinking, to the claim that nothing exists misinterprets that part of the biconditional. It actually reads "if you assume that nothing exists except thinking, and something exists, then that something must be thinking." This bears no implication that in fact if nothing is thinking, nothing exists. To take it so is to confuse the state of doubt with an ontological attitude, when in fact it is an epistemic one. As a doubt about what can be known with certainty, what is 'indubitably true', when faced with the proposal that nothing is thinking, the only appropriate implication is the statement "then it cannot be known that anything exists". This is a far cry from the claim that nothing exists. It is even farther from the claim that when you are not thinking, you do not exist. All the cogito supports is the conclusion that, when you are not thinking, you cannot know that you exist. Is that so bizarre?