

CAN DESCARTES EPISTEMOLOGY JUSTIFIABLY ANSWER THE SKEPTICS' ARGUMENTS?

Nkereuwem Dominic Ekpo.
University of Uyo.

Abstract

The attempt to deconstruct all knowledge claims and re-erect new ones on unshakable foundation immune to skepticism is, unarguably, linked to the philosophy of Rene Descartes. For him, this firm foundation is the famous 'cogito ergo sum' (I think, therefore, I am) discovered in the process of universal methodic doubt. But the question is can Descartes epistemological foundationalism justifiably answer the skeptics' arguments? This paper argues that the cogito is not logically coherent with Descartes' grounds for his systematic skepticism and that so long as knowledge follows the metaphysics of man and subject to environmental and social determinants, any effort to erect superstructures that will withstand skepticism is not only unnecessary; it is also undesirable for, the growth of philosophic knowledge-which is tentative, dynamic and contextual- is not linear and enjoys no finality.

Keywords: knowledge, skepticism, methodic doubt, foundationalism, cogito.

Introduction

In the opening chapter of his metaphysics, Aristotle writes that “all men by nature desire to know”. Man's curiosity to know is a quest beyond mere sential and experiential givens to the true situations of things. No one deliberately desires or seeks falsehood. Is such a natural quest a reliable project or a mere wild goose chase? What is knowledge? Is it possible to know? What can I know? (What? Can I know?). How do I know what I claim to know? Is it possible to know with certainty? Russel (1998:1) puts the question more fundamentally thus: “Is there any knowledge in the world which is so certain that no reasonable man could doubt it?”. In the history of philosophy, the rigorous attempts to answer these and allied questions have generated different schools thought such as empiricism, rationalism, relativism, skepticism etc.

In the midst of skeptical clouds of his previous learning coupled with progressive scientific revolutions of his times, Descartes sought, through his systematic doubt, to establish indubitable foundation that the most extravagant supposition of the skeptics would not surpass it. This paper argues that such quest and conclusion cannot defeat skepticism and does not tally with the moderate realistic nature of knowledge which is dynamic, tentative, contextual and grows more often by disagreement than by mere consensus. Let's briefly consider skepticism and skeptics arguments to the possibility of real, certain knowledge.

Skepticism

Skepticism comes from the Greek word 'skeptomai' or 'skeptestai', meaning 'to examine', 'to consider', 'to enquire', 'to look about more carefully'. The noun form 'skeptikoi' refers to an examiner, an enquirer, a careful observer. At this level, skepticism entails a continuous process of enquiry in which every claim to knowledge is brought to the court of evidence, weighed or tested by counter experiences in order to ascertain its truth-value. Ozumba (2001:42) defines it as “any philosophical attitude which expresses doubt as to the possibility of certain knowledge”. Put differently, “the central thesis of skepticism is the denial of the possibility of objective knowledge” (Ojong and Ibrahim, 2011:41). It questions man's possibility of knowing objectively and with certainty. For the skeptics, one can hardly say how a thing really is but, instead, how it appears to be. Partial or moderate skepticism admits we can know certain forms of knowledge. In this sense, rationalism, empiricism, positivism and idealism are various forms of moderate skepticism. Absolute or total skepticism denies the possibility of any form of knowledge.

The Arguments of the Skeptics

The arguments of the skepticism are rooted in the supposition that knowledge entails certainty and as such, “it may be argued that knowledge of this kind is not attainable and hence knowledge is not possible” (Hamlyn,1970:9). The arguments of the skeptics are basically reduced to the following points: illusion/discrepancies among philosophers, epistemic relativism, the impossibility of demonstrating fundamental principles without vicious circle or infinite regress, the dream-awake dilemma, the evil genius arguments etc. Let us briefly and critically examine each of them:

i. Erroneous and Conflicting Opinions Among Human Beings

There is hardly any knowledge claim, say 'p' which does not find its opposite 'not-p' strongly defended by others including experts who are thought to be epistemic authorities. Every proposition has a counter proposition and sometimes the new proposition becomes the starting point of another in an endless triadic interplay of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Thus, it is argued that the human mind is intrinsically incapable of knowing truth with certitude. The presence of error in man's judgement as well as conflicting views among philosophers is insufficient to conclude that the human mind is incapable of knowing with certainty. The idea of error presupposes that there is another one- the twin brother- truth. Arguing from this polar concept, Eboh (1995:21) maintains that “if error is a polar concept of truth and skeptics admit instances of error in our knowledge, he must also admit of instances of truth or certitude in our knowledge for there cannot be counterfeit coins unless there are genuine ones”. Are there clear demarcation and/or criteria to distinguish truth from falsehood?

ii. The Impossibility of Criterion or Infinite Regress Argument

This argument is based on the impossibility of proving a genuine criterion of distinguishing truth from falsehood without going round the wheel. To say that something

is true or false, we need some criteria and to validate such criteria, we need some other criteria which themselves have to be validated. Thus, the process continues ad infinitum in a vicious circle or infinite regress. The skeptics overstress the impossibility of criterion and infinite regress as if every piece of knowledge requires demonstration. For instance, that I am here in this library reading and writing this article is a fact that is so obvious and may not need any deep philosophic or scientific justification to give this judgement validity. Again, that a whole is greater than any of its parts, that two things equal to a thing are equal to each other ($A=B$ and $C=B$, then $A=C$) are so self-evident and require no rigorous demonstration that will result in vicious circle.

iii. The Illusion Argument and the Relativity of Perception

This argument challenges the reliability of the senses as genuine perceptual windows. The senses, the skeptics claim, sometimes deceive us. If we are deceived once by them, what is the guarantee that we are not always deceived? Besides, it is a common observation that things do not often appear or taste the same to different people. Something that looks beautiful or tastes sweet to the perceiving subject 'S' may appear ugly and bitter to another 'T'. Does sweetness or bitterness lie in the object or the subject perceiving it? Because of this relativism, skeptics tend to deny that there is such thing as objective knowledge. Arguing from a particular instance of deception to universal instance, as the skeptics do, is indicative of hasty generalisation. What is given to the senses is always true. Probably the errors noticeable in perception are not attributed to the senses but the mind's precipitate judgement and interpretation of the sense datum.

iv. The Dream Argument

The dream argument is based on the inability to distinguish dream from waking life especially at the time of dreaming since the realities presented in both worlds are one and the same. Can a person who dreams know at the same time that he or she is dreaming? The things we see in dreams resemble the ones we see in real life and often time we mistake the dream world for real life until we wake up to face the reality. For instance, in a dream I may be awake counting so much money with happiness or writing examinations with anxiety when, in fact, I am lying asleep in bed. How can I know at the moment that it is not real life, that I am only dreaming? Is there anything about the experience of dreaming which can conclusively distinguish it from that of waking? How sure are we that the dream is not the waking life while the latter is the dream? Christian (1973:214) recapitulates the Chinese philosopher, Chaung-tzu's dilemma of distinguishing himself from a butterfly: "Once upon a time, I, Chaung-tzu, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither to all intent and purposes.... Suddenly, I awoke.... Now I don't know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming that I am a man". With this kind of dilemma, the skeptics wonder whether life is not one of continuous day-long dream. One could reply that pre-sleep and post-sleep periods have some existing coherences. There is no such coherence pattern between two dreams. When we wake up from sleep, we find ourselves in bed and can observe the same furniture in their respective positions. Dreaming and waking are polar concepts. Thus, Warburton (1992:96) is of the view that "if I were dreaming all day long, then, I would have no concept of a dream: I would have nothing with which to contrast dreaming since I

would have no concept of being awake”. In his epistemology, Descartes employs all these arguments and the more devastating one- the evil genius- as grounds for his universal skepticism.

Skepticism and Descartes' Epistemological Project

Descartes was confronted with wide spread skepticism and the falsity of widely held beliefs especially dogmatism and scholastic tutelage he acquired at the Jesuit College, being a high ranking institution at his time. In the discourse on method, he recounted his frustrations: “As soon as I finished the course of study..., I found myself embarrassed by so many doubts and errors that it seemed to me that the only profit I had had from my effort to acquire knowledge was the progressive discovery of my own ignorance”. Descartes set out to deconstruct the old epistemological edifice and to erect new ones on solid and firm foundation which cannot be demolished by doubt and skepticism.

Fascinated by the universal application and results achieved by mathematics in his days, he set out to reconstruct a unified system of knowledge after mathematical paradigm. For him, if the axiomatic method employed in geometry could be successful in geometry, why not elsewhere? Descartes wanted to 'mathematise' philosophy. He chose Mathematics as the archetype of all scientific knowledge. Mathematical knowledge enjoys consensus among mathematicians and non- mathematicians alike. Everywhere you go, for instance, $2+5=7$ and $2 \times 5=10$. No one has ever doubted these. It may even be ridiculous to do so. Descartes advocated a reconstruction of a unified system of knowledge that is entirely apriori, foundational and after such pattern.

To achieve this aim, method is sine qua non. Method- for Descartes- consists in harnessing the operations of the mind with special set of rules clearly articulated in his first philosophical work, “Regulae ad directionem ingenii” (rules for the direction of the mind) to breaking complex things to simpler units then building up again from there. In the discourse on method, Descartes presents four methods which, in his own logic, when carefully followed could lead to real certain kind of knowledge: “The first was never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such... to compromise nothing more in my judgement than what was presented to my mind clearly and distinctly as to exclude all grounds of doubt. The second is to divide each of the difficulties under examination into as many parts as possible. Third, to conduct my thoughts in such an order that by commencing with objects the simplest and easiest to know, i might ascend by little and little, and as it were step by step to the knowledge of more complex... and the last, in every case to make enumerations so complex and reviews so general that i might be assured that nothing is omitted”. With these step-by-step strategies from doubt to division of problems into parts and progress from simpler to more complex problems, Descartes hopes to achieve his epistemological dream(s).

Epistemological Deconstruction

Every (re)construction comes with concomitant deconstruction. To arrive at a new solid edifice of knowledge, everything he hitherto knew must be systematically doubted and 'destroyed'. Descartes expresses this vividly in the Meditation as follows: “Several years have passed since I first realized how numerous were the false opinions that in my youth I

had taken to be true and thus how doubtful were all those I had subsequently built upon then. And thus I realize that once in my life I had to raze everything to the ground and begin again from the original foundation, if I wanted to establish anything firm and lasting in the sciences". This demolition exercise was not carried one by one on everything he knew and accepted. That would be a difficult task. He sets out to attack the principles upon which they rested, for when the foundation is undermined, the entire superstructure collapses on its own. Like the skeptics he doubts even the mathematical truths based on the supposition of illusion and malignant genius arguments. In his text, *Does God exist?* Kung (1978:220) summarizes four grounds for Descartes for universal skepticism as follows:

- 1. Sense perception is unreliable: since the senses are sometimes deceptive, we may never entirely trust them. The certainty of the external world as a whole is dubious*
- 2. Sleeping and waking can never be distinguished by certain signs. What we experience in waking can also be experienced in dreaming*
- 3. Everything might be deceptive. If we are already so much deceived, why should we not be deceived about that which seems to us most certain? Even the universal basic concepts and principles of nature, even the truth on which all knowledge is based is doubtful.*
- 4. There might be a "deceiving spirit", an evil spirit (genius malignus) who is supremely powerful and intelligent and does his utmost to deceive me.*

As earlier noted in this work, the illusion argument questions the reliability of sense perception, the major avenue hitherto utilized by Descartes to acquire his knowledge claims: "All that up to the present time I have accepted as true and certain I have learned either from the senses or through the senses; but it sometimes proved to me that these senses are deceptive and it might be wiser not to trust entirely anything by which we have once been deceived". We usually trust our senses and sometimes we are misled. A straight stick immersed in water appears bent. A coin placed at the bottom of basin appears to be brought to the surface. Sometimes we see someone at a distance and call the name of the person we think he is but upon approaching him closely, we discover that we have failed in our judgement; he is entirely a different person. Similarly, if someone deceives us or steals from us once, the tendency is to be cautious in dealing with such person. In a similar vein, if the senses deceive us sometimes, why not always? Could it be that we are under perpetual illusion and hallucination?

Descartes also makes allusion to the dream argument. The problem posed here is very controversial. How do we distinguish dream from waking life? Any means we employ as a distinguishing criterion or yardstick between dream and waking life may also be part of the dream. The dream argument could be very problematic. In the words of Ozumba (2001:45) "since the Cartesian time, the "dream argument" has exercised a scorching influence on the positive quest after knowledge, the point being made is that we must be able to clearly, distinctly and conclusively show how to draw a line between dream event

and waking event before we can overcome skepticism”.

In other to bring the demolition exercise to full completion, he introduces the activity of a malignant genius which enables him to cast doubt on apriori and mathematical truths. The argument is based on the presupposition of the existence a supremely powerful deceiver, as against a supremely powerful and benevolent God, capable of misleading him into believing that those things he perceives with conviction are true, when in fact, they are false and unreliable. The possibility of an evil genius deceiving us leaves us entirely without any firm assurance in the foundation of our knowledge claims.

The Discovery of the *Cogito*

For Descartes, the systematic skepticism is not teleologically oriented. It is “tentative, provisional and has a functional purpose. To doubt is not an end in itself; it is a process of justification, of eliminating various falsehood and ultimately arriving at an unshakable foundation of truth” (Mayer, 1957:111). In the process of doubt, Descartes comes to grasp the famous dictum “*cogito ergo sum*” (I think, therefore, I am) and this, for him, becomes the epistemic paradigm, the 'Archimedean point', a solid and unshakable foundation upon which all structures and superstructures of knowledge rest. To doubt that one is thinking is impossible since the very act of doubting is a confirmation of thinking and again, since thinking is not a cognitive activity embarked upon by non-being, Descartes argues that deceived or not, he necessarily exists since that which does not exist- non-being- cannot be deceived.

Prior to Descartes, St. Augustine, in an effort to refute the skeptics' argument against the possibility of knowing with certainty, already formulates argument akin to the pattern of Cartesian cogito. For him, Skepticism entails self-contradiction; one is at least certain of one thing that he cannot know with certainty and whosoever affirms this cannot at the same time deny his existence without contracting himself. In the *Civitate Dei* (the city of God), Augustine (1958:236) argues: “If I am mistaken, I am. For, if one does not exist, he can by no means be mistaken. Therefore, I am if I am mistaken. Because, therefore I am, if I am mistaken, how can I be mistaken that I am, since it is certain that I am if I am mistaken? And because if I could be mistaken, I would have to be one who is mistaken, therefore, I am most certain that I am not mistaken in knowing that I am”. Although “*Si enim falor sum*” (if I am mistaken I am) of Augustine is logically similar in formal pattern to Descartes “*cogito ergo sum*” (I think, therefore, I am), it should, however, be noted that Descartes formulates the classic as an indubitable foundation for his system of philosophy whereas Augustine only intends his own as a refutation to skeptics' basic principles of universal skepticism. With the certainty of the cogito, Descartes goes on to re-affirm the existence of other things using God, whose existence he demonstrates with his fallible faculties, and goes on to use him as an epistemic guarantor and/or Divine illuminator of our finite minds.

Descartes' *Cogito* and the Question of Certain Knowledge

Here is an attempt to appraise Descartes philosophy in relation to the quest for indubitable foundation of knowledge. Descartes epistemology marks the starting point of modern philosophy. That radical departure from dogmatism, the focus on 'apriority' coupled with

the courage to question knowledge claims from the senses and epistemic authorities characterize his unique contribution to philosophy. Descartes theory of knowledge opens great epistemological controversies between reason/experience, rationalism/empiricism and indeed, subjectivism/ objectivism.

Can Descartes epistemology justifiably answer the skeptics' arguments? Is Descartes epistemic foundation- the cogito- really immune to skepticism? Descartes finds in Mathematics a paradigm of knowledge. Do mathematicians, unlike philosophers, always agree on all mathematical issues? They may agree on the question posed but disagree on how to solve it. Besides, attempt to model philosophy after mathematical paradigms may not solve the problems of philosophy because both disciplines have their distinctive formal subject. Hamlyn (1970: 14-15) maintains the view that “The fact that the problems and questions with which the philosophy is concerned here are of a different order of generality from those that are the concern of mathematician or scientists makes it unlikely that the methods of the more particular disciplines will be fruitful in philosophy as well”. Again, mathematical propositions are matters of universal convention rather than demonstrable fact. How do we know that a straight line whether short or long is 180° or that a circle whether small or big is 360° ? How can something that is big or small, long or short have the same measurement?

In the methodic doubt, Descartes intends to make his mind a 'tabula rasa' by attempting to get rid of everything he has learned from childhood. Is this a possible thing to do? The very concepts used in his philosophical meditation are entirely testimonial. He already relies on the reasoning faculties and procedures which he does not prove to be reliable. This cannot be demonstrated without regress. Some thinkers like Schacht (1984) believe that Descartes philosophy was hardly revolutionary as it is often imagined. Perhaps the only thing that was revolutionary was his demand that traditional assumptions must be subjected to the thorough crucible of rational analysis or ratiocinative enquiry.

For some philosophers, the certainty of the cogito is incontestable and that no one can doubt this without at the same time confirming it. The cogito has been subject to criticisms arising from various interpretation and misinterpretation of it. Is it an inference or performance, an event or argument? There is a sense in which the cogito could be interpreted as a logical enthymeme. An enthymeme is a syllogism in which one of the premises has been suppressed or presumed. The entire syllogism could be recast as follows:

All thinking beings exist/are ----- major and suppressed premise

I think ----- minor premise

Therefore, I am ----- conclusion

If this can be admitted, why spend so much energy and time on epistemic demolition when one could simply say I eat, I read, I pray, I walk, I drive..., and therefore, I am? It is the 'I' which carries the commitment of existence. According to Beck (1969), “Descartes thought that 'I am' followed from 'I think', though not apparently from 'I walk'. The truth is that it follows from any phrase in which the word 'I' appears, for it is the pronoun that carries the commitment to existence rather than the content of what is said”.

A counter argument to this is that the cogito, for Descartes, is a self-evident axiom immediately grasped by intuition. One is only misguided by the word 'therefore' which sometimes does not mark an inferential step but symbolizes a relation of necessary connection. Could Descartes be passing in and out of existence? If thinking is the only presupposition for existence, one may ask- what of when one is not really thinking as in the case of sleep, do I, by implication, cease to exist?

The phrase 'I think, therefore, I am' is, prima facie, captivating and incontestable but it does not convey the full meaning. Every conscious activity is phenomenologically intentional, that is, object-oriented. To think, for instance, is to think of something. To think of nothing is a metaphysical absurdity. I think (of what?), therefore, I am (what?). These are suppressed. Man is not, as Descartes thinks, a disembodied or isolated thinking self. Mercier (1982) clearly affirms that being human is not pure consciousness. The Cartesian analysis of man as an isolated, closed subjective thinker does not correspond to anthropological reality. Human consciousness is necessarily related to the non-self. It is subjectivity open to an objective reality, a subject-object relationship. Knowledge has a bi-polar structure in which the subjective pole faces each other. Descartes thinking self without the objective pole is a truncated description for man is not simply 'consciousness' but a conscious-being-in-the-world. As a being is so it knows. Knowledge is not purely cognitive or rational. The emotions of love, fear, grief, anxiety and hatred which are existential and intrinsically bound to the very nature of the knower play a vital role in knowing.

The transition from 'I think' to 'I exist' can only be hypothetical in which the consequent 'I exist' follows necessarily if and only if the antecedent, 'I think' is true. Thus when logically examined in the light of Descartes initial skeptical methodology, the cogito, far more than being indubitable foundation, as Descartes claims, marks another starting point for further skepticism since it can be asked- how does he know that he is thinking? Suppose he is being deceived by the evil genius to believe that he is thinking when actually he is not. The demonic hypothesis or skepticism that preceded the cogito, clearly and logically undermines the truth value of the cogito since acceptance of it might causally be the result of demonic action.

An attempt to look for secure foundation of knowledge presupposes the understanding of the real nature and meaning of knowledge or at least, it takes it for granted. For Hamlyn (1970), the traditional approach to epistemology consists in taking more or less for granted what knowledge is and asking instead how it can be given firm foundation. This amounts to putting the cart before the horse. Probably if attention is given to the concept of knowledge, the worries about foundation may not be that necessary. It is like imposing a different category on something and beginning to search for those things that have such features. Knowing is a tripartite process that involves the knower (subject), the known (object) and cognition and these are subject to the limitation of man's finitude as well as social and environmental determinants. Knowledge needs not always be absolutely certain. Such certainty can only be dynamic, tentative and contextual. It is subject to revision, modification, change and even rejection. Descartes mistaken perception and analogy of the growth of knowledge to an edifice does not fit in here. Indeed, as Hamlyn (1970:10-11) says, "The growth of knowledge is really not like the growth of a building..."

because knowledge does not grow simply by way of addition. The growth of our knowledge involves much modification and abandonment at some places of what we earlier held to be true” Packer (1960:19) differently expresses similar opinion thus: “In the history of man's ideas, we have seen the collapse of many pieces of 'real', certain thorough knowledge that we are today understandably more than a little skeptical. In the ancient world, it was 'truly known' that the earth was flat and that it was in the centre of the universe and not many years ago, most of the people were convinced that it was impossible to transmit voices let alone pictures over long distance. Indeed, so often we have discovered the falsity of widely held ideas that we perhaps tend to think that man progresses by the rejection of 'truths' than by their discovery...”. Hence, building on such a firm foundation, as Descartes attempted to do, is not only impossible; it is undesirable: “what cannot be achieved is the discovery of principles that will put skepticism out of question for all times. Skeptical criticism is always possible and indeed desirable. But the search for epistemic foundation has as its aim the provision of immunity from such criticism. The attempt to find such foundation is thus not hopeless, it is also undesirable” (Hamlyn1970: 10-11). One popular aphorism says 'to err is human'. “Man can never have any guarantee against error in his acquisition of knowledge nor can there be any system of knowledge that would be immune to error, criticism or skepticism” (Omogbe 1989: 55). So long as man remains within the limitation of his finitude and confines to the fluctuation of space and time, attainment of epistemological certainty that will put skepticism out of question- as Descartes envisaged- remains an unrealizable enterprise.

Conclusion

This article critically examined Descartes' attempt to reconstruct an indubitable epistemic foundation that would be impregnable to skeptical demolition and upon which all other fabrics of knowledge will be erected. For him, that was the famous 'cogito'. The fundamental question considered here was - can Descartes' epistemological foundationalism justifiably answer the skeptics' arguments? Descartes' cogito as a sure foundation cannot withstand the evil genius argument earlier put forward by him since there is no guarantee that such conclusion was not influenced by the same malignant evil genius. Unarguably, skepticism has been instrumental to the birth of epistemology. The theory of knowledge is, partly, a set of defense against the impossibility of knowing with certainty. Descartes' epistemological foundationalism cannot entirely defeat the skeptics' arguments. No epistemological conclusions enjoy absolute certainty and/or finality. Knowledge follows the metaphysics of man and it is characteristically tentative, dynamic and contextual. It grows and/or progresses more often by disagreement than by mere consensus.

References

- Beck, I. J. (1969), *The Metaphysics of Descartes*. Oxford: University press.
- Carlo, W.E. (1967), *Philosophy, science and knowledge*. Milwaukee: the Bruce pub.Co.
- Christian, J,L. (1973). *Philosophy: Introduction to the art of Wondering*. San Francisco: Rinehart Press.

- Descartes, R. "Discourse on Method" in Anscombe E. (Editors)(1954), *Descartes Philosophical Writings*. New York: Thomas Nelson and sons pub.
- Descartes, R. *Meditation of the First Philosophy (3rd edition*, translated by Cress, D.A) (1993). Indianapolis; Hackett pub co.
- Eboh, B. O. (1993). *Basic Issues in the Theory of Knowledge*. Nsuka: Felluda Pub. Co. 1995
- Hamlyn, D. N. (1970). *The Theory of Knowledge*. London; Mac. Edu. Pub.
- Kung, H. (1978). *Does God Exist?* Great Britain: The University press.
- Mercier, J. L. (1982). *Epistemology and the Problem of Truth*. Bangalore: Niger Fernandes.
- Ojong, K. A. and Ibrahim, A. A., (2011). *Fundamental Problems of Epistemology*. Calabar: Jochrisam pub.
- Omoregbe, J. (1989). *Epistemology: A Systematic and Historical Study*. Lagos: Joja Edu. pub.
- Ozumba, G. O. (2001). *A Concise Introduction to Epistemology*. Calabar: Ebenezer printing press.
- Packer, F. H. (1960). "A Realistic Appraisal of Knowledge" in Houde, R. and Mulla, Y. (Editors), *Philosophy of Knowledge: Selected Readings*. Chicago: Lippincott Pub. Co.
- Russell, B. (1998). *The Problem of Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schacht, R. (1984). *Classical Modern Philosophers (Descartes to Kant)*. London: Routledge pub.
- St. Augustine, *City of God* (Bk xi, 26) translated by Gerald G.USA. 1958