

Philosophy 203
History of Modern Western Philosophy

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Hamilton College
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Class 6 - Adjudicating the Objections and Replies

Business

Today: A Group Exercise on the Objections
and Replies

Tuesday: Hobbes

Papers are due next Thursday

The *Objections and Replies*

- After completing the *Meditations*, Descartes circulated the manuscript, often through intermediaries.
- The original 1641 edition included six sets of objections and replies.
 - The 1642 edition included a seventh set, as well.
- Threads of argument woven among the different objections and replies
 - Each objector saw the previous objections.
 - The objections build on each other.
- Often lively, concrete examples
- Some scholars insist that the *Objections and Replies* are integral parts of the work, essential parts of the text, and not mere auxiliaries, or commentary.

The Objectors

1. Johannes Caterus
 - Catholic Dutch theologian
2. Various theologians and philosophers collected by Marin Mersenne
 - friar and mathematician
 - handled the remaining circulation of the manuscript
3. Thomas Hobbes
 - exiled and living in France, in his 50s,
 - still ten years before *Leviathan*, and a year before *De Cive*
4. Antoine Arnauld
 - philosopher and theologian, and Jansenist
 - co-author of *The Port-Royal Grammar*
5. Pierre Gassendi
 - atomist
6. Various theologians and philosophers collected by Mersenne, again
7. Pierre Bourdin, Jesuit priest
 - These only appeared in the second edition
 - I haven't included these, yet.
 - I also want to include the letters - project for student research

Topics in the Re-organization

- I. To the Illusion and Dream Arguments
- II. To the Cogito
- III. To the Idea of God
- IV. To the Causal Argument for God's Existence
- V. To the Ontological Argument
- VI. To the Nature of Knowledge and the Criteria for Certainty
- VII. To the Nature of Reason and the Classification Our Ideas
- VIII. To Innate Ideas and Necessary Truths
- IX. To the Account of Error and Free Will
- X. To the Nature of the External World
- XI. To the Arguments for the Mind-Body Distinction
- XII. To the Nature of the Self, and the Faculties of the Mind
- XIII. To the Immortality of the Soul
- XIV. To the Differences Between Humans and Animals
- XV. To the Method

The Exercise

- Form groups (of 3 or 4) using the puzzle pieces.
- Choose one set of Objections and Replies
 - 2-4 objections and replies in each set
- Find a place to work.
- Three (or 4) roles for each group
 - Descartes, the Objector, Judge/Scribe
 - The person playing the objector reads the objection aloud
 - The person playing Descartes reads Descartes's response.
 - The judge/scribe facilitates a judgment, and writes down a summary.
 - Adjudications may end in a verdict, or they may just point to topics for further research.
 - Work together
- You may switch for the next objection/reply.
- The goal is to decide who is right, not to win the debate.
- Return to class at 10am

Adjudication Summaries and First Paper

- Papers are due next Thursday
- You may work on the objections and replies you saw today or others
- All of today's handouts, and more, are available on the website.