

Essay on i think,
therefore i am.
explain and assess
descartes famous
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I THINK, THEREFORE I AM

"I think; therefore I am" was a seventeenth century statement that Rene Descartes, a French philosopher, used and philosophically proved it beyond doubt. Descartes was initially in the process of figuring out his real nature using reasoning as opposed to experience that many philosophers of his time used. He is considered one of the first philosophers to explore human as more than flesh and blood (Weate, 1998, pp. 34-45). He believed that the processes and means through which individuals judged their environments as well as formed their opinions justified their existence (Weissman, 2006, pp. 56-9). In his findings, Descartes realized that "I exist" is a certain phenomenon, therefore, the thing that follows this condition must be certain as well. This philosophical thinking can be literary translated to mean that if an individual doubts his existence, therefore, it proves that this person exist because even doubting your existence translates that you are a thinking being. Thinking is natural occurrence and individuals should always believe that they should understand every phenomena differently according to their interpretation of the situation as opposed to making decisions based on observations. Observation might provide leading data, which might not necessarily reflect an individual's thought of the situation. However, thinking about the same would eventually produce the best alternative that this person strongly believes he is.

Throughout time in history, philosophical thinkers have tackled the question of existence in reality. Cogito ergo sum or I think therefore I am forms Descartes philosophy of human existence in reality. He believed that as long as individuals are thinking beings, therefore they exist. According to this

philosophical point of view, it therefore implies that to justify the existence of human beings, they must not conceive every data that they receive to be false, or readily accept them as the truth. This further implies that the perception of the mind might either be proven either as wrong or right. In his view, Descartes believes that even thinking that an individual does not exist implies that he is a thinking being therefore he exists. However, he believes that we should not trust our senses to provide us with the truth always. Descartes strongly believed in the sense of deduction as his major reasoning method. However, he disregarded perception citing that the latter could easily be distorted. To support his argument, Descartes used a simple example that has been popularly referred to as the Wax Argument. This argument states that a piece of wax has certain characteristics such as shape, size, color, smell, and texture, which are obvious to a human simply by making a visual observation (Kluck, 2000, p. 78). These observable features of the wax can easily be distorted simply by placing the piece of the wax in to burn in a flame. Through this process, all these attributes of the wax would be altered since it would produce a different smell, change the color, size, and its texture. Therefore, Descartes concludes that for an individual to conclude that despite the burning the material, it remains the wax, it important that an individual involves the comprehension of the mind. Nevertheless, viewing or observing the burnt wax would eventually trigger the conclusion that the material is not wax since the fire distorted its famous and conspicuous properties. Therefore, basing his arguments on deduction as opposed to perception, Descartes developed the statement “ I think, therefore I am” to prove that thinking is vital in establish the sense of the

human being.

The human thought is the only undecieving and undoubted thing that Descartes could base his arguments on them. If an individual can doubt thought, this implies that the individual is thinking about his doubt thereby disapproving these doubts in themselves. The construction of reality entails several mind-tasking events, which ensure that the individual explores and evaluates the meaning of Descartes' phrase as well as disregarding perception and upholding deduction. In this regard, it therefore implies that due to the diversity of human beings, every single human being would have different thoughts on different phenomena, thereby constructing different realities in similar situation.

Descartes begins his reasoning to support this philosophical phrase with the question that how anyone could know anything for sure, if no one was certain of the reasoning behind it (). Therefore, in order to ascertain the truth about anything in the world, an individual should disbelieve and doubt everything they hear, or see. He believes that this is the only way that an individual would correctly comprehend data before accepting them as facts, else they would live with realities that other people construct, which might not universally apply to every human being. Doubts exists, therefore, conscious acts also exist. However much an assertion might appear to be a doubt to one person, another person would view this doubt as an actuality. Constructing the mind either in the doubt or in conscious thought makes different circumstances have different deductions from different individuals. However, perception might also vary, but the thinking of different members of the society should incline toward their deduction instead of the former,

which is subject to change.

The “ I” in Descartes’ phrase can be translated in three dimensions. First, it might be translated in the first person perspective as is commonly used in phrases. Secondly, the “ I” can be translated as the self that is constituted by the mind, or the ideal “ I”. Finally, it can also be translated as the real self of the human beings. In these translations, an individual can construct an ideal self such as thinking that one is Napoleon. Therefore, according to Descartes’ philosophical idea, constructing these mindsets make the person the self that he constructs in his mind. On the contrary, a person might also construct conscious thoughts in the mind such as thinking that I am not Napoleon; therefore, I cannot do the things he did. In the latter thinking, the self emerges in realism as opposed to the ideal self subconsciously constructed in the first instance. The mind is usually a complex thing. Finding the best construction of the self in different situation differ from one person to the other. Therefore, Descartes believed that since individuals have aspiration in life, thinking or constructing the ideal self makes the person the ideal individual that he believes he could be even without necessarily becoming this person in reality, which is the driving force behind succeeding in life.

Descartes had to forget and leave to the past all that he previously knew in order to develop this philosophical thinking. He first accepted that he had no body or sense. Additionally, he asserted that the physical world is nonexistent, which might also imply his physical non-existence as well. Nevertheless, he also believed that he had to exist in the first instance to possess these assertions and doubts. There was no way that he could doubt his existence

while he was actually the one doubting everything else. Therefore, “ he is” and this is a deduction of his mind, not a perception of the same. This further implies that for the deception, thinking, and misleading to occur, an “ I” must be present. This “ I” must also have the inborn desire, or the soul, which nourished, sensed, moved, controlled and think for it as well as a body to contain it. Nevertheless, Descartes believes that all these phenomena are subjects to doubt, except his thinking. Without these attributes, Descartes believes that he can still exist, if he can still think. In concluding that the “ I” exists, Descartes believes that the person constructs certainty, idealism, and reality.

People always have the experiences of the things that they think they are. This explains the distinction between the things we think we are and the accrual or real us. Even if we might not be the actual things that we think we are, the thought is enough to give the experience of our thinking. For instance, in our dreams as we sleep, we might dream of an apple or oranges. However, the definitions and the physical attributes of these items would remain the same, both in the dream and in reality. This dream represents an ideal experience. At the time when an individual is dreaming, he is not aware that he is asleep, but considers everything that happens in the dream as the reality. Therefore, this explains how Descartes philosophy operates. When we think, we form ideal experiences, which carries away our thinking into believing that we are in the situations that we think. Therefore, since we can think, therefore we are. This also indicates why Descartes insists on the mind and not the physical body.

According to several philosophical skeptics, they have criticized Descartes’

idea arguing that indubitable knowledge cannot exist in the real world, or if they give room that it might exist, they believe that such knowledge has not been found yet. Therefore, they consider Descartes' assertion that Cogito is beyond doubt as a fallacy. Critics believe that anything that has the ability to think must first exist. Therefore, the cogito does not only state the obvious, but also fails to justify this premise (Levene, 2013, p. 91). Despite conceding that there could be another premise, Descartes believes that the cogito is not a syllogism or a self-evident idea. For instance, one may wonder, which of these come first? The thinking or the existence? Just from this simple question, it is evident that in order to think, a person must first exist. Therefore, Descartes does not explain any phenomenon, but only states the obvious idea that everybody can identify. Nevertheless, these opponents have not provided enough evidence to prove their criticism for the cogito, which several other philosophers have not only considered relevant, but also developed with new ideas that make it even more relevant.

Conclusion

Rene Descartes is one of the philosophical thinkers that shaped the subject of philosophy with his ideas. He was a French philosopher of the seventeenth century who not only sought to study human being as flesh and blood, but also as thinking being. He argues that human thinking should not be based on deductions and on perceptions. Descartes gives the example that has been referred to as the Wax Argument, which explains that the perceptive features of an object can be distorted. However, he believes that the deductive features are inborn and requires reasoning and thinking to establish. He asserts that the construction of reality requires existence of

conscious thinking. While accepting that conscious exists, doubts also exist. Doubts are responsible for shaping our thinking because we do not have to approve every data get as well as we do not have to disregard them, but should analyze them through critical thinking in order to construct a conscious being.

Cogito ergo sum or I think therefore I am provides that even though we might not remember that we are thinking, we are nevertheless thinking in our minds. Even doubting that we are thinking is thinking in itself and approves us as human beings. This thinking is believed to be the fundamental of all knowledge since people must think in order to acquire knowledge and use this knowledge objectively. The three interpretations of the " I" in this dictum proves that thinking that I am in itself proves that I am. This being is considered as either real or ideal. Nevertheless, both real and ideal being provide some experience to the human being, whom Descartes believes is fundamental to existence. Even though there have been skeptics of Descartes' philosophy, the proponents provide sufficient information and proof to qualify his assertion as true definition of being.

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