

Explain descartes'  
method of doubt;  
what does he hope to  
accomplish from this  
met...

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9 August The Purpose of and Philosophy behind Descartes's Method of Doubt

Descartes's Method of Doubt does not challenge the existence of knowledge, but it enables Descartes to reach a conclusion that cannot be criticized. This conclusion becomes the first brick of the building of knowledge. Simply doubting the truths does not lead to a meaningful critical analysis. Therefore, Descartes instead doubts the structures from which we retrieve the knowledge. Descartes has doubted what we can get from our senses.

Descartes says that one can be misguided by one's senses as a result of which, one may not see the real things. Descartes goes on to even doubt if he is awake. Using this dreaming hypothesis, Descartes finds a way to doubt the materialistic world's certainty, which also lays the basis for Descartes's doubt regarding mathematics. Just like this world could be a deception, there could be an evil genius who could convince Descartes into believing that 2 added to 3 makes 6, which is certainly not true.

The prime goal of Descartes is to build a safe foundation for the philosophy. Most of Descartes's writings belong to the period when the modern science was starting to advance, and Descartes was of the opinion that the scientists had a very subjective idea of how to advance in their urge to create knowledge. Hence, Descartes decided to provide the scientists with a solid starting point that was in essence, an Archimedean fulcrum. Descartes achieved this by introducing a Method of Doubt with which, he could express his doubts regarding the knowledge's structure in a systematic way.

Although Descartes seems like a skeptic, but in reality, he is not one.

Skepticism, as explained before, is only a method using which Descartes critically analyzes things and facts so as to reach at a conclusion with a solid

rationale for it. An in-depth analysis of Descartes's philosophy suggests that he has very much played the role of a religious zealot on his time. "Scepticism is a form of anti realism" (" Descartes meditation 1") whereas Descartes used his philosophy to explore realism. In order for one to be characterized as a skeptic, it is imperative that one always remains skeptical about one's stance on things, whereas Descartes starts analyzing a matter from a skeptical position, only to establish a conclusion at the end. This is not skepticism since it leads to confidence and surety that lacked in the start of the analysis. This essentially means that rather being a skeptic in essence, Descartes made use of skepticism as a means to critically analyze things, which is why he is known for his Method of Doubt. " Descartes supposed that if we were really to reflect upon what it is to be certain, we would see that the radical skeptical grounds for doubt are a natural extension of the sorts of doubts we raise in everyday life" (Broughton). It might be that Descartes already had the conclusion in his mind before he started discussing a matter and he attempted to reach those conclusions by putting forward a series of questions, that he himself answered. Descartes has made many assumptions regarding the supernatural nature that coincides with the contemporary religious zealots' folk wisdom.

#### Works Cited

Broughton, Janet. Descartes's Method of Doubt. Princeton University Press, 2001. Print.

" Descartes meditation 1." n. d. Web. 9 Aug. 2012.

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